

# Political Leadership Strategies: Recognition-Resonance-Relevance in the Digitalized Era of Management

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**Abstract**—*The notion of leadership is as old as mankind. The relevance and reality of leadership has been transformed into multifaceted leadership strategies for today's organizations. The context and content of leadership is the key factor for organizational excellence. The guiding thoughts of mission and vision are the prima facie of new millennium leadership connoted as political leadership. Harnessing leadership for common good and better state of affairs in our society and therefore it is imperative to study leadership and its generality through waves of political leadership. In this paper, delineation is done as to what are the underlying rudiments of political leadership. With a brief introduction of the concept of political leadership, the paper throws light on ingredients of political leadership, framework of political leadership, dynamics of x, y, z factors for credible political leadership. The paper concludes with a discussion on the future prospect of political leadership in the days to come. The overall approach of the study is theoretical and coverage attempts to reach the relevance of political leadership in the present digitalized era of management.*

**Keywords:** *leadership, political, leader, groups, power.*

## **Introduction**

Leadership is a complex process by which an individual influences others to achieve a mission, task or objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Leadership makes people want to achieve elevated goals while on the other hand, bosses tell people to accomplish a task or objective. What makes a person want to follow a leader? People want to be guided by those they express their respect and who possess a clear sense of direction. To gain respect leaders must be ethical (Brown & Trevino, 2006). A sense of direction is achieved by conveying a strong futuristic vision. A respected leader concentrates on what is *[be]* (beliefs and character), what he *knows* (job, tasks, human nature), and what he *does* (implement, motivate, provide direction).

## **The Quotient of Political Leadership**

Leadership is most crucial for organizational operations. It exists every sphere of human life and activities – in small organizations and in large ones, in businesses and in churches, in trade unions and in charitable bodies, in tribes and in universities. The distinctive features of the 21<sup>st</sup> century organizations are to cope up with unavoidable uncertainties with the need for the torch bearer in the nomenclature of 'leader' is highly aspired. A true leader is a visionary individual with the potential to design a competitive landscape towards value creation and sustenance of the business houses in the long run. The emergence and significance of leadership date back to ancient days of war and conquest. Over time leadership evolved to accomplish goals. Going by the words of Peter F. Drucker, "Management is doing things right, Leadership is doing the right things", one can well say that a true manager is always born from a true leader, whether be sailing along or across the tide. It can be widely acclaimed that little effort has gone in understanding why leadership has transformed into a political show case where leaders are coined in terms of particular political parties, ruling groups, coalitions, administrations, terrorist groups, independence movements, protest groups. Trying to understand leadership credibility requires an understanding of leadership (Greenstein, 1969). The concept of credibility is defined in terms of the three things trust, honesty and competence. It is mostly witnessed among the politicians that these credible characteristics are the most desirable component to become a high credibility leader and that is in order to be believed by the masses. Therefore only if a leader is being believed by the public, he or she successfully attains the political goals supported by pillars of strong public belief in the democratic nations across the globe. Among various aspects of leadership, political leadership in particular in the nation-state occupies a prominent position. Within each nation, political

leadership can command and reach out widely and extensively. In reality there is no generally accepted definition of the concept of political leadership. However political leadership is essentially a phenomenon of power (Cohen, 1972). It is power because it consists of the ability of one or few who at the top to make others to do number of things for the good of mankind. The implication of political leadership can be visualized because various political processes and peace processes are driven by elite group of individual with a relatively small group of people are responsible for arriving at final decisions and implementing policy. Moreover many violent societies are prone to political leaders who are willing to manipulate a sensitive situation and actively propounds against peaceful settlement of conflict and many other variables are dependent on political leadership in the transformation of a conflict (Koslin & . Moos ,1951).

### Examining Ingredients of Political Leadership

The concern of political leadership is quite pertinent in the present day organisations. The initiative of learning about leadership can help us gain access to knowledge about the processes occurring within political groups and their impact on the resulting decisions. Some have opined that political leadership involves persuasion in the service of setting an agenda, building networks and accomplishing things (Hermann, 1986). In a broader sense it can be delineated that leadership is more than leaders comprising of a set of ingredients, each of which is significant to understanding what is happening at any point of time. Leaders and constituents work together in a particular context which can facilitate or create hindrances to the leaders in the accomplishment of goals and cultivation of relationships between the leader and those led. Research reveals that the magnitude of constituents selecting different types of leaders can be projected in the given in the comparative Table: 1.

**Table 1: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LEADERSHIP CONSTITUENTS**

Comparative Analysis of Magnitude of the Leadership Constituents		
<i>Magnitude of Constituents selecting different type of Leaders</i>	More in times of crisis	Less frequent in times of peace
	More absolute in democratic system	Less relevant in authoritarian political system
	Plenty Opportunity exists during boom period	Meager possibility exists during recession
	Quite prevalent during revolutionary movements	Not much prevalent during institutional change
	More required when developing a vision is critical	Not much required when maintaining stability
	Democratic system results responsive leaders	Hierarchical & Authoritarian system results less responsive leaders

The approach of contingency theory of leadership emphasizes on the similarity between what the like is like, what relevant constituencies want, what the setting calls for and the nature of the relationship existing between leader and led resulting accomplishment of leadership. If the likeness is good all move in concert and much can be done in accomplishing specific goals. On the contrary if the likeness is not so good the leader becomes less responsive to relevant constituents or the context changes.

### Framework of Political Leadership

In an effective leadership situation the leader is an advocate, whose leadership style is an alliance and building. In an effective leadership situation the leader is a hustler, whose manipulative leadership style is the striking feature of political leadership. Political leaders clarify what they want and what they can get; they assess the distribution of power and interests; they build linkages to other stakeholders; takes the shelter of persuasion process, utilizes negotiation and coercion mechanism as per the demand of the situation and environment. The prominent components of the political framework of leadership can elucidated in the given Table: 2.

**Table 2: NINE NECESSARY CONSTITUENTS OF POLITICAL FRAMEWORK OF LEADERSHIP**

<i>Components of Political Framework of Leadership</i>	<i>Characteristic Phenomenon</i>
Exercising and Abusing of Political Power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political power and sensitivities influences use of power</li> <li>• Leader uses newfound political power resulting uphold of peace</li> <li>• Failure in the acknowledgement of sensitivities of power suggests change towards pragmatism in principle only &amp; not in practice</li> </ul>
Leading One's Own Party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership skills are required more within parties than between parties</li> <li>• Difficulty in finding balance between executive leadership and collective leadership</li> </ul>
Distributing Constituents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concept of 'elastic-band leadership' defines the vital part of dealing with leadership constituent</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stretching leadership constituents in the interest of peace is highly desirable</li> <li>• Dislocation leadership and its constituents may result to leaving leadership without mandate</li> </ul>
Relating to Other Party Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders are acknowledged that political leadership snatches one leader from another resulting downfall</li> <li>• Dealing with other party leaders happens to be difficult assignment</li> <li>• Relationship building opportunities and peer-learning sessions between the leaders suffers from lack of coherence immediately after an agreement has been reached</li> </ul>
Functioning with Civil Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building relationship between top bureaucrats and political leadership is important</li> <li>• The notion of functioning of civil servants under political leadership at times confronts the situation where the civil service servants would not want or relinquish the control over certain departments</li> </ul>
Forthcoming Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possibilities of promoting political inter-group tensions by political leadership challenges in the election phases</li> <li>• Sometimes it is expected that the threat of an election can force the leadership to take a less pacifying approach</li> </ul>
Realignment of Party Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly majority of political parties are constituted with the policies and ideals based on conflict disregarding social and economic issues</li> <li>• The role of the leadership vests on preparing possible agenda on realignment of party politics in the post violent phases.</li> </ul>
Handling with Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political change involves risks</li> <li>• Leaders may disagree with the changes undertaken by others</li> <li>• Change is perhaps the most crucial issue in political leadership</li> </ul>
Process Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process Management is an essential element</li> <li>• It ensures unforgotten responsibilities, challenges and relationships</li> <li>• At times the common consensus in form of lack of 'process management' at leadership level during crises becomes the most talked about subject</li> </ul>

Analysis of framework of political leadership faces contradiction and conflicts. A failure to manage views of constituents if the most vital issue and attention need to given to ensure that previous failings are not repeated which may hold the key to successful implementation of the agreements made in the future (Hermann & Charles, 1995).

### **The Dynamics of X, Y, and Z Factor for Credible Political Leadership**

A systematic and distinguishing outline can be drawn between X, Y, and Z factors that drive the social construction of credibility in political leadership. The X, Y, and Z factors speak about appeal, persuasion and competency and in other words speaks about images, words and deeds.

**X Factor:** The concept of X factor revolves around on the notion of performing arts mostly concentrated in music, dance or nay true talent phenomenon. Realistically X factor commonly represents anything that goes beyond mere performance skill. It also signifies the true talent that not only excels at singing or dancing or any other performing expertise characterised by an added dimension and that special component creates a unique identity of an individual from others. The physical attributes of politicians were much talked of. To connect such physical attribute all too quickly into connotations like 'beauty-versus-nerd' or 'beauty-versus-beast' are not irrelevant notions for politicians. Studies reveal that beauty helps to promote and promulgate the acceptability and success in the competitive political platform. Empirical studies on the relation between political success and good looks display a nuanced picture of the politicians' visual charisma. The classical Greek etymology of charisma entails to a person being gifted with a particular grace. A charismatic person has the gift of bringing salvation and bestows it on people around him. Perception politics encourages members of political audience to form intuitive impressions of politicians based on visuals representation, hairdo, dress, body posture, facial expression, hand gestures subject to meticulous attention (Kellerman, 2010). The upcoming new trend of exploiting every opportunity and innovation in visual representation by the political leaders acts as a projector of building a strong and powerful image of themselves.

**The Y Factor:** The power of persuasion can be visualized by way of the dramaturgical approach, an amalgamation of sensitivity and ethics. Political performance rooted in unambiguous values and qualities could be justified on ethical ground and simultaneously be preferable from a rhetorical and dramaturgical point of view also. According to classical Aristotelian rhetoric, persuasion can be clarified in three ways: by way of logos, ethos and pathos. All three are very much pertinent for politicians who mean to persuade people with words and gestures to match. Politicians who follow the path of logos undertake to convince their audience with evidence based arguments and with conclusions being validated by logic. On the contrary politicians who use pathos as a persuasion tactic try to touch their spectators at an emotional level complemented with reminiscent examples,

analogies and by displaying their own passions. Down the line the politicians who choose ethos exploits their own person and personality as a persuasion strategy. The Y factor tends to focus more on the power of speech acts than on the power of appearances. In analyzing political leadership the both form and content is to be visualized both from outside and inside adding Y factor of persuasion to the X factor of appeal.

The Z factor: The importance of competence is the most vital component which leader should possess. Political leaders must be honest, inspiring, forward looking and above all competent. Studies suggest that the top three desirable qualities of a political leader is trustworthiness, honesty and again competence. Z Factor- the power of 'savoir faire' is coined with ability and competence to execute the job. Modesty, judgment, tolerance and cosmopolitanism and the crucial qualities and the politicians who possess such virtues would clearly soar above ordinary. The political leaders cannot function without deeply felt convictions as long as these three factors do not gain upper hand. Moreover political leaders cannot do without passion as long as it does not prevail over an equally indispensable sense of reality.

### **Interlinking Social Responsibility & Political Leadership**

Amidst implication of globalization on present day organizations, the decoupling of organisational practices with complex mechanism the impact of leadership on responsible business practices is one of the prime agenda of the present day business houses. Leadership as a cross cultural phenomenon confronts the challenges of globalization has an inclination towards building an understanding with business ethics and following the philosophy of Social Responsibility (SR). In a globalised world the analysis of 'SR oriented political leadership' can be experienced in terms of successful and peaceful forms of coordination with a promising approach and benefiting outcomes (Ciulla, 2005). The political conception must not be confused with the idea of politics as power struggle. In leadership research 'political' primarily denotes the idea of power struggle that extracts from the efforts of different groups to enforce their interests. To determine the scope of responsibility and to examine the possibilities for a proactive political engagement of business leaders a clear cut understanding of different rationalities, heterogeneous norms and cultural values need to be identified. The political concept of leadership responsibility translates into the idea of responsible leadership as political leadership in deliberative democracy emphasizing the prominence of procedural practice and the idea of the leader's political embeddedness in civil dialogue (Diermeier, 2006). Responsible leadership implies first of all to analyze the factual conditions and possible consequences. With the collection of facts the remaining unsolved moral questions and conflicts can be resolved by referring to existing rules and regulations. Subsequently, responsible leadership means also to facilitate the implementation of decisions reached. This involves justifying the decision within the organization, being a role model in supporting the decision and initiating the processes necessary for the implementation. The very concept rests on the leader's ability to comprehend the increased complexities of a globalized environment, which require the acknowledgement and involvement of different rationalities in a communicative manner. The suggested amendments to the constitutive elements of leadership are reflected in its politicization. The leader as the nexus of evolving leadership tasks and organizational goals brings together the participants of diverse interest groups. The very role of the leader serves as a torch bearer in campaigning for a deliberative approach to problem solving, and thereby contributing to the ethics and efficiency of corporate actions, but also providing opportunities for mutual beneficial relationships, innovation, and profit in the long run (Doh & Stumpf, 2005).

### **The Future Prospect of Political Leadership – An Overview**

The measurement of leadership in the political context can be improvised on the platform of precise assessment and quantification. Leader's goals and social demands, the weight of structures and the support provided by these structures to the leaders with a psychological attributes all constitute the dimensions of leadership. However a close examination of the present state of affairs of political leadership the future life-line of political leadership can be portrayed through a Two-Fold approach of discovering potential variables for a prospective political leadership future is Illustrated in Figure 1

The measurement of leadership can be improved and substantial progress can be achieved when at least some of the structural resources that are at the disposal of the leaders can be evaluated. Better information coupled with better examination and better performance can excel the political leadership dimensions and consequently the characteristics of leaders will become gradually better known. Better assessment will spur towards further refinements and progress in the understanding of political leadership itself (Hermann, 2003).

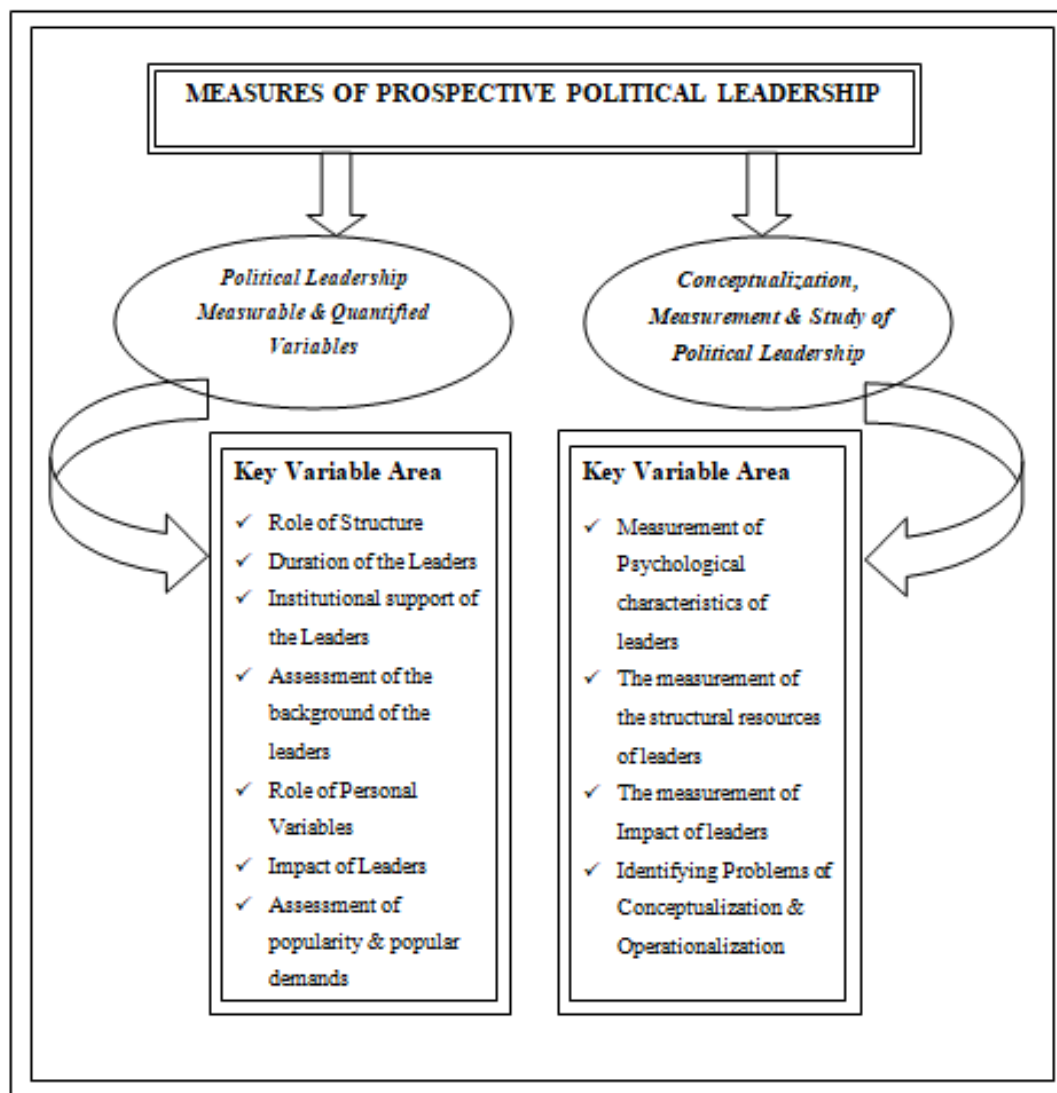


Figure 1

### The Concluding Note

In the last few decades the views and position of political leadership have begun to change. The changing scenario of political leadership is consequence of the social and economic development in the contemporary world. Unlike in the past the pace, the face, and the race of political leadership is gradually making a positive, constructive, concrete makeover. Prominently it can be witnessed in global hemisphere that the leadership has come to be concerned principally with the development of social and economic conditions. Almost certainly the prime role of political leaders has gone into the waves of transformation of attitudes towards executing the leadership role which entails continuous positive guidance and direction towards masses belonging to the society ( Jean, 1987). Efforts have therefore to be initiated to ensure that political leaders do fulfill this positive role. It is well-known that twentieth century leaders good or evil have extended fruit finding output for the improvement and long term development of the society. Thus institutions surrounding the political leader must be based on the foundation about the trust in the leader, trust in the leader's willingness to act as a leader, and trust in the leader's competence to act in this manner. Thus a detailed study of the impact of political leaders and the characteristics of political leadership is directly and intricately linked to the attempt for rejuvenation of political leadership agenda in the generations to come.

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