

Changes in the IT Sector's Leadership Qualities before and after COVID 19

Mrs. J. Jayalakshmi,

Research Scholar, KLHBS, Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation Deemed to be University, Off Campus, Hyderabad.

Email Id: jaya.lakshmi22@klh.edu.in

Dr. M. Geeta,

Associate Professor, KLHBS, Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation Deemed to be University, Off Campus, Hyderabad.

Email Id: sivageeta@klh.edu.in

Mrs. J. Jayalakshmi,

Assistant professor, MBA, Vignan Institute of Technology and Science, Deshmukhi Village, Yadadri, Telangana.

Email Id: jaya5462@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The present global crisis is not a financial one, but a decision-making catastrophe. Values govern decision-making, and the inquiry is about the values of the present "leaders." The purpose of this research is to investigate the traits and characteristics of leadership that need to be addressed. One of these facets is successful leadership, which does not suffer from technical limitations, but rather from a focus on categorical ideals. Another component is leadership, which is often based on appearance rather than accountability and effort. The study's primary objective was to deduce the establishment of situational leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic, dubbed new normal leadership, among Hyderabad-based information technology employees. To accomplish this objective, the researcher chose different IT industries from among Hyderabad's IT companies. The study used a qualitative research approach in order to characterize people's lived experiences with a particular occurrence or human situation. The data analysis retrieved themes from the acquired data using transcriptions, codes, and triangulations. The findings indicate that: (1) New Normal Leadership is the capacity to adapt while being steadfast in one's commitment; (2) It is about being an effective instructional decision-maker; and (3) It is about being a planner, vigilant, and initiator. At the completion of this investigation, conclusions were taken and suggestions made, including the need for future quantitative testing of this extracted theory, which is highly suggested for confirmatory and more in-depth studies.

Keywords: COVID 19, Leadership, Human Resources, Conflict Management & Organizational Behavior

Introduction:

The epidemic has created unique obstacles in contemporary history, for which there are insufficient rigorous research and methodologies that may be implemented immediately. Leaders of IT employee providers have an important challenge: controlling the performance of teams of software experts during a crisis in order to ensure that the software industry operates at maximum capacity during a pandemic. The human component has long been regarded as the primary resource that influences an organization's efficiency. Numerous studies have shown the impact of leadership quality on employee performance. Effective leadership has a significant influence on achieving effective and high-quality outcomes. Thus, leadership quality is inextricably linked to the quality of IT services, and leadership is regarded as the cornerstone of well-coordinated and integrated Software Industry suppliers. There have been studies that demonstrate a significant favourable relationship between leadership style and patient satisfaction, as well as a reduction in negative consequences. The relevant research gap is in the aspects of crisis leadership competency. Competent leadership is critical in addressing pandemic concerns in software companies. The relevance of leadership ability for personnel with management responsibilities is a topic of discussion at the moment, although

it is often underestimated in reality. Investment in leadership competency development, which must be seen holistically, should be included into the strategy of suppliers of software skills with the goal of improving the quality of their services. The crisis is generating non-standard and complicated circumstances in which proper leadership abilities are needed twice as much owing to the requirement for swift and thoughtful judgments that have an influence not only in the near term but also in the long run. Employee performance is impacted by greater uncertainty during the acute period of transition. Uncertainty, being the human mind's most unsustainable condition, is a cause of stress, impeding employee performance during a crisis. The purpose of this research is to explore the content of leadership competency across software providers during COVID-19 pandemic crises, as well as the mechanism that mediates their shared impact.

The new normal leadership occurs while sectors face difficult circumstances with increased responsibility expectations and limited financial resources. Solving this conundrum will need joint efforts to produce cost-effective solutions. With the new normal being the norm, it is vital that IT leadership have a connected character rather than being practiced in isolation from IT. William H. Gross invented the phrase "The New Normal" in March 2009. The impulse stems from the evolving economic situation, both today and in the future. Transitioning from one economic and social system to another is a process that entails reduced household debt, increased personal savings, and decreased consumption rates.

Literature Review

Today's economy, which is defined by significant technology advancements, sometimes referred to as Industry (or revolution) 4.0, presents new problems for businesses and people. Humans' roles are evolving as they increasingly interact with machines and robots, and the virtualization of corporate processes enables traceability of these changes. Access to Big Data, cloud computing, robotics and automation, collaborative robots (cobots), artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and the Internet of Things Services enables the initiation, creation, and application of knowledge, thereby ensuring high production flexibility and efficiency. There is no one-size-fits-all guide to implementing Industry 4.0. However, specific frameworks may be used that are dictated by fundamental technologies, such as the ones listed above. Three sorts of interactions are critical in Industry 4.0: people to people (P2P), people to machine or machine to people (P2M or M2P), and machine to machine (M2M) (M2M). Under these changing conditions, a new kind of leader is emerging, namely managers with the power to influence employee behavior in order to turn the firm into a smart factory. Leadership is a difficult topic to define. It is defined in our research as a 'person's efforts directed toward the achievement of organizational objectives. Leadership is the capacity to influence, inspire, and motivate others, as well as manage their actions in order to accomplish the organization's objectives. As a result, certain abilities are essential for the leader to operate well. The leader's abilities and leadership style are critical components of a business's success. For leadership to be successful, it must be founded on the leader's authority and power being acknowledged by workers. Industry 4.0 leadership has a well-defined direction: it is focused on the development of cyber-physical systems that operate in a dynamic network of connections, and it is centred on a common object of interaction that is constantly reconfigured in response to changing aims and circumstances. To achieve the widely held vision of its future, it is vital to set activity directions for workers, since the manner in which Industry 4.0 solutions are implemented is dependent on their skills. Thus, leadership in this industry is about motivating and inspiring people, as well as channeling their energy toward making the vision of a brighter future a reality. Leaders must maximize the potential and skills of all workers in order to achieve Industry 4.0. In cyberspace, leadership is aided by skills (leadership via skills), particularly the rising relevance of personal competences (soft skills), owing to the ease with which information may be accessed and accumulated from a variety of sources and locations, practically without limitation. In an Industry 4.0 environment, many firms' aims are increasingly focused on developing an enterprise with high intelligence; as a result, executives must also be adaptable and willing to take risks in order to adapt and bring changes. Managers, too, should be prepared for and accepting of change, willing to take calculated risks in order to adapt to and start change. When developing leadership, a situational approach is still applicable.

Objective of the Study: The study is focuses on the leadership challenges and activities on and before COVID 19 in Information Technology Companies in India

Research Methodology: As the study focuses on the various challenges and activities of the leadership in 21st Century, the research data is collected through various articles, Journals & Books on Leadership roles on or before pandemic.

Leadership roles and responsibilities on or before COVID 19:

A rising number of businesses are beginning to prepare for the post-COVID era. Leaders are designing and executing operational processes to allow for the resumption of in-office work. They are, however, navigating discussions about a new hybrid workplace that would incorporate both remote and in-office employees. Leading is difficult enough. However, leadership after COVID-19 will place a premium on leadership and provide challenges with competing demands from a dispersed workforce. Here are some pointers to help you make successful workplace adjustments and ensure that your post-pandemic leadership achieves the required results from employees.

To begin, leaders must recognize that their primary role is to develop and lead their direct subordinates. That will also be true in the post-COVID workplace. Leadership is not a side job for a leader; it is your job! Who will develop your employees, training them for increasingly difficult responsibilities and prepare them for succession? And, given the challenges of returning to an office environment and working in a hybrid team, effective leadership and development are critical for post-COVID-19 leadership.

Second, there is nothing soft about the skills required for effective leadership. Anyone who continues to divide leadership into "hard" functional talents and "soft" people skills has never led anyone successfully. Consider where the bulk of your present problems stem from. What takes up the most of your time and gives you the most grief as a leader? I'm betting that people management is at the top of the list. Leadership deserves to be respected.

Third, master the basics by ensuring that team priorities are successfully aligned with the organization's main strategic goals. Effective post-pandemic leadership ensures that employees concentrate on the company's key operations. Employees may be excused if their tasks have changed drastically in the recent year—possibly many times? Clarifying their work responsibilities is key for getting the intended outcomes and is one of the most important activities you will do as a leader. Leave it to your employees to figure out your company's strategy and how to translate it into the day-to-day work obligations for which they are responsible. That is entirely your duty.

Establish a clear expectation for goal accountability as well. Accountability is essential when workers operate remotely and have little insight into their daily tasks. In addition, priorities team member coaching and development by scheduling one-on-one coaching sessions with each direct report on a regular basis. These workshops will help you make space for specific difficulties, address personal concerns, and establish action plans for dealing with challenges that may arise in the post-COVID workplace.

Finally, accept responsibility for hiring and growing personnel, as well as "de-selecting" and removing team members based on performance. As with pre-pandemic leadership, post-pandemic leadership requires you to build and manage a successful team, which includes responsibility for the selection, growth, and, tragically, termination of those who fail to perform.

Executives highlight five crucial possibilities that can help businesses adapt to crises and evolve.

Nothing is a priority when everything else is. In the wake of COVID, many CEOs find themselves operating in an unclear grey zone. It wasn't until two years ago that few CEOs viewed crisis management and business agility to be essential organizational capabilities. But today's chief executives have a different perspective. According to recent study from IBM's Institute for Business Value, CEOs are emphasizing all of these competencies. Next two years are expected to see a major change in priorities, according to our findings. They have made it quite obvious that they emphasize worker safety and security, cost-control, and agility.

It's Time for a New Era CEOs' top objectives are altering substantially as they prepare for an uncertain future.

Change is the only constant.

There has been an increase in the expectations of leaders for transformation programmes. In addition, most organizations are speeding up their transformation. Customers and partnership prospects seem to be being sacrificed in favor of the company's emphasis on change. Competitiveness and employee resiliency are two of the most critical advantages of continuous digital

transformation for CEOs. From April to August 2020, IBV Trending Insights has performed several proprietary consumer and executive surveys, as well as fresh data from executives across sectors with a total sales volume of USD 3.7 trillion. We've come to the clear conclusion that after COVID-19, the corporate landscape has shifted dramatically. Business executives' demands for speed and adaptability have risen dramatically, regardless of the present situation or the company's long-term goals. Traditional boundaries are disintegrating as a result of the difficulties of continuous innovation, quickly changing client expectations, and an unparalleled rate of change. They seem to have recovered their clarity of thought in recent days. Aspirational motivation has developed into existential motivation. Five-hundred nine percent of businesses surveyed said that the COVID-19 outbreak has hastened their digital transformation. Five key epiphanies for the post-pandemic corporate environment are revealed in our study from well-known leaders, bringing fresh insights on digital transformation, the future of work, transparency, and sustainability. They serve as a guide for CEOs who recognize that the traditional methods of doing business no longer work.

The first realization is that digital transformation isn't only about technology.

These "game-time" pivots—shifting large numbers of workers to faraway platforms and reconfiguring supply chains—are more than simply short-term financial man oeuvres, according to anecdotal evidence. Rapid change has become the norm, and being able to adapt to it has become a fundamental organizational skill. Sixty-six percent of the organizations we investigated are now able to do previously impossible tasks because of the COVID-19 epidemic. Cost-savings are the primary advantage of transformation programmes; therefore this cultural change is largely defensive.

The significance of speed is recognized by businesses.

There is, however, something much greater and more pervasive going on right now than crisis management. Many firms seemed to have doubts about their own technology and human resources capabilities prior to the epidemic. The epidemic fears that hung over the country this year proved to be mainly unwarranted. In recent years, executives have become more confidence in the potential of technology and are accelerating their digital transformation efforts.

Technological platforms were more important, and the business teams that used them saw results. As opposed to the invention of new technology, existing instruments were used to their fullest extent. Before long, previous implementation hurdles had been eliminated, and those who took action first experienced the advantages almost immediately. It's impossible to undo the damage done by the COVID-19 epidemic on organizations throughout the globe. "Long-term adjustments to our organizational plan" were cited by 55% of respondents. COVID-19 has "improved our approach to change management" and "increased process automation," according to 60 percent of respondents, while 64 percent said they're moving toward more cloud-based corporate processes. Increasingly, executives are confidence in the power of technology and are pursuing a digital transformation strategy. Investing in artificial intelligence (AI), internet of things (IoT), block chain, and cloud technologies is how they want to reclaim COVID-19, according to them. Organizational leaders are catching on to the advantages that technophiles have long advocated. To ensure long-term success, businesses must ensure that their employees are as educated, robust, and flexible as their technology.

As shown in the second insight, success requires a human element.

Human capital is the key to success in digital transitions, even if leaders are aiming to acquire a wide range of technology capabilities. IBV research shows that business capabilities that focus on people and customers, such workforce development and customer experience management, have the greatest impact on an organization's predicted growth. Management, on the other hand, seems to have disregarded these cautions. Over the next several years, more transactions and customer service contacts will be conducted online, according to more than three-quarters of CEOs. Executives expect that customer experience management will be a top priority in the next two years, up from only 35 percent a year ago. Despite this, CEOs anticipate digital transformation to improve customer service the least. After COVID-19, more than three-quarters of CEOs expect that enhanced customer behavior will persist. According to CEOs, 60% said they would use AI-based customer contact solutions, and chatbots handled up to 80% of customer assistance traffic at certain organizations during the epidemic. We'd want to know how they intend to improve user experiences, if not entirely via digital conversion. They are more concerned about their staff

than their consumers, and this is why they are so torn about how they communicate with them. It has been ignored that employee satisfaction is as vital as safety, flexibility, and skill development in the workplace. Employee well-being is a top priority for executives, who agree that their staff have been under a lot of stress.

Employers often overestimate the impact of their assistance and education programmes.

However, our findings show that CEOs substantially overestimate the efficacy of their support and training initiatives compared to how their staff really views it. Employees feel that their employer cares about their well-being about half of the time. When the majority seems to be suffering, leaders who get this right have enormous potential. More than simply an issue of perception is at play here when it comes to the trust deficit. To the contrary, employees have good cause to doubt the company's dedication to them. Since the epidemic started, 22% of the workforce has been either temporarily or permanently laid off as a result. Management may be conveying signals that human resources are disposable when matched with reasonable and even crucial company goals such as cost savings and technological resources. Artificial Intelligence and other "contactless" activities all help to reducing the number of people required to perform an activity by increasing automation. Workers' support for work-from-home options is waning, work-from-home solutions are falling short of expectations, and the trend toward more remote work is eroding the human contacts that characterize many company cultures. There is a rift between the workforce and upper management.

Three things have become clear: company strategy has been hijacked by traumatic stress.

The task of establishing the company's vision falls to senior executives. There is the risk that they would lose focus since they are always putting out flames. What are the ramifications of this? Executives are taking notice of the current focus. Executive objectives have been shifting often since the beginning of 2020, and this is the third major reorganization in as many months. In the short term, they seem to be putting more emphasis on improving internal operating capabilities than on providing excellent customer service. Bosses are taking a closer look at themselves after COVID-19. According to a poll of 3,450 CEOs from 20 countries and 22 sectors, business objectives have changed substantially in the last two years toward crisis management, worker safety, and security. The number of CEOs who say they will continue to focus on cash flow and liquidity management is up from a year ago by more than double.

Similarly, 87% of those polled believe that cost-cutting measures are going to be required. Resilience is becoming more important, with 75% planning to focus on it in the next two years. A significant shift away from long-held just-in-time delivery requirements has been made by 40% of CEOs, who emphasize the need of retaining extra capacity to weather future catastrophes. Platform-based business models are preferred by 94% of CEOs questioned.

Concerns about cyber security have also expanded significantly, with some sectors dedicating more than 90% of their resources to this area. Sixty-six percent of CEOs say they want to concentrate on cyber security in the next two years, and forty-six percent say they want to employ artificial intelligence to do it. More than twice as many individuals are currently using the technology as there were only a year ago. The first realization is that digital transformation isn't only about technology. These "game-time" pivots—shifting large numbers of workers to faraway platforms and reconfiguring supply chains—are more than simply short-term financial man oeuvres, according to anecdotal evidence. Rapid change has become the norm, and being able to adapt to it has become a fundamental organizational skill. Sixty-six percent of the organizations we investigated are now able to do previously impossible tasks because of the COVID-19 epidemic. Cost-savings are the primary advantage of transformation programmes; therefore this cultural change is largely defensive.

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The COVID-19 pandemic hasn't had the same impact on every organization and sector. When a "K-shaped" consumer environment exists, some consumers prosper while others suffer, this arrangement resembles it. There is an example of this divergence in the stock market, where the big consumer technology platforms have continued to advance while other companies have crumbled. Consider Amazon, which grew by 78 percent this year alone. More over half of the consumer sector's other activities saw decreases as a result of its growth. As an example, look at Apple, which has risen by 60% and is now larger than the S&P 500's bottom third combined. In contrast to the lone players like Amazon and Apple, most firms are built on collaboration and ecosystems. Just because a system is large doesn't mean it will perform better. Successful people are able to combine their physical stature with mental dexterity. After the financial crisis has passed, CEOs expect the health-care industry to take advantage of a growing consumer interest in wellness products and services. Telecommunications, media, and entertainment were all predicted to benefit from the rise of the stay-at-home consumer. Increased reach is expected to help choose winners in several sectors. As a result, we found that 70 percent of CEOs expect significant partnership activity inside their sector and 57 percent look outside it in the future. In any case, participation is expected to rise by more than 300 percent in the coming two years, compared to the preceding two.

Companies are collaborating.

This is an important point to keep in mind: physical size alone does not imply superior performance. As a result of their adaptability, large firms have been able to maintain stability (in a problematic sector) or even thrive in it. People who are on the fast track to success have the capacity to combine size with agility. Pandemic lockdowns, however, allowed "important personnel" to be exempt from the restrictions, making them the most respected and appreciated members of society. "The necessities" have been emphasized in all organizations and across all budgets as a result of a higher regard for those who allow others to live, work, and play. In order to concentrate on development and competitiveness, there is a change in emphasis on assessing and managing new company operations and expansions. According to CEOs' expectations, these industries rank

second-to-last on the list, after customer service, when it comes to digital transformation. There must be a strong emphasis on new business venture and expansion evaluation and management from an organizational perspective in order to concentrate on growth and competitiveness. When it comes to dealing with a new financial crisis, many, if not all, corporations are doubling down on their basic operational and people changes. However, CEOs must remember these onerous targets if they really want to improve their company's competitiveness. These initiatives will lead to future advancements and inventions. It will be scrutinized more thoroughly than ever before in the process of authorizing and distributing monies.

Five-fold illumination: The foundation of long-term viability is health.

Plans for sustainability before the coronavirus primarily dealt with environmental concerns, such as the dangers to global health posed by pollution and climate change. Products and enterprises that displayed authenticity in these areas attracted a growing number of consumers. Regulations shared many of the same concerns and purposes. However, in the middle of a public health crisis, environmental sustainability and human safety issues got entangled. Customers are more likely than ever before to use disposable masks and gloves, and they also want more customizable packaging. To protect themselves and their loved ones from the illness, they've been receiving products to keep them from stepping out in public. They seem to be a balance between human health and environmental preservation. Consumers' passion to environmental problems, however, has not diminished. Indeed, a new, larger, and more sophisticated concept of sustainability encompasses both health and safety. There is already an increase in corporate duties as firms strive to satisfy current sustainability objectives (such as reducing their carbon footprints and improving their waste management systems) while also complying with new health and safety regulations. Environment and humanity are inseparable. In the last two years, executives' interest in environmental issues has increased significantly. After COVID-19, this may be one of the most challenging and crucial results. We need new procedures and materials as well as different kinds of data and efficiency in order to meet this demand." Think at it this way: Is it better for the environment to let rotten meat be thrown away or use more plastic to keep it fresher? As a society, how can we make sure that companies and consumers get what they need, while eliminating waste? The questions will get increasingly difficult, and leaders will be required to reply in a more nuanced and logical manner. Because of the epidemic, we were reminded of how solidly and really the unthinkable and the unexpected are. A nightmare for many, it has been painful, expensive, and unsolved. Groups have sought to benefit from the unexpected windfall for a few fortunate people. Pandemic-induced strategic, operational, and financial adjustments are here to stay for the foreseeable future. There will be an increase in investment in digital technology, transformation, and cloud computing. There is a self-reinforcing dynamic that will lead to even greater acceleration in the near future. CEOs that can manage complexity and increase competitiveness by linking digital transformation to business aims have an exciting opportunity while others wait for things to "return to normal." Is there any hope of returning to normalcy? To put it simply, it's too risky and rewarding. The stakes could hardly be higher. The greatest obstacle to success is the sheer amount of red tape that organization has to deal with. More than twice as many CEOs now see it as a hurdle than did previously. Another potential stumbling block is the exhaustion of the employees. It's possible that the complexity is contributing to employee tiredness and exhaustion. Businesses and the globe as a whole can benefit from all of this. Worker trust and confidence must be developed in order for a diverse workforce to perform well. How they are managed today will have a profound effect on future perceptions and values.

The sooner you take action, the better.

As a result of this changing climate, firms must respond swiftly to maintain a competitive advantage. In order for a business to thrive and grow, it must take action in three areas. With compelling leadership, you can inspire, engage, and empower your workforce in new ways. Assist in the development of more flexible work arrangements (like hybrid models of remote and in-office work). Make mental health and skill development of workers a top priority. Employees' long-term trust and loyalty may be enhanced by all of these aspects after a pandemic. Artificial intelligence, automation, and other exponential technologies may improve the intelligence of processes. Focus on supply chain resilience, cyber security, and the use of automation and AI. Focus on hybrid cloud utilization and colorizing additional business functions to increase operational scalability. There is no room for complacency or nostalgia in this new reality. There's no going back to the way things were before this happened. The

stakes are too high, and the dangers and possibilities are too vast. As a result of the unpredictable nature of the future, executives must ensure that their organizations are ready to deal with the inevitable disruptions and changes that will occur in the future.

Conclusion: During the COVID-19 epidemic, workers' experiences working from home (WFH), as well as their well-being and performance, have been carefully examined. WFH and its effects on managers' new roles as remote managers have received little attention so far. What we want to find out is how COVID-19 knowledge work managers handled with distance management. Since the experiences of workers and managers are different, research and practice should examine WFH's impact on employee well-being and performance, as well as on managers' leadership. Executives from MNC subsidiaries are increasingly taking on global responsibilities in multinational corporations (MNCs).

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