

Integral Leadership Style: A New Perspective

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to validate the proposed model of integral leadership style based on spiritual and philosophical approaches by examining the perception of tactics involved in integral leadership style in the Indian context. The data were collected from the managers regarding their leadership style according the scale developed for integral leadership style in the service sector companies in the fields finance and telecom in the northern Indian region. Authors attempt to do this by interpreting and synthesizing the model of integral leadership style. This study used Internal Consistency Reliability, Pearson Correlation, and Exploratory Factor Analysis as statistical techniques. Results showed that the model of integral leadership style is valid within the Indian context and the holistic, intuitive and conscious approaches are better correlated than intelligent and sensual approach.

Keyword: Leader, Integral, Conscious, Holistic

Trevino (1986) speculated that since unethical practices cost the industries billions of dollars a year and damage the images of corporations, the emphasis on ethical behaviour in organisations has increased over the recent years. WorldCom's Bernie Ebbers and Enron's Ken Lay exemplify the leaders who were failed to provide the moral and ethical leadership and their organisations faced the financial scandal that resulted in the largest bankruptcy (Trevino & Brown, 2005; Shirur, 2011). Further, Andrew Fastow and Jeffrey Skilling of Enron; Dennis Koslowski of Tyco; Ramalinga Raju of Satyam are the other names in the list of leaders who were successful but failed in integrities (Chandler, 2009; Bhasin, 2013). These ongoing frauds and scams in the large corporations and industries in the repetitive manner made us to think again about the prevalent leadership styles and practices and to find out the missing link on the personal as well as on the professional front.

Prerequisite Leadership

George (2011) stated that we often characterize the leaders tangled in the scams or scandals as the 'immoral people', but in reality they often yield attractions in their path that lead them to cross the boundaries of morality and ethics, and they clash themselves on a slippery slope called ethical failure and no recent leadership theory has succeed to address the complications and entangled mindset of the leaders. There is a need for additional thinking and analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and the gaps in the existing knowledge base with respect to the existing leadership theory and practices.

The Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon in his address to the 63rd session of the general assembly stated:

'We need to engage at the highest levels ...we need a new understanding on business ethics and governance, with more compassion and less uncritical faith in the "magic" of markets. And we must think about how the world

Current Scenario of Business

The business world and the human kind over the ages had suffered from transgressions. More recently, the traumatic period of corporate scandals in the world during last few years shook the confidence and trust of the people from the corporations. From Enron to Anderson, Satyam to 3G Scam - every scandal is a disclosure of the misdeeds and unethicity by respected business leaders as well as their political counterparts (Shirur, 2011; Datta, 2012). Senior managers, accountants, top executives are involved in improper allocation of expenses in the financial statement, bewildering deals, falsification of figures, manipulation of data, false valuation etc. in these big corporate scams (Shirur, 2011; Chandler, 2009). The unethical behaviour practiced by employees and the business leaders include favouritism/nepotism, moral hazard, lying, greed, free riding, white collar crime, frauds and bribery etc.

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economic system should evolve to more fully reflect the changing realities to our times' (Ki-Moon, 2008).

Researchers and scholars have made significant efforts to understand and define leadership despite ongoing debates about the concepts and models of leadership (Hogan & Hogan, 1999; Yukl, 2002). However, neither becoming a leader nor explaining the concept of leadership is easy (Bennis, 2003). The ability to become a leader is based on the assumption that leaders are people who are able to express themselves fully—we need to understand a leader as a whole person who expresses him/herself through his/her body, mind, emotion, and spirit (Bennis, 2003; Fairholm, 1998, Jarvis, 2005).

In this connection leadership must progress to the next level, integrating the holistic point-of-view. This inquiry falls within the scope of what in recent years has often been called 'Transpersonal' psychology, i.e. the study of human development that transcends personal self-consciousness. There has been significant interest in this field in proposing stage-based theories of transpersonal development. Merely the transcendent leader (who possesses high levels of leadership of self, others, and the organisation) can deliver higher sustained firm performance in today's dynamic environments (Crossan & Mazutis, 2007).

This research uses a stage-based evolving system, not so much with the purpose to propose a new definitive theoretical model, but rather as a means of providing a structure with which to explore in some detail the dynamic processes within consciousness that establish development of inner self, as Maslow assumed it :

'In the hands of a mature, healthy human being—one who has achieved full humanness—power ... is a great blessing. But in the hands of the immature, vicious, or emotionally sick, power is a horrible danger' (Maslow, 2000, p.146).

Maslow (1971, p.346) also considered that self-actualised people having strong ethical conviction. These clues from a humanistic psychologist can provide the answers for the creation of honorable leadership.

Integral Leadership Style

The Concept

'Everything that happens to us, then, is only the answer and echo of what and how we ourselves are.' - Jean Gebser

As suggested in the previous passage the reflection and consciousness as the important element to develop self-awareness and integrity in leadership. Wilber (2000) defined the integral leadership as, 'Imbedded in Integral Philosophy is integral consciousness, which expands our frame of reference in how we see and interact with the world by offering a way to "transcend and include" (p. 27).' An integral approach to leadership includes a holistic and humanistic perspective of leaders in relation to organisational structures that focus on functions and processes (Cacioppe & Edwards, 2005). Integral leadership basically emphasises on both multidimensional business conditions and key facets of human development (cognitive, emotional, physical, interpersonal, ethical, moral, and spiritual) as the most comprehensive way of developing oneself, guiding others, and building successful organisations. In the similar vein Pauchant (2004) stated that integral leaders are the people who are effective at healing the deepest wounds of our society such as poverty, violence, and environmental decay.

'An integral vision - or a genuine Theory of Everything - attempts to include matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit as they appear in self, culture, and nature. A vision that attempts to be comprehensive, balanced, inclusive.' (Wilber, 2000b. p. xii)

In the similar connection Singh-Sengupta (2011) proposed the model of integral leadership style, inspired by Sri Aurobindo, regarding different stages of self and different levels of being. She talked about the concentric system of outer, inner and inmost being and the vertical system of various levels of consciousness which ranges from the lowest to the highest level 'Sacchidananda'. She further stated that on the lower hemisphere mind, body and life veil the spirit, which disappears on the higher hemisphere and serves the foundation of the model.

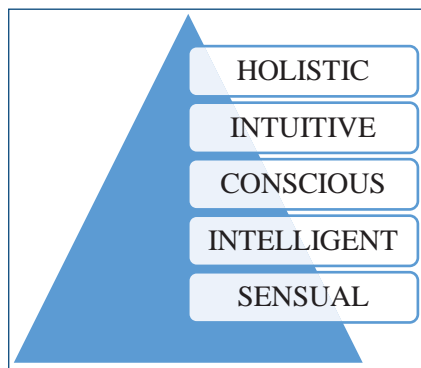
According to the level 5 integral leadership style model the communion of mind, body and spirit brings a unique energy in the individual that the leader gains by focusing on his/her inner-self and controlling all his/her sense organs. This purity of mind enables the employees to create a pure environment at workplace and this is duty driven. The model talks about the capabilities of a leader who can transform himself and integral leadership model talks about the possibilities of transformation of outside to inside and it has a belief that, 'leadership is an influential process, which stimulates the mind and starts from within.'

In the similar connection Singh-Sengupta (2013) stated that our mind gets easily externally controlled and as a result we fail to give attention to our inner forces. Appropriate attention to our inner nature can help us develop inner consciousness and that can guide one to realize one's purpose of being or existence (p.19).

The level 5 leadership style moves beyond contingency and trait theories of leadership. It rather focuses on the principles of evolution and involution and allows the inner nature to reveal itself in its fullest. The five domains are not isolated, but are interrelated. Therefore wellbeing is enhanced by developing positive relationships in each domain and increased by embracing more domains.

This integral leadership style denotes the indwelling spirit style of leadership where the mind resides in the soul. It travels at 5 different levels of mind and the resultant behaviour (Singh-Sengupta, 2013) (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Level 5 Integral Leadership Style-From Evolution to Involution



Source: Adopted From Singh-Sengupta (2010)

Level 1-Sensual

Leadership at this level deals with the physical level of being. The sensuous leader is guided by physical mind that contains the desires and seeking for pleasures.

Level 2-Intelligent

Intelligent leader is governed by the impulses and desires of the vital and seeks to justify and rationalize actions, which are based on the impulses and desires of the vital.

Level 3-Conscious

Leadership is based on inner consciousness at all three levels-physical, mental and vital. Leadership at this level starts with higher level of consciousness.

Level 4-Intuitive

Leadership is based on intuition and rational decision making that comes as a result of illuminated state of higher mind. It is the illumination of the spirit.

Level 5-Holistic

Leadership is based on cheerful silent state of mind-a calm composed state of intellect and wisdom, *shhitprajana*.

Some of the main characters of these leaders are:

- Control of the senses which otherwise, lead to anger, bewilderment, loss of memory, and eventually destruction of intelligence.
- Concentrated and peaceful.
- Calm self-knowledge.
- Extinguishment of individual ego in the universal one. The operationally relevant behaviour modes of such leaders are:

1. The leader works for the sake of *loksangrah*-holding together of people, preventing them for the wrong and inspiring them towards right. The leader works on moral order.
2. The leader is always engaged in the welfare and good of all creatures-*Sarva-Bhuta-Hite-Ratah*.

While describing the welfares of integral leadership style she alleged that the benefits of high-integrity and high-responsibility organisations are well established conscience mechanisms that emphasize fair practices which are manifested in responsible decision making and organisational citizenship behaviour. Values such as integrity, honesty and humility, which have long been considered as spiritual ideas, are demonstrated to have an effect on leadership success (Singh-Sengupta, 2010). The author has also proposed a model of spiritual and ethical foundations of organisational development to achieve corporate prosperity. At the micro level this leadership style is based on self-control, self-regulation and higher value system influence it positively. It is named the model of corporate abhudaya framework through integral leadership. The level integral leadership style provokes us to move from doing situation to the being state (Singh-Sengupta, 2013), as Buddha famously said, "You become what you think." To implement integral leadership one need to promote ideal pattern of behaviour, which will be helpful to shift the focus from sensuous frame of mind to contemplative frame of mind (Singh-Sengupta, 2013) as

indulged in the intoxication of power and money, often top leaders reject to see the reality and loose connection with their own self and results in individual and societal degrading. While unfolding the prominence of “self” Singh-Sengupta (2013) states that the communion of mind-body-spirit carries a unique energy that is gained by focusing on his inner self. It enables the employees to create a pure environment at workplace and his mind has to be made progressively clean and pure with the conscious pursuit of thoughts which are elevating and uplifting (p.22).

Empirical Findings

The research questions that guided this study are:

1. What is the level of perception (self) of the manager about his leadership approach based on his/her ethical values and beliefs according the integral leadership style scale?
2. Whether the approaches of integral leadership style seem to be uplifting manner as the model in the surveyed organisations?

The population of interest for this research is Indian service sector. The choice of the service sector was due to the large representation in the Indian corporate world because India became a positive outlier not only in terms of the share of services in value addition but in terms of its share in employment. The data collection was done during January 2014 to July 2014 in the service sector organisations of north Indian region.

As a research sample, employees of 9 companies were recruited. Of these companies, all belonged to the reputed Indian companies. Instrument used was a closed ended questionnaire developed for this study (Appendix), which consisted of total 20 items. Nine items were adopted from Singh-Sengupta (2011), two items from Brown, Trevino and Harrison (2005), two from Fry and Matherly (2006), and the rest were developed. Approximately 841 employees were asked to participate in this survey and 580 responded to this survey (responding rates = 68.96%). Finally, 564 cases were analysed; there were 16 missing cases. Most of the respondents were male (82.6%) and rest were women (13.7%). The reliabilities of the dimensions of the ILS were found to be acceptable and Cronbach alphas of holistic, intuitive, conscious, intelligent, and sensual scales were 0.80, 0.72, 0.70, 0.55,

and 0.71, respectively. The reliability of the consolidated scale was 0.81.

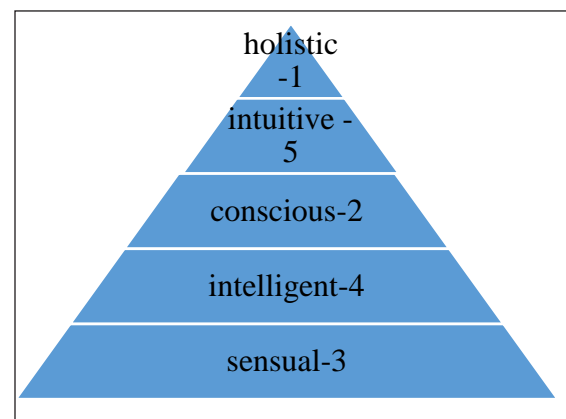
Mean and standard deviations of all the factors used in this study were computed to examine the distribution of scores within each set of variables. Means were rank ordered to underline their order of endorsement by the executives and managers. It should be noted that response were made on a 4 point Likert scale. Higher score on each dimension denoted greater affirmation with the dimension description.

Table 1: Mean, SD and rank of ILS approaches

Variable	Dimension	Mean	SD	Rank
Integral leadership Style	Holistic	15.78	4.1	1
	Intuitive	8.85	2.5	5
	Conscious	15.37	3.6	2
	Intelligent	9.41	2.2	4
	Sensual	12.53	3.4	3

Table 1 revealed that holistic style ranked first in the order of endorsement shown by the managers. Mean and SD of this dimension clearly indicate that most of the managers considered their approach as holistic. Conscious and sensual approach ranked second and third respectively.

Fig. 2: Casual Diagram of Integral Leadership Style, Rank according the Mean Score



The authors examined the validity of the proposed model that is mentioned earlier in order to understand the feasibility in the Indian service sector. Ironically it seems that managers in the service sector do not follow their intuition often, however they believe in the holistic ideology of life where they accept the importance of calm composed mindset and work leads to purpose of life, which

is quite contradictory. The findings clearly indicated that the luxuries of life and the pleasure of attaining personal objective are some of the influential parameters of acting leaders. being initial at the model the sensual approach which acted at base found itself on the high level while analyzing the data.

However the intuitive approach was found to be on the lowest in the terms of mean score.

In order to study the nature of relationship among the factors generated from a set of scale the interrelations were computed. Results of inter-correlations among factors of integral leadership style have been shown in Table 2. It has been evident from Table 2 that most of the leadership style factors were significantly correlated with each other positively.

Table 2: Inter Correlation among Factors of Integral Leadership Style

Factors		2	3	4	5
Holistic	45**	44**	29**	01	
Intuitive		49**	27**	01	
Conscious			31**	10**	
Intelligent				31**	
Sensual					

Note. $N = 564$; ** $p < .01$

Holistic, intuitive, conscious, and intelligent dimensions of integral leadership style correlated significantly and positively with all other. However the sensual style was having insignificant correlation with the holistic and intuitive leadership styles. On the level of conscious and intelligent it became significant ($r=.10$, $p<.01$ and $r=.31$, $p<.31$). The findings indicate that the sensual and intelligent dimensions of integral leadership styles are less associated with the holistic and intuitive leadership styles, however holistic, intuitive, and conscious dimensions of integral leadership styles are better connected with each other.

The multivariate statistical test that was used to examine the data was factor analysis with PCA (principal component analysis). Factor analysis is a multivariate technique for identifying whether the correlations between a set of observed variables stem from their relationship to one or more latent variables in the data, each of which takes the form of a linear model (Field, 2005). In the similar vein Cooksey (2007) also confirms that factor analysis might be

used to: (1). condense a set of items into a smaller number of composite factors, (2) establish the dimensionality of a survey measure, (3) test whether there are specific factors underlying a specific scale. However in this research new constructs have been introduced and examined and in that context factor analysis was required to test the dimensions which were proposed initially and were the same as the factors generated by the factor analysis techniques. In this connection the researcher run factor analysis on the each section just to extract the most composite factors in the questionnaire.

Respondents were provided a list of 20 items related to integral leadership style. The statements are presented in Appendix. The factor analysis run on the total items of integral leadership style and it clubbed exactly in the five factors which had the similar items which were designed to measure different construct, so in this manner it establishes the validity of dimensions of the instrument used for mapping integral leadership style. It has confirmed that the specific items are underlying within specific construct as said by Cooksey (2007).

1. Holistic: Eigen value=3.21, percent of variance =16.07
2. Intuitive: Eigen value=1.96, percent of variance =9.80
3. Conscious: Eigen value=2.29, percent of variance =11.47
4. Intelligent: Eigen value=1.61, percent of variance =8.06
5. Sensual: Eigen value=2.19, percent of variance =10.99

The factors and their details are presented in Appendix. The findings indicated that the respondents are reported to be highest on the holistic approach followed by conscious and sensual. The respondents reported lowest on intelligent and intuitive. The description of the items is given in the Appendix.

The research findings showed that managers in Indian service sector perceive their approach more as holistic and conscious in the integral leadership style model but they have also accepted that their drive has been motivated by the fulfilling of their sensual desires, like Maslow need hierarchy pyramid. On the other hand managers have not perceived intuition as their approach which is quite contradictory statement, because clarity of mind comes through intuitive approach which is an inevitable stage

of acquiring holistic phenomena of integral leadership abilities. It shows that the Indian managers perceive their leadership approach mostly as the mix of holistic, conscious, and sensual approaches.

Conclusion

The research suggested that the five approaches of integral leadership style model are well versed and as the model talks about elevation from lower hemisphere to higher hemisphere. The correlation among these approaches shows that the association between the uplifting approaches becomes more rigid level by level. The relation between holistic and sensual approach establishes the complete resistance, however the findings supports the transcendence of the model. Most of the managers in the Indian service sector think that the holistic approach followed by conscious approach of integral leadership style is the most apt for them, which somehow establish the inclining attitude towards these approaches.

Limitations

First, this study examined perceived behaviours such as the approaches in integral leadership style at only one point in time and used a self-report method-a survey of participants, which makes the possibility of a percept-percept bias. According to McDonald (2008) self-reports have a lot of room for biases, which involve a systematic tendency to respond to a range of questionnaire items on some basis other than the item specific content. The main disadvantage lies in the fact that respondents tend to rate themselves as being much more virtuous than they actually are as there is a tendency to present them in a socially acceptable manner. The second limitation is due to the small presence of women in the sample; this study has limited generalizability to this group. Because of the involvement of senior managers/managers, mostly men in the organisations, women had the limited presence in the sector surveyed.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further work needed to be conducted with qualitative research on integral leadership style is necessary because little or none of it has been conducted. As quantitative research limits deep understanding of the perception of leadership because this topic is related to belief, feeling,

and self-conceptions and qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world which leads that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings. Nevertheless it should be noted that the future research would benefit from examining broader perspectives of integral leadership approaches using more sophisticated analyses.

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Appendix

Table A1: Factor analysis

	<i>Component name</i>	<i>FL**</i>	<i>V%***</i>	<i>EV*</i>
Item#*	(1)Holistic		16.07	3.21
10	Happiness comes from peace of mind.	.71		
11	A calm composed state of mind increases work effectiveness	.73		
12	I have a sense of responsibility towards the society and employees.	.69		
13	Prayer is an important part of my life.	.77		
14	My work helps me finding the purpose of my life.	.64		
	(2)Conscious		11.47	2.29
18	I am hopeful about life.	.46		
19	I use introspection /reflection of my work as a part of my daily routine.	.49		
20	I spare time for personal contact with my followers.	.75		
21	I am always interested to know how my people are feeling and doing.	.68		
22	I am able to practice self-control.	.68		
	(3)Sensual		10.99	2.19
26	I do what is useful to attain personal objectives.	.64		
27	My priority is to satisfy my personal needs and career objective.	.72		
28	I feel good when I earn more and more money.	.78		
29	I work because it helps me to afford the luxuries of life.	.75		
	(4)Intuitive		9.80	1.96
15	I trust my gut feeling.	.62		
16	I believe intuition is more important than reasoning while taking a decision.	.69		
17	I don't carry grudges because it adds mental anxiety to my mind.	.79		
	(5)Intelligent			
23	I explain rules and expectations to my team.	.68		
24	I have the best interests of the employee in mind.	.66	8.06	1.61
25	I am very good at bargaining so that I can get the maximum benefits out of it	.70		

*FL**=factor loading*

*V%***=variance*

EV=Eigen value*