



The Interplay between Leadership Behavior and Labour rights: A Synergistic Evolutionary Perspective

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The Interplay between Leadership Behavior and Labour rights: A Synergistic Evolutionary Perspective

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Abstract

The phenomenon of leadership stemmed from the skills and abilities of a leader are led to the ideas of Great man theory and the Traits theory. Over the years the psychology of leadership argued that effective leadership is grounded in leaders' capacity that they share with others. The descriptive research investigates the evolutionary shift of leadership theories from individualistic perspective to environmentalist perspective in the era of democratization of environment and labour rights movements. The

research finds that evolution of leadership theories has progressed from an individual-focused approach to recognizing the complex interplay between leaders, followers, and the broader environment. Research endorses that democratization of socio-political environment has corresponding effect upon the enactment of labor rights laws that correspondingly influenced evolution of leadership theories. Labor rights challenged customary concepts of individualistic leadership styles and highlighted need for addressing workers' rights and well-being in organizational contexts. Modern theories acknowledged the dynamic nature of leadership and emphasized the need for leaders to adapt their behaviors, styles, and decision-making processes based on the specific situational and contextual factors they encounter.

Keywords: *leadership perspective, individualistic leadership, environmentalist approach, behavioristic approach, labour rights laws*

Introduction

The concept of leadership has always been a topic of interest since the beginning of time Leadership is defined as, “the focus of group processes, a personality attribute, the art of inducing compliance, an exercise of influence, a particular kind of behavior, form of persuasion, a power relationship, an instrument to achieve goals, an

effect of interaction, a differentiated role, the initiation of structure”¹ and different combinations of these. Another worth citation work titled as, “An Integrative Theory of Leadership”² terms leadership as a social process where one individual aids and supports others in the accomplishment of a common task. Leadership is termed as a process of working with others to accomplish shared goals, emphasizing more on ‘working together’ and less focus on the outcomes. Leadership theories, evolved over the time line spectrum to explain that why and how people are turned leaders, enhance their abilities to influence followers and drive them to the attainment of organizational goals. Early theories of leadership were predominantly focused on identifying the personal individualistic traits that make someone an effective leader or otherwise.³

These theories assumed that certain inherent traits, such as intelligence, confidence, and charisma, were key indicators of leadership potential. It was assumed that the inborn traits contribute to great leadership was called as, “Great Man theory” and the search for “Great man” in the history of leaders was grounded in the study

¹ Bernard M. Bass, *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 20.

² Martin Chemers, *An Integrative Theory of Leadership* (New York: Psychology Press, 2014).

³ Yuan-Duen Lee, Pi-Ching Chen, and Chin-Lai Su, "The Evolution of the Leadership Theories and the Analysis of New Research Trends," *International Journal of Organizational Innovation* 12, no. 3 (2020): 88–104.

of individuals who were known as great leaders Mouton.⁴ The theory portrayed “Great Man” for the great leaders as heroic, mythic and destined to rise to leadership at the time of need. The sequel of Great Man theory was Trait theory that distinguished leaders from non-leaders on the bases of specific qualities. However, these theories had limited success in providing a comprehensive understanding of leadership, as they failed to account for situational factors and contextual influences.^{5, 6}

Behavioral theories (individualistic focus) shifted their focus from intrinsic traits to discernible behaviors and sought to recognize the behaviors and engagements demonstrated by effective leaders. The behavioral leadership styles were classified in to the task-oriented and people-oriented approaches⁷. Priority of the Task-oriented leaders evolved around goal accomplishment, task delegation, and performance appraisal, while people-oriented leaders focused on

⁴ Nico Mouton, "A Literary Perspective on the Limits of Leadership: Tolstoy's Critique of the Great Man Theory," *Leadership* 15, no. 1 (2019): 81–102.

⁵ Richard T. Harrison and Claire M. Leitch, eds., *Research Handbook on Entrepreneurship and Leadership* (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2018).

⁶ Asad Sarfaraz Khan, Qadar Bakhsh Baloch, Muhammad Adil, and Syed Mohsin Ali, "Personal Factors of Entrepreneurs and Its Impact on Sustainability of Social Organizations in Pakistan," *Abasyn University Journal of Social Sciences* 13, no. 1 (2020).

⁷ Osman Uslu, "A General Overview to Leadership Theories from a Critical Perspective," *Marketing and Management of Innovations* 1 (2019): 161–172.

configuring relations, backing up team members, and their happiness.⁸

The significance of leadership practices that align with the values and expectations of the environment.⁹ Therefore, Contingency theories supported the assumption that effective leadership is contingent upon the fit amid the leader's attributes and the situational factors.¹⁰ Another paradigm departure from the individualistic focus approach was 'Transformational leadership' that acknowledged the influence of leaders on their followers and the reciprocal sway of the leader-follower affiliation. Transformational leaders inspire and encourage followers by focusing on their wellbeing, personal growth, emotional intelligence, shared vision, and empowerment.¹¹ Though these theories approved the prominence of followers but overlooked the bigger environmental context. This gap was soon filled by

⁸ Wael Ibrahim Alsarrani, Ahmad Jusoh, Ayman Ahmed Alhaseri, and Amani Almeharish, "A Literature Review Study of the Relationship between Leadership Style, Leadership Behaviour, and Leadership Traits," *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews* 9, no. 4 (2021): 152–159.

⁹ Alexander Fries, Nadine Kammerlander, and Max Leitterstorf, "Leadership Styles and Leadership Behaviors in Family Firms: A Systematic Literature Review," *Journal of Family Business Strategy* 12, no. 1 (2021): 100374.

¹⁰ Zhanna Lyubykh, Nick Turner, M. Sandy Hershcovis, and Connie Deng, "A Meta-Analysis of Leadership and Workplace Safety: Examining Relative Importance, Contextual Contingencies, and Methodological Moderators," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 107, no. 12 (2022): 2149.

¹¹ Qadar Bakhsh Baloch, Nazim Ali, and Gohar Zaman, "Measuring Employees Commitment as Outcome of Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles: An Empirical Study," *Abasyn Journal of Social Sciences* 3, no. 2 (2014): 208–214.

‘situational leadership models’, such as the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership and the Fiedler's Contingency Model, recognizing the effect of situational dynamics on leadership successes.¹²

Research Question: The preceding discourse suggest a premise that all of the leadership theories and models suggest leadership theories are categorized on the bases of either personal qualities of leader or on the relationship amid leader and led, or on the leader's skills significant to the tasks assigned. A detailed review of Individualist's leadership is explained in terms of traits that qualify an individual to acquire respect and submission from others, whereas, environmentalist's leadership is product of situation. The research study explores to synthesize all of the leadership theories and models with a view to trace their paradigm shift from one perspective to the other along time and space. The study also seeks to judge the influences of labour rights laws on the evolutionary perspective of leadership models.

Leadership Theories: Evolutionary Perspective

For the purpose of better understanding of this research, leadership theories are grouped on the bases of their

¹² Sihame Benmira and Moyosolu Agboola, "Evolution of Leadership Theory," *BMJ Leader* (2021): leader-2020.

approaches and sequence of emergence on their timeline in to three major classifications as follow:

- a. Individualistic traits and attributes focus.
- b. Individual and follower's interaction focus.
- c. Environment Focus leadership theories.

Individualistic School of Leadership: This school of leadership highlights the importance of leaders' attributes and focuses on the personal qualities, abilities, autonomy, and vision of individual leaders in driving success at workplace and in an organizational context. The School emphasizes on the personal characteristics, traits, appearances, leader's ability to persuade, inspire, and influence others rather than broader organizational or environmental factors. The approach accentuates that the leader's effectiveness is differentiated from the worth of leader's traits and qualities, such as acumen, intelligence, self-assurance, confidence, charisma, emotional intelligence, and honesty. This School is defined through two theories i.e. Great Man theory, and Trait theory.

Great Man Theory: The theory was put forward by Thomas Carlyle in his book "*On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*" that suggests that leadership phenomenon can be learned by studying biographies of great men (Carlyle, 1846 & 1993). The theory offers that great leaders possess inborn talents that set them

apart from others and regulate their success. It infers that leadership traits are genetically inherited and more predominant amid exceptional personalities from explicit backgrounds thereby leading to credence in a "leadership gene." The theory highlights prominent personalities from the history such as socio-political leaders, military commanders, reformers as religious figures as examples of "great men". The theory has inbuilt limitations integral to the concept as follow:¹³

- a. The theory name itself, "Great Man," imitates its gender biasness having disregards leadership qualities of women.
- b. Focuses predominantly on individual leaders and fails to acknowledge significance of collaborative and collective leadership struggles.
- c. Leadership is an art and science that can be learned and developed but the theory undervalues and miscalculates the role of learning, and training in modeling effective leadership.
- d. Leadership encompasses a multifaceted blend of traits, skills, behaviors, and situational factors, whereas, Great Man Theory oversimplifies complex leadership phenomenon by attributing it to a few inherent traits, and not influenced by external factors or individual learning.

¹³ Christian Harrison, *Leadership Theory and Research: A Critical Approach to New and Existing Paradigms* (Cham: Springer, 2017).

- e. The theory faces criticism for lacks of empirical evidence, and neglecting situational and contextual factors.

Trait Theory: The origin of the notion of the theory was derived from the “Great Man” model during the first half of the 20th century and attempts to explain that some mental, physical, and social traits or their combination is common amongst effective leaders. The word, “traits.” refers to steady patterns of views, moods, and behaviors associated with individuals including ourselves.¹⁴ The Traits theory differs from Great Man Theory on the pretext that good leaders are not necessarily born with explicit traits, rather existence of some characteristics shine a person as a good leader or unsuccessful one. The trait theory identifies leadership personality’s features from varying standpoints such as; physical factors including weight, and height; physiological appearance; intelligence factors include certainty, judgment, and awareness. Stogdill (1975) assumed that anyone can be made a good leader by developing certain explicit traits. The Trait Theory posits that leaders possess specific traits or qualities that differentiate them from non-leaders and, leadership potential can be measured by assessing an individual's proprietorship of such specific traits (Zhang, et.al. 2021). Theory postulates that leadership traits can be influenced by a mix of hereditary and

¹⁴ Z. A. K. D. A. Nawaz and I. Khan, "Leadership Theories and Styles: A Literature Review," *Leadership* 16, no. 1 (2016): 1–7.

environmental dynamics. Generally cited traits include acumen, intelligence, self-assurance, willpower, integrity and truthfulness, emotional intelligence, extroversion, and industriousness, and each trait has direct link with corresponding outcomes.¹⁵ However, the theory holds following limitations:

- a. Trait Theory places undue emphasis on innate traits while disregarding the significance of leadership skills, behaviors, and competencies. Furthermore, the literature is inconsistent in identifying universally associated traits.
- b. The theory overlooks the worth of situational factors in leadership effectiveness and neglects the interaction between traits and the situational context.
- c. Leadership effectiveness is predisposed by numerous factors beyond individual traits whereas; the theory does not account for the leadership dynamics in different contextual and environmental alternatives.
- d. The Theory predominantly centers on leader traits with total disregard to the character and influence of followers.

Individual and Environment Interaction Focus: Behavioral Theories

Behaviorist theories of leadership center on observable behaviors and engagements of leaders rather than intrinsic innate traits or features.

¹⁵ Christian Harrison, *Leadership Theory and Research: A Critical Approach to New and Existing Paradigms* (Cham: Springer, 2017).

This approach emphasizes around the argument that effective leadership is phenomenon that can be learned and nurtured through explicit behaviors and activities. The behavioral approach was totally divergent to individualistic school as it focused on “what leaders do, instead of their personality traits and termed leadership as a subset of human behavior that differentiate leaders from non-leaders.¹⁶ This approach was evolved from the Ohio State Studies and the University of Michigan Studies as both of these theories set the grounds for considering both task-related behaviors and socio-emotional factors in effective leadership. Behavioral leadership theories laid foundation for later theories like; ‘Leadership Continuum’ Managerial Grid, Theory X & Y’ etc (Choi, et.al.2020; Zhang, et.al. 2021).

a. The Ohio State University Studies: The Ohio State Studies were series of research projects piloted in the 1940s and 1950s, aimed to ascertain the vital behaviors displayed by effective leaders and their bearing on followers and organizational outcomes. The studies acknowledged two key extents of leadership behavior i.e. initiating task structure and people consideration from employees’ perspective.¹⁷ In other words, leaders could exhibit high or low levels of both behaviors simultaneously. The task focus structure leaders facilitate subordinates in accomplishment of their tasks by setting vibrant goals, and instituting

¹⁶ Jon P. Howell, "Leadership Behavior and Organizational Effectiveness," *Administration in Mental Health* 7, no. 2 (1979): 120–132.

¹⁷ Chin-Ju Tsai, "Cross-Cultural Leadership Behavior Adjustment and Leader Effectiveness: A Framework and Implications," *International Studies of Management & Organization* 52, nos. 3–4 (2022): 205–225.

task-related processes and procedure. The task structures sets clear directions and expectations, stimulates efficiency in accentuating completion of the assigned task. Whereas, the ‘People Consideration’ refers to the extent that reflects leader’s concern for the socio-emotional necessities of their followers.¹⁸

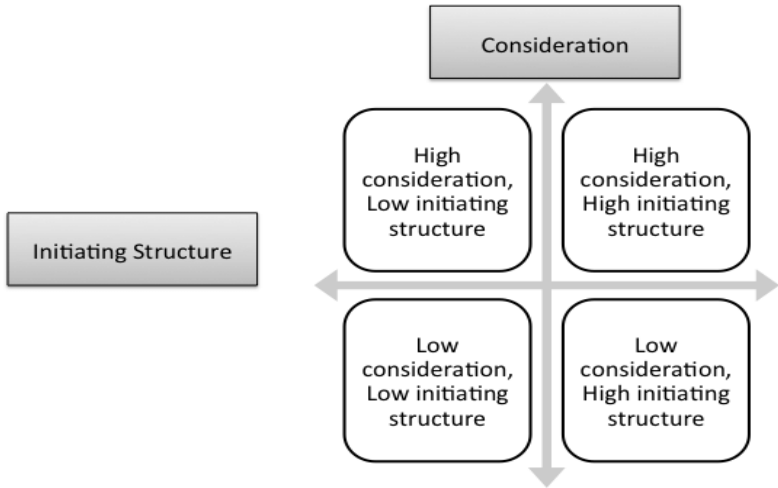


Figure 2.2: Dimensions of a Leader Behavior

Leadership literature suggest that the leaders who demonstrated high levels of both initiating structure and consideration were associated with more positive outcomes including; higher levels of job satisfaction, higher motivation, and better performance under leaders who displayed both task-oriented and people-oriented

¹⁸ Chou-Yu Tsai, Jason D. Marshall, Anwesha Choudhury, Andra Serban, Yoyo Tsung-Yu Hou, Malte F. Jung, Shelley D. Dionne, and Francis J. Yammarino, "Human-Robot Collaboration: A Multilevel and Integrated Leadership Framework," *The Leadership Quarterly* 33, no. 1 (2022): 101594.

behaviors.¹⁹ Leaders positioned high in this extent are reassuring, compassionate, welcoming, and focused to the well-being, comfort and contentment of their team members.²⁰ Such a leadership behavior empowers followers, generate mutual trust and respect amid the two. The Ohio State Studies were persuasive in modeling succeeding leadership theories, distancing from the trait theory, and contributed to literature with 'Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire'.²¹ The findings of Ohio State Leadership Studies have also been supported and reinforced by Michigan University's task-oriented vs. relationship-oriented behaviors model, Fiedler's Contingency Leadership Model and Blake & Mouton Managerial Grid.²²

- b. The Michigan University's Studies:** The University of Michigan Studies, also conducted in the 1940s, acknowledged two styles: employee-oriented and production-oriented. Both of the identified

¹⁹ Andrew A. Hanna, Troy A. Smith, Bradley L. Kirkman, and Ricky W. Griffin, "The Emergence of Emergent Leadership: A Comprehensive Framework and Directions for Future Research," *Journal of Management* 47, no. 1 (2021): 76–104.

²⁰ Hannes Zacher, Clara Kühner, Ian M. Katz, and Cort W. Rudolph, "Leadership and Environmental Sustainability: An Integrative Conceptual Model of Multilevel Antecedents and Consequences of Leader Green Behavior," *Group & Organization Management* 49, no. 2 (2024): 365–394.

²¹ Dongwon Choi, Minyoung Cheong, and Jihye Lee, "Leadership Influences? It Depends on Followers! The Relationship between the Ohio State Leader Behaviors, Employee Self-Regulatory Focus, and Task Performance," *Personnel Review* 49, no. 2 (2020): 491–515.

²² Marie S. Mitchell, Gabriela Rivera, and Linda Klebe Treviño, "Unethical Leadership: A Review, Analysis, and Research Agenda," *Personnel Psychology* 76, no. 2 (2023): 547–583.

leadership styles in these studies were identical to Oho Studies' initiating structure and consideration behaviors. Employee-oriented leaders center on constructing affirmative affiliations with their followers aiming to inculcate spirit-de-crop, nurturing trust and promoting mutual respect.²³ On the other hand the 'Production-oriented' leaders predominantly expect task completion, efficacy, efficiency, productivity and high performance from their underlings. This style of leadership results in greater job satisfaction, while production-oriented leadership results greater productivity but lower job satisfaction.^{24, 25} Therefore, the Studies advocated for finding a balance between task-oriented and people-oriented behaviors to be an effective leader.

- c. Leadership Continuum Theory:** Leadership continuum, originally suggested in 1958 by Tannenbaum and Schmidt²⁶, classifies various shades of contingencies lying between the two extremes i.e. most autocratic with no freedom of choice for the followers, and laissez faire on the other with full delegation of power to the followers for decision making and accomplishment drive.²⁷

²³ Marie S. Mitchell, Scott J. Reynolds, and Linda K. Treviño, "The Study of Behavioral Ethics within Organizations: A Special Issue Introduction," *Personnel Psychology* 73, no. 1 (2020): 5–17.

²⁴ George E. Gibbon, "The Impact of Authentic Leadership Behaviors on Employee Trust and Job Satisfaction in Multinational Enterprises in the Retail Sector in the United States" (PhD diss., Keiser University, 2023).

²⁵ Bahaudin G. Muftaba, "Task and Relationship Orientation of Aspiring Leaders: A Study of Male and Female Adults in Business Education," *Business Ethics and Leadership* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1–12.

²⁶ Robert Tannenbaum and W. Schmidt, "How to Choose a Leadership," *Harvard Business Review*, May–June 1973.

²⁷ Thaddeus Hunt and LaVonne Fedynich, "Leadership: Past, Present, and Future: An Evolution of an Idea," *Journal of Arts and Humanities* 8, no. 2 (2019): 22–26.

The broad range of the continuum suggests a choice of act related to the level of authority employed by the leader and to the zone of autonomy available between two limits of authoritarian and free rein. The left side of the Continuum, in below diagram, illustrates a style where total control is retained by a boss and the right side of the continuum expresses the gradual delegation of control to the subordinates at workplace. The suitability of leadership style is tangent upon factors such as, the type and nature of the task, expertise, maturity, capability of the team members, and the time and resource constraints.²⁸.

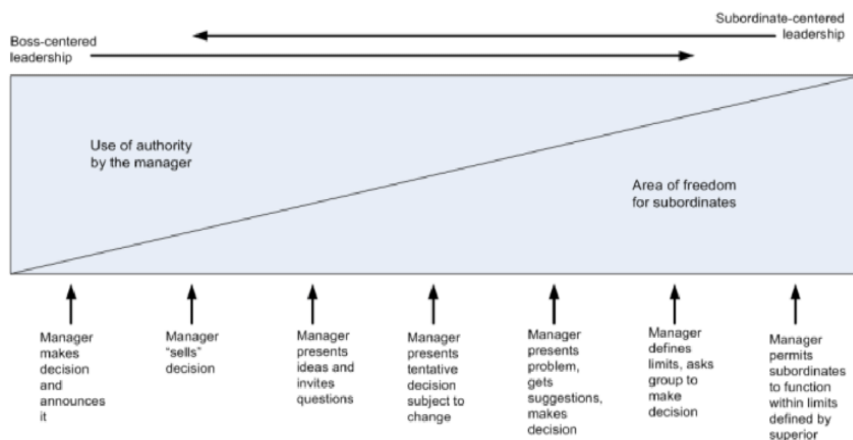


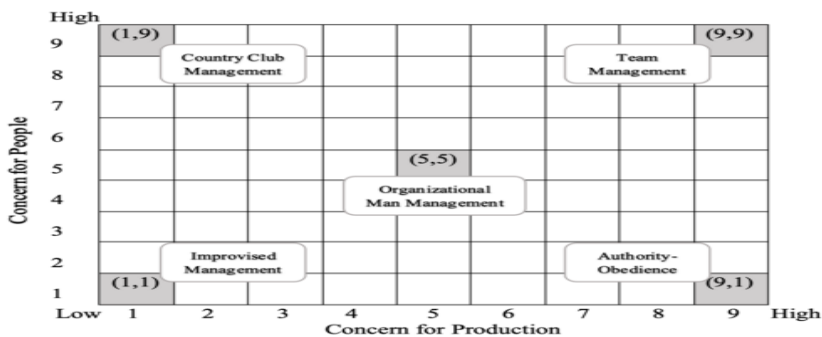
Figure 2.3: Leadership Continuum

The Leadership Continuum model has added in comprehending leadership behaviors and situational variation,

²⁸ . Berndt, Ralph, Claudia Fantapié Altobelli, and Matthias Sander. "Leadership in International Companies." In *International Marketing Management*, pp. 595-602. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2023.

however, the model is criticized because of its certain limitations. The model centers on the notions that the authority rests exclusively with the leader and readiness of subordinates, but does not contemplate other influential contextual factors; such as socio-organizational culture, business dynamics, and external environmental factors.

d. Blake and Mouton’s Managerial Grid: Drawing from the



findings of Ohio University studies, Michigan studies and the Leadership Continuum, Robert Blake and Jane Mouton introduced Managerial Grid model in 1964. The model describes two-dimensional behavior i.e. ‘concern for production and concern for people’ allowing five styles including; “Impoverished, Produce or Perish, Middle of the Road, Country Club, and Team management”

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Figure 2.4: Blake and Mouton’s Managerial Grid

²⁹ K. Vidyakala, "A Conceptual Study on Managerial Grid Approach," *Aut Aut Research Journal* 11 (2020): 117–122.

The Managerial Grid model and leadership continuum models offer valuable insights into leadership behavior, and their comparison and contrast suggests similarity of both in categorizes leadership style focusing a crossed two opposing dimensions. Concern for production or task orientation of Managerial Grid equates with the boss centered or autocratic approach of the Continuum. The other extreme of the Managerial Grid is “Concern for People” resembles in its contents and approach with human / people relations centered approach of the Continuum. Depending on the specific context and leadership challenges, either model can be useful in understanding and developing leadership effectiveness.

Environment Focus Leadership Theories: Environmental focus leadership theories identify that leader effectiveness is contingent upon the specific context, associations, and needs of the environment. The interface amid individuals and their environment is a vital feature of human life in general and at work place in particular. This interactive interfacing encompasses the reciprocal effect and interplay amid people and the contiguous physical, social, cultural, professional contexts. Since the environmental dynamic influence the compliant response needed by the contiguous surroundings therefore, these theories suggest

that effective leaders to judge the environmental dynamics, and fine-tune their behaviors accordingly.³⁰

Research on Behavioral theories succeeded in ascertaining that supportive behavior amid leadership and team facilitates behavioral integration and boosts work group performance. The traits and behavioral theories have suggested an influence on a leader's success but have ignored the playoff between the leader and the situation. This gap led to investigate the influence of situation on leaders-led relationship outcomes and sought the answer that why certain style and set of skills were suitable for one situation and unsuccessful in another.^{31, 32}

- a. Situational Leadership or Contingency Theories
- b. Transformational Leadership
- c. Authentic Leadership
- d. Servant Leadership

³⁰ James Hunt and Martin Fitzgerald, "Styles of Leadership," in *Leadership: Global and Regional Perspectives* (2018), 62–98.

³¹ Jennifer Lynn Turnnidge and J. Côté, "An Exploration of Coaches' Leadership Behaviours in Youth Sport" (PhD diss., Queen's University, Kingston, 2017).

³² Minjung Kim, Young Do Kim, and Hyun-Woo Lee, "It Is Time to Consider Athletes' Well-Being and Performance Satisfaction: The Roles of Authentic Leadership and Psychological Capital," *Sport Management Review* 23, no. 5 (2020): 964–977.

Situational Leadership or Contingency Theories: The contingency approach proposes there is no one-size-fits-all leadership style in all circumstances. Instead, it underscores that effective leadership is contingent upon numerous factors, including the characteristics or traits of the leader, the subordinates, and the explicit background or situation in which leadership is applied. Leaders must evaluate the situation and characteristics of their subordinates, and then adjust their leadership approach accordingly.³³ Some of the prominent contingency theories include:

- a. **Fiedler Model:** The first and all-inclusive leadership contingency model suggested that the effective group performance is contingent upon a fit amid leader's style and the degree of situational control.³⁴ Fiedler recognized two main leadership styles: task-oriented and relationship-oriented. The model submits that task-oriented style is most effective in highly promising or highly disapproving situations, while relationship-oriented leaders are most operative in situation.
- b. **Path-Goal Theory:** Proposed by Robert House, the theory recommends that leaders should engage in behaviors that help illuminate the goal path and eradicate impediments for their subordinates.³⁵ The theory pinpoints four styles, 'directive, supportive,

³³ Imran Shafique and Loo-See Beh, "Shifting Organizational Leadership Perspectives: An Overview of Leadership Theories," *Journal of Economic & Management Perspectives* 11, no. 4 (2017): 134–143.

³⁴ Fred E. Fiedler, "Contingency Theory of Leadership," in *Organizational Behavior*, vol. 1 (London: Routledge, 2015), 232–255.

³⁵ Robert J. House, "Path-Goal Theory of Leadership: Lessons, Legacy, and a Reformulated Theory," *The Leadership Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (1996): 323–352.

participative, and achievement-oriented’. The suitability of style depends on the followers’ characteristics and the task or situation.

c. Hersey and Blanchard’s Situational Theory: The theory, advanced by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard, centers on the follower’s readiness and suggests leaders to regulate their style fit to the maturity and know-how of the subordinates. The theory categorizes four styles: ‘telling, selling, participating, and delegating.’³⁶

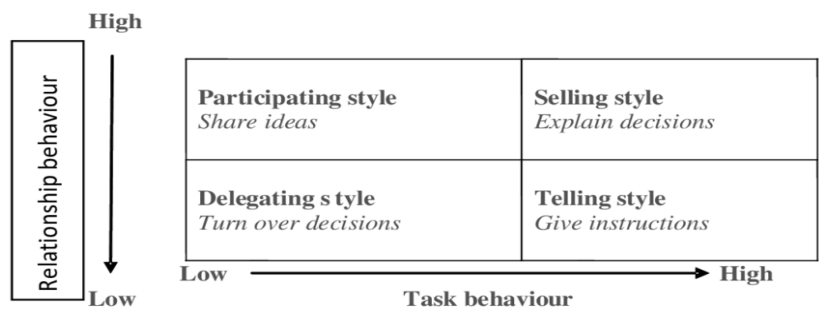


Figure 2.5: Styles of Leadership Task

Transformational Leadership: James MacGregor Burns defined transformational leadership as a process where leaders and their followers nurture each other to higher levels of morality and inspiration.³⁷ The theory suggests that a leader inquest of building high performance teams, works with followers beyond their self-interests, ascertains wanted transformation to take on challenges in

³⁶ Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard, "Great Ideas Revisited: Revisiting the Life-Cycle Theory of Leadership," *Training & Development* 50, no. 1 (1996): 42–47.

³⁷ James MacGregor Burns, *Transforming Leadership: A New Pursuit of Happiness* (New York: Grove Press, 2004).

prevailing organizational settings.³⁸ The character and integrity of leader is reciprocated by their follower's trust, esteem, and job satisfaction, loyalty, organizational commitment and citizenship behavior endowed with creativity and innovativeness.³⁹ Transformational leaders craft a vision, trial the status quo, empower and rally their teams to reach their full potential with their daring initiative exhibiting following four-dimensional factors:

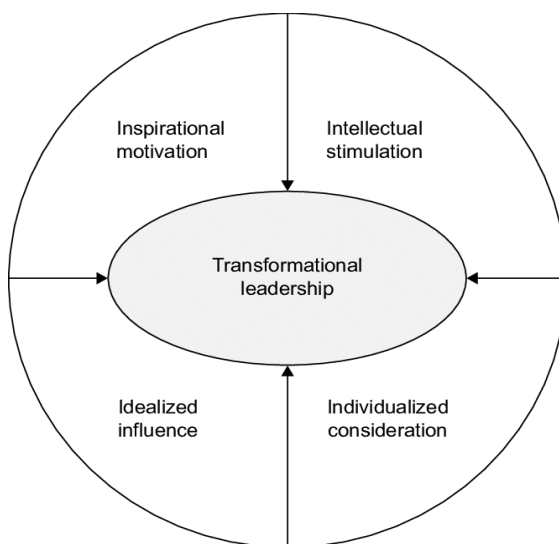


Figure 2.6: Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

³⁸ Taiichi Ohno, "Transformational Leadership in New Work Organizations," in *New Work, Transformational and Virtual Leadership: Lessons from COVID-19 and Other Crises* (2021), 67.

³⁹ Mohsin Shafi, Zheng Lei, Xiaoting Song, and Md Nazirul Islam Sarker, "The Effects of Transformational Leadership on Employee Creativity: Moderating Role of Intrinsic Motivation," *Asia Pacific Management Review* 25, no. 3 (2020): 166–176.

Authentic Leadership: Authenticity denotes truthfulness to oneself irrespective of the pressure or cost, stay steadfast in aligning ideals, and actions.⁴⁰ Authentic leadership theory signifies the genuine, candid and transparent leadership that is not only true to them rather their values help in build trust, promotes open communication thereby structuring positive workplace environment.^{41, 42} Some of the salient points defining authentic leadership are:

- a. The approach emphasizes genuineness, transparency, self-awareness and self-truthful to their values. Such leadership endowed integrity, unswerving reliability and consistency of character nurtures trust and credibility among their followers.
- b. Authentic leaders are aware of their strengths, weaknesses, values, and beliefs, and their self-awareness permits them with authenticity and to align their actions with their core values.
- c. Transparent and open in their communication, admit mistakes, and share candid feedback.
- d. Create reassuring and empathetic work place environment where leaders listen keenly, value to the concerns of their followers and followers freely express their opinions and sentiments.

⁴⁰ William L. Gardner and Kelly Davis McCauley, "The Gaslighting of Authentic Leadership Revisited," *Leadership* 18, no. 6 (2022): 832–840.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Grégoire Bosselut, Laure Guibert, Sarah Meyer, Séverine Chevalier, and Evelyne Fouquereau, "Role of Psychological Ownership and Authenticity Strength in the Relationship between Authentic Leadership and Sport Team Performance: A Multilevel Analysis," *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 56 (2021): 101965.

- e. Purpose driven consistent and resilient leader stimulates and encourages their followers to overpower challenges to their target goals.

Servant Leadership: Robert K. Greenleaf coined this term ‘Servant leader’ in 1970 and conferred the position of leadership upon those who were servant by nature, feel responsible towards underprivileged, help others by leading them.⁴³ Theory of Servant leader argues that the leaders are not the boss but servants of their people with wholehearted devotion to their followers’ needs and followers reciprocate through augmented collaboration, profound engagement, and better performance. Generally it is assumed that traditional leadership amasses power with one at the “top of the pyramid”, but servant-leader keeps others at first priority, helps in their development and empowers their followers through power sharing. Larry Spears contributed in furthering the concept of servant leader and suggested ten features of servant leaders that include; “listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and building community”⁴⁴. Servant leadership inverts the norm, instead of seeking service from people; serve the people which

⁴³ Robert K. Greenleaf, *What Is Servant Leadership?* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1970).

⁴⁴ . Spears, L. C., D. Dierendonck, and K. Patterson. *Servant leadership*. 2010.

in turn energize reciprocal support in exchange of care thereby augmenting own psychological wellbeing.⁴⁵, ⁴⁶

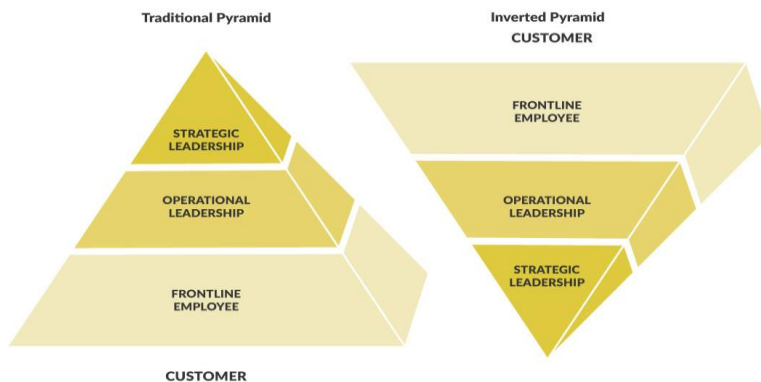


Figure 2.7: Leadership Pyramid

Evolving Labour Rights Law

The research examined the literature and observed that labor rights were evolved over time in response to regulatory and societal changes concerning workers and employer's dynamics. The examination of secondary sources revealed that evolving recognition and protection of labour rights were influenced by the socio- economic and political

⁴⁵ Karatepe, Osman M., Anastasia Ozturk, and Taegoo Terry Kim. "Servant leadership, organisational trust, and bank employee outcomes." *The Service Industries Journal* 39, no. 2 (2019): 86-108.

⁴⁶ . Franco, Mário, and Augusto Antunes. "Understanding servant leadership dimensions: Theoretical and empirical extensions in the Portuguese context." *Nankai Business Review International* 11, no. 3 (2020): 345-369.

context of labor movements of 19th and 19th centuries.⁴⁷ The Industrial Revolution, of 18th century, kick started mass migration of workers from rural to urban factories sites and rise of industrial capitalism.⁴⁸ This period observed extensive mistreatment of workers, including child labor, long working hours, unsafe working conditions, and low wages. In reaction to these challenges, labor movements gained impetus and thriving drive for healthier working environments and labor rights. Frequent strikes of workers gave weight to the collective bargaining of trade unions.

Over time, labor legislation expanded basic labor rights labor encompassing array of concerns such as fair wages, rational working hours, work safety, safeguard against discrimination, and the right to collective bargaining. Labor rights challenged customary concepts of leadership and highlighted need for addressing workers' rights and well-being in organizational contexts. Labor rights law challenged customary models of leadership and positively influenced leadership theories to integrate values of human dignity, social justice, equity, empowerment, authenticity and ethical responsibility. The labor rights movement has stimulated for a more humanistic perspective of leadership treating employees with dignity, well-being, and non-

⁴⁷ David Brody, *Labor Embattled: History, Power, Rights*, vol. 265 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005).

⁴⁸ Zaragosa Vargas, "Labor Rights Are Civil Rights: Mexican American Workers in Twentieth-Century America," in *Labor Rights Are Civil Rights* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

discriminatory adherence to workers’ rights,⁴⁹ The labor rights movement struggle led to the integration of ethical leadership models that valued honesty, equality, and accountability towards employees, societies, and the environment. The timeline underlining key points in the enactment of labor rights laws are:

Table-1: Labor Rights Laws Enactment

Year	Law
1802	The Factory Act in the United Kingdom restricts the working hours of women and children in textile mills and introduce factory inspectors. ⁵⁰
1911	The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York City leads to public outrage and prompts the passage of workplace safety regulations in the United States. ⁵¹
1919	The International Labor Organization (ILO) is founded as a specialized agency of the United Nations to promote labor rights and set international labor standards. ⁵²
1948	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is adopted by the United Nations, recognizing the right to work, fair wages, and safe working conditions. ⁵³
1970	The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) is enacted in the United States, establishing standards for workplace safety and health. ⁵⁴
1998	The International Labor Organization adopts the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, affirming the importance of core labor standards ⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Rosidi Ruslan, "COVID-19 Fulfilling Workers' Economic Rights Positive," *Journal of Morality and Legal Culture* 1, no. 2 (2020): 113–121.

⁵¹ Brenda Lange, *The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire* (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2009).

⁵² Deborah Barros Leal Farias, "Multiple Hierarchies within the ‘Civilized’ World: Country Ranking and Regional Power in the International Labour Organization (1919–1922)," *European Journal of International Relations* 30, no. 2 (2024): 333–358.

⁵³ Glenn Hughes, *Inherent Human Dignity: A Philosophical Meditation* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2025).

⁵⁴ David Rosner and Gerald Markowitz, "A Short History of Occupational Safety and Health in the United States," *American Journal of Public Health* 110, no. 5 (2020): 622–628.

⁵⁵ David Weissbrodt and Matthew Mason, "Compliance of the United States with International Labor Law," *Minnesota Law Review* 98 (2013): 1842.

2011	The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights are endorsed, outlining the responsibility of businesses to respect human rights, including labor rights. ⁵⁶
2021	Various countries continue to enact and update labor laws to address emerging challenges, such as remote work, gig economy, and gender pay gaps. ⁵⁷

Findings

Deep insight in to the literature seeking answers to the relevancy of evolving labour rights with evolutionary perspective of the leadership, contrast and commonalities in the discourse of leadership theoretical underpinnings are analyzed in this part of the paper.

Research contends that evolution of Labour rights laws played a vital role in evolving leadership theories with special reference to; working hours, hygienic workplace environment, health and social safety provisions, empowering workers and ensuring fair treatment at workplace. The worker’s awareness of their rights enabled them to proclaim for humanized work environment. Here are some key aspects of the role of labour rights awareness:

- a. Cognizance of labour rights helped identify and report such violations, inviting legal action against the defaulters involved. This awareness helped to to expose and prevent abusive practices such as child labor, bondage or labor in captivity, and unfair wages.

⁵⁶ Janne Mende, "The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011)," in *Sources of the History of Human Rights* (2018).
⁵⁷ Riya Shah, "COVID-19 & Labour Laws: An Analysis," *International Journal of Law, Management & Humanities* 4, no. 6 (2021): 483.

- b. Labour rights reassured workers to unify and form trade unions to serve as collective voices for workers, negotiating platform for judicious working hours, humanly sustained working conditions, improved wages and shared benefits.
- c. The labor right laws brought attention to issues like organizational justice and workplace equity thereby promoting inclusive leadership approach following fair and equal treatment for all employees without any discrimination on social, religious, ethnic, colour and belief.
- d. Recognition of employees' wellbeing and work-life balance, supportive work environment in evolving leadership theories are credited to long struggle of labor rights movements.

Conclusion

The study concludes that democratization of the world; development of labor rights law leadership theories are three intersected notions that evolved over the years. Democratization encouraged rule of law, political participation, guarding human rights, fairness and transparency in dealing, and accountability of leaders. Democratization of socio-cultural environment helped creation of enabling workplace environment in organizational settings allowing employees rights and their right for participation in decision-making processes. Regularization of workplace ensured transformation of hygienic workplaces, fair wages, and overcoming inequalities.

The evolutionary perspective of leadership theories and practices discussed in the paper was also influenced by democratization processes and labor laws enacted during the period. The workplace democratization promoted a culture of inclusivity, collaboration, and shared responsibility in organization. The evolving workplace democratization influenced leaders to nurture involved, motivated, productive and engaged workforce.
