Theoretical Underpinnings of Leadership: A Review Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The literature study and discussion on leadership has been extensive and continuously evolving for centuries. Scholars with studies centrally focused on leadership have failed to define leadership universally, instead have bent the term to match their research objectives. A reference chain method is followed to collect highly influential works on the subject along with previous literature reviews that trace the historical development of the subject. The paper dwells on the contemporary relevance of leadership literature and attempts to outline a universal meaning of leadership distinguishing the concept with the synonyms. The paper critically synthesises the diverse concepts in leadership styles, behaviours and approaches and examines an interesting emerging dynamic of leadership focused on the dark traits.

KEYWORDS: dark triad; effective leadership; leadership; leadership style; leadership theory;

1.   INTRODUCTION:

The beginning of the study of 'leadership' traces back to the early 18th century and the discussion since has been extensive, debated and evolving through the generations. Many scholars have probed the matter contributing to new theories or criticisms and have produced experiment-based evidence to support or explain their purport.

However, the universal definition of the subject is yet shrouded with ambiguities, leaving room for further development. 'Leadership' remains tainted as an umbrella term that include anything and everything, varying constantly based on the context of use or the research objectives. Furthermore, the diverse expansion of the theory has spiralled into complex dimensions, confusing the term with the synonyms, and obliterating the distinction of its spirit and significance.(Raffo & Clark, 2018) reports that more than 60% of the studies with their basic theme revolving around the very subject failed to define leadership. Hence, it is safe to say that the universal definition of leadership to date remains undiscovered.

This paper intends to synthesise the literature on leadership, investigate the root cause of the persisting gaps in the literature and unite the key findings under the umbrella to explain its relevance in the present times. The paper also examines the newly emerging dimension of 'the dark side' of leadership and how it impacts a leader's personality.

1.1   Review Method & Theoretical Underpinnings

The literature has been reviewed by collecting papers and critically examining the works of various scholars in the past. Given the extensive nature of the subject, the keywords "Leadership"; "Leadership theories"; and "Leadership styles" were used along with the reference chain method to collect highly influential and relevant works in the field. Various literature reviews conducted in the past with different

perspectives were critically studied to conclude. The summary of the theoretical underpinnings is shown in **Table 1**.

2. LEADERSHIP: DEFINITIONS AND MEANING.

The English Oxford Dictionary traces back the term 'Leadership' to 1821as the state or position being a leader or action of leading or commanding a group, organisation or country. This enabled a simple understanding of leadership as a position of power or an identity that shoulders responsibilities and take actions for its fulfilment.

(Rost, 1993) defines leadership in the paper (p.99)—*"Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and their collaborators who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes"* the definition is widely used for its emphasis on the aim of leadership of inducing changes and achievement through collaborative relationship.

The studies (Dickson, 2023; ; Faruqi, 2024; Abid Malik & Azmat, 2019; Raffo & Clark, 2018; Badshah, 2012) have cumulated various definitions of leadership provided by scholars who explained leadership as—a process of motivation, ability to influence, a set of behaviours or application of power, all directed towards the effective accomplishment of a task or achievement of a common goal.

(Faruqi, 2024) proposed a new leadership definition*: "Leadership is the process of interactive influence that occurs when, in a given context, some people accept someone as their leader to achieve common goals."* This provides power to the acceptance and willingness of the followers to be influenced and leaves room for various contexts of leadership application.

According to (Dickson, 2023), *"Leadership inspires followers to work together for a common goal, guiding the group towards greater cohesiveness and effectiveness. Leadership depends on influence, the process by which people are inspired to work towards collective goals voluntarily through intrinsic motivation."* The definition impressed leadership as an intrinsic quality contingent on the ability of inspiring, motivating and influencing followers towards a group goal achievement.

(Abid MALIK & Azmat, 2019), p.25 has defined: *"Leadership is a process in which a person or persons inspire(s) and motivate(s) the people to meet the shared goals or objectives which may be changed or added as per the needs and challenges. Leadership connects with the people beyond superficial or formal level, and creates a bond that motivates them to do things rather than forcing them."* The definition is along the same lines as (Dickson, 2023) emphasises the human factor in leadership aiming to influence or inspire actions among people or groups towards a common goal without force.

(Raffo & Clark, 2018) reported the results of their experiments that concluded that each individual perceives the meaning of leadership differently based on their experiences, intellectual reflections and areas of value.

Many more scholars have attempted to define leadership (as shown in **Table 2**) with different focus in mind. The delineation revolves around the skills of a person as a leader, some action-centric approaches describe leadership as behaviour and actions, while others use performance-centric analysis to validate the effectiveness of goal achievement. According to the critical reviews, more than 1500 definitions exist for leadership with no specific that is universally applicable, making the literature all the more extensive and complex to decipher.

The positional or hierarchical perspective of leadership has limited its understanding and relevance in the present times (Raffo & Clark, 2018). The review of (Abid Malik & Azmat, 2019) acknowledge that the evolution of the concept into diverse fields and purposes has led to contradictions in definitions itself, and

often confusions with the concepts that branched out of this theory (Benmira & Agboola, 2021; Nienaber, 2010). However, to generalise the matters, the majority of the leadership definitions (also according to Table 2) commonly conclude an understanding of the goal-driven 'Influence' on subordinates. The ultimate judgement criteria for success or failure of leadership in any context comes down to the performance and followers' satisfaction.

Hence, it can be collectively and universally agreed upon that leadership as a process, style, behaviour, trait or performance aims at 'Influence' and 'goal achievement'. Based on the generalised understanding, it can be concluded that Leadership is an influence on other people, individual or groups aimed at achieving desired goals. It is a psychological force exercised to ensure maximum human satisfaction in and on accomplishing a task.

Table 2: Other Leadership Definitions	
Author	**Definitions**
Keith Davis	"Leadership is the process of encouraging and helping others to work enthusiastically toward objectives."
C.I. Bernard	"Leadership is the quality of behaviour of the individuals whereby they guide people or their activities in organized efforts."
Koontz and O'Donnell	"Leadership is the process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly towards the achievement of group goals."
Bernard Keys and Thomas	"Leadership is the process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically towards achieving objectives."
John Maxwell	"Leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less."
Northouse	"Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."
R. W. Griffin	"Leadership can be defined as the ability to influence others."
Source: https://expertpreviews.com/definitions-of-leadership-by-different-authors-17-definitions-of-leadership/#google_vignette	

2.1 Leadership and Leader

(Hunt et al., 2018) defines leadership as the behaviour set exhibited by a leader. Although the definitions of leadership revolve around the characteristics and behaviour of the leader, it is important to distinguish the two from each other. Being a leader is associated with a task of importance, requiring to make decisions to steer the efforts of those under command towards a common objective. A leader has a formal position of power or implied authority over other people, groups, organisations or countries. Whereas, leadership for performance does not require formal power, authority or designation. It can be expressed as a personality variable or seen as human characteristics or behaviour.

'Leadership' have a symbiotic relationship with a 'Leader' where the former is an observable behaviour that the latter embodies for goal achievement. To put it simply, Leadership is a process or characteristic that includes all the intangibles required for effective performance. Leader on the other hand is a designation, a formal name assigned to a person who assumes the position of responsibility, of whom effective leadership is expected.

(Abid Malik & Azmat, 2019) after a critical review of several definitions and aspects of the subject proposed a definition of leader (p.24)— *"A leader is a person who is able to inspire the human resources. He/She not only meets the current targets and objectives, but also modifies the existing ones and/or creates the new ones according to the newly emerging challenges. A leader focuses on building or developing the*

organization, group or nation than oneself or merely running it." The definition includes the spirit of the term leader in appropriately broad sense that aligns with the fundamentals of leadership.

2.2 Leadership and Synonyms

It is because of 'Everything Under an Umbrella' phenomenon that the term 'leadership' is often mistaken or interchangeably used with management, and hence the word 'leader' is often confused with managers, supervisors, heads, bosses or a coach. The fundamental difference lies in the view of performance of the job; withing or beyond the set of defined limitations.

Although the terms leadership and management include similar job descriptions of directing, organising and controlling, management is limited to the management of people, tasks and groups towards a definitive objective subject to deadlines. Leadership is a broader term that includes grooming and growth of subordinates' potential, understanding the vision behind the goal and assuming a responsibility to lay down foundations for future development.

(Nienaber, 2010) argues that management and leadership for all intents and purposes are the same despite having evolved from different roots. The relationship between the two is complementary to each other which cannot be separated in practice (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). On a contrary, leadership according to (Faruqi, 2024) is a long-term scheme with fewer limitations compared to management with the relatively limited scope of operation and vision. Although the distinction between their roles indeed hangs threadbare, scholars neither deny the existence of differences nor support the premise that them being all the same.

To distinguish leader among the other synonyms, (Abid Malik & Azmat, 2019) highlights that assuming the power position to lead does not make a person a leader. A boss, supervisor, or manager simply performs a set of tasks and displays a set of behaviours to get the job done. They neither assume responsibility for the success, failure or satisfaction of their subordinate nor concern themselves with their growth. Their focus is fixed on self-fulfilment and accomplishing the goals of the organisation. On the contrary, a leader is a person who inspires and motivates growth behaviour and assumes the twin role of mentor and manager, not limited to organisational goal achievement. (Faruqi, 2024) distinguish managers as people required to run the organization from leaders who help uplift the organisation to new heights.

Among various arguments on the subject of similarities or differences, (Silva, 2014) sheds light upon the difference in the notions of leadership and leaders in academia and the real world. Although the academic theories disregard the impression of the person in charge or a head is a 'leader', circumstantially it gives the person all the power to act, command and exert influence nonetheless. (Landis et al., 2014) define leaders as people looked upon in times of high pressure, even if the day-to-day behaviour is insignificant. The definition makes a strong impression of the leaders being the same as managers whose behavioural responses impacts the subordinate performance.

3. LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Several scholars have outlined the evolution of leadership theory. (King, 1990) traces the evolution distinguishing it into different eras, (Hunt et al., 2018) uses historical events to describe the rise and fall of theories, whereas (Benmira & Agboola, 2021; Badshah, 2012) used a chronological approach to sketch the theoretical development of leadership. The combined conclusion based on the review (shown in Table 1) produces the following theories of leadership—

3.1 Great Man Theory

The theory first given by Thomas Carlyle dates back to the ancient times, the 18th century, when leadership

was perceived as a 'gift' that a person was born with. The great man theory regarded leaders as heroic figures believing them to be born with the qualities that shows in times of need. These idols were believed to possess a natural power to command and accomplish tasks. The history cited the common characteristics among several great leaders in the time to justify that leadership was gift the person was born with or inheritance of the status by birth (Monarchs). There prevailed 'charismatic leadership' coined by Max Weber in the 1920s among different classes of leaders say political, religious or spiritual leaders that operated behind the veil of a charm leading though influencing the self-perception of the nature of the job. The strength of the theory was the supporting examples of leaders on the rise at the time explained the natural influence of people assuming leadership positions and exercising their power, getting results. However, the theory was transient due to the lack of empirical evidence and limiting the leadership to born with greatness or the inheritance of title leading to the development of the trait theory.

3.2 Trait Theory

The Trait theory, to answer the gaps of the great man focused on the common characteristics observed in the leaders seeking to understand what qualities set them apart. The experiments conducted in the 1930s revealed that leadership could be learned and a leader could be anyone who shows the ability to lead a group for attainment of the desired results. The theory suggested that the acquired necessary skill set when coupled with internally inherited qualities could produce effective leadership in the form of a unique style. The strength of this theory was the universal generalisability, for the leaders across diverse domains, possessed similar skill sets and qualities of character.

However, the theory was deficient in producing the set of definite qualities and a way of measuring them. Neither the common set of characteristics of a leader in a person did not guarantee successful leadership nor could explain the success of a leader deficient of some characteristics out of the defined set of traits. The common reason for the failure of this theory was the inability to produce concrete empirical shreds of evidence in support. Scholars argued that the theory functioned well in a vacuum but failed to operate in presence of situational contingencies.

Nevertheless, this theory seems highly relevant in the present age of the business environment in the staffing process. It provides an effective tool to devise psychometric tests and programs to test the specific abilities of the candidates before deeming them fit for the job.

3.3 Behaviour Theory

Changes were observed in the leader's acquired and inherited traits with time, enhanced experience and response to the environment. This changed the emphasis from traits to the behaviour of a leader to study effectiveness in performance. Thus, the behavioural theory of leadership evolved in the 1950s to mid-1960s based on B.F Skinner's theory of behaviour modification.

According to Peter Ducker effectiveness is doing the right things. The behaviour leadership theory regards effective leadership as the right behaviour of a leader at any point of time. The theory accepts the premise that 'leaders are made' but unlike the trait theory believes that the actions of the leader decide the effectiveness of his command instead of the qualities. The theory explained the Power Leadership concept given by Kurt Lewin. This was a revolutionary theory that led to diverse discoveries in the leadership discipline—leadership style, focus and application in management.

The experiments at the University of Iowa reported the four factors of a leader's behaviour—consideration, initiative structure, production emphasis and social awareness(Badshah, 2012). A series of experiments and empirical studies by Blake & Mouton devised the Managerial Grid Model to help the development of skill and behaviour responses in managers that enable them to effectively lead. The set of

behaviour patterns of the leaders was called leadership style, categorised based on their focus on people and task (Dickson, 2023) which although independent of each other were applied simultaneously to achieve results.

It is important to understand a thin line difference between the trait theory and behaviour theory. Though both convicted leadership as a learned phenomenon, trait theory studies the inherited or naturally instilled qualities in the leaders whereas behaviour theory focus on the actions followed by the learned behaviour and the results.

However, the theory faced criticisms for the inverse relationship between leadership styles or focus with the organisational objectives added complexity to the leadership understanding making it even more harrowing to decipher than before. Additional criticism of the theory was the failure to identify universally effective leader behaviour and disregard for the situational or environmental factors in play. The Blake & Mouton's Managerial Grid however efficient was accused of having strayed from the original objective of effective leadership and turned around all about organisational management instead.

On the upside, the assertion that 'anyone could be trained to be a leader' make this theory gender-neutral, opening the floodgate for development of potential leaders beyond the gender bias. It is still prominently used as a highly effective tool for managerial training and development in the present age.

3.4 Contingency Theory

The theory holds the degree of a leader's motivation, power and influencing abilities as the contingent factors for effective group performance (Badshah, 2012). The contingency theory takes into advisement that an effective leader may not be effective universally under all conditions. The suitability of a leadership style or behaviour may vary circumstantially or contextually.

Fred E. Fiedler in the 1960s provided the first model for the theory emphasising the significance of the context of leadership for effectiveness. It proposes that a leader to be effective should change their work environment to fit their unique behaviour and leadership style (Dickson, 2023). Fiedler argued that there is no best way to lead—no definite set of behaviours or traits can apply universally and suggested that leaders be placed in settings that fit their style and behaviour. According to him, the success of a leader depends upon the suitability of his style and behaviour to the context of leadership. However, the assertion that leadership style or behaviour is constant is subject to arguments failing to consider the environment's situational, biological and psychological aspects. No human can remain constant (biologically or psychologically) with their behaviour and the traits or styles evolve with experience and circumstances over time as argued by the behavioural theory.

Another is the Path-Goal Model alleging the significance of followers having a clear understanding of the goals and the path that leads to their achievement(Sivaruban, 2021). The theory developed based on the motivation and performance factors of the leader and explained different leadership styles associated as directing, coaching, supporting and delegation. The model is called Path-goal as it affects the follower's perception of work goals with an understanding of the direction of such goal attainment(Sivaruban, 2021) The Vroom-Yetton contingency model, also known as the decision-making model, suggested decision-making ability of leaders was the contingent factor in the leader's success and the leader-follower's relationship.

While discussing leadership theory, it is important to differentiate between behavioural and contingency leadership theories as their advances are awfully close. Behavioural theory assumes leader's appropriate behaviour is vital for leadership success. Whereas the contingency theories revolve around explaining various contingent factors playing a role beyond behaviour. Fielder's contingency theory extends the

premise by adding weights to the context of leadership application, Path-goal suggests the dependence on clarity in goal achievement and the decision-making model highlights how severe is decision making for leadership success.

3.5 Situational Theory

The development of the book Management of Organisational Behaviour led to the Situational Leadership Model. The theory was given by Dr. Paul Hersey and Dr. Kin Blanchard in the late 1970s, also known as Blanchard and Hersey's Situational Model of leadership. The authors later extended their own version of the theories with slight diversion.

The theory suggests that a leader to lead effectively must adapt to suit the work environment—match the needs of task accomplishment and people on the team. It mainly revolves around the leader-follower dynamics and flexibility of a leader in the work dynamics. To be effective, the leader must be dedicatedly adaptive with the behaviour to meet the maturity of the team members(Sivaruban, 2021).

Although the theory suffers from lacking the means to produce empirical evidence and universal measurement for commitment, competency and efficiency, it is highly palpable in the contemporary age onset of the fast-changing business environment for training managers and leaders. The theory necessitates the leaders to keep up with the changes and bend their styles or behaviours to suitably address the needs of a team at their level of maturity.

On the downside, the theory hinges on the leader's judgement of the subordinate's maturity and overemphasises flexibility which may not be effective in task accomplishment. The development of this theory advanced the interest of scholars to evaluate the volatile dynamics of leadership in the 20th century.

3.6 Contemporary Theories

The need for the development of new concepts of leadership rose in light of the constant disruption caused by the expedited progress across various disciplines in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The reason was attributed to the demands of new emerging relational and collaborative organisations and need for leaders that could thrive under such pressure.

Transactional Leadership aims at a mutual benefit derived from the understanding between leaders and followers. It is a two-way influence relationship (Badshah, 2012) that emerges from the exchange of rewards & benefits, the reciprocal response of demands between the leader and followers and focus towards a common objective. (Dickson, 2023) writes that transactional leaders are better called managers driven with the responsibilities of directions, task completion and close monitoring of the productivity. This leadership style greatly relies on the authority, a status quo for both positive and negative reinforcements. (Benmira & Agboola, 2021) writes that this leadership excels under a clear chain of command in mature organisations.

Transformative Leadership is a method of mutually shared responsibility for goal achievement to enhance the motivation & ethical behaviour of the followers. The theory stresses the commonality of goals that could be reached by transforming the minds of the followers into working for the greater good. It works best in times of crisis when the revitalisation of the organisation requires an influence to inspire change. (Hunt et al., 2018) writes that leadership by transformation requires special charisma in leaders for development of the leader-follower relationship founded on ethics and motivation. Transformational leadership to work according to (Dickson, 2023) essentially involves four elements namely Inspirational motivation, Intellectual stimulation, Individualised consideration, or Idealised influence.

Both these theories work well today in the practical world. They provide a foundation for managers and leaders to identify the needs of the time and adapt their style or behaviour accordingly—transactional for

task completion and transformational for team satisfaction. The optimum combination of both kinds when applied appropriately under the contextual or circumstantial factors, it is likely to be efficiently effective with results.

4. LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS & STYLES

The literature indicates substantial amount of work in the study of behaviour and styles of leaders and managers. For decades the area has been of special interest to scholars of organisational behaviours, human resources, management and psychology. The enormity and diversity of the subject makes the synthesis of literature on the subject more complex and harrowing. However, the review provided a good depth into the matter to organise the discussion of the leadership styles based on various approaches.

Based on traditional industrial approach, leadership styles are categorised into—autocratic, democratic, bureaucratic, laissez-faire. The management approach presents different views of leadership such as strategic, team, shared or global leadership. The individual identity approach classifies the leadership style into authentic, spiritual, servant, power or charismatic leadership.

4.1 Traditional Industrial Approach:

Autocratic Leadership Style exercises the authority and power singularly to direct and control the activities or decisions. This style originated from ancient times of rulers and kings and was carried throughout the history to present age that allows central power and authority for designations to command obedience. The autocratic leadership do not concern itself with human relations, psychological well-being or behavioural reinforcements. It only commands and seeks to accomplish the tasks by orders.

Democratic Leadership Style empowers the followers and by inviting participation in decision-making and welcoming the feedback on the consequences. The power handed out to an individual is a collective group decision to crown the leader that assures cooperation. (Sivaruban, 2021) concluded in the findings that democratic leadership is the most effective style compared to the others. This form of leadership seeks to accomplish tasks while keeping in order the human relations and well-being of the subordinates.

Bureaucratic Leadership Style is suited to highly regulated institutions, industries and government bodies with rigid structures and stringent rules. The leadership functions under a strict chain of command with delegated responsibility to be monitored by the leaders. The followers are promoted for conforming to the rules and the leaders lead by centralised power (Ja' & Bambale, 2011).

Laissez-faire Leadership Style is 'No Leadership' in simple words. It provides autonomy to the team members to design their work without interference in their way or work, performance methods or deadlines. It runs on the belief that employee motivation and satisfaction naturally drive them to achieve objectives. Research finds this method ineffective for goal attainment as it harms the work culture by inducing lethargy instead of motivation from freedom. Although this leadership might work in creative industries that need autonomy for creation and presentation of arts for success.

4.2 Management Approach

Strategic Leadership requires unique competencies such as the tremendous cognitive capacity to assimilate new pieces of knowledge or information, a futuristic vision to innovate and a collaborative ability to achieve high performance for organisations. The leadership requires the leader to formulate a strategy and lay out the path for execution with room for impromptu improvisation.

Team Leadership is mainly associated with mediation and engagement between team members to monitor performance, progress and productivity. It requires social awareness and a participative approach that

enables a leader to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the team members to mentor them for enhanced group performance.

Shared Leadership places the team at the centre of leadership allowing each team member to take the lead in their expertise and assume a shared responsibility instead of relying upon one shoulder. It allows more collaborative decision-making in the strategic areas and boosts the morale of team members by placing a high value to their area of expertise.

The global integration of the work environment has revolutionised the work environment and added substantial complexity to the needs and demands of or from a leader. It calls for global leaders who can manage obscurity arising from diversity and cross-culture participation. It requires mastered strength of core competency, behavioural competencies and social awareness for a person to assume the role of global leadership.

4.3   Individual Identity Approach

Authentic Leadership is a process of channelling the intrinsic positivity of a leader to stimulate transformation guided by personal growth and self-development. It shows an understanding of one's true character that empowers to lead through a positive ethical climate fostering self-development of both the leader and the follower (Datta, 2015). An authentic leader is guided by a moral code, values and principles which reflects in the decisions and their behaviour. They are highly self-aware and also perceived so by others of their knowledge, principles and strengths (Ja' & Bambale, 2011). (Datta, 2015) concludes that authentic leadership is a key to effective leadership performance and management.

Spiritual Leadership is an intrinsic concept aiming at the fulfilment of both fundamental and moral needs of the followers through the transformation of minds and actions (Smith et al., 2018). According to (Ja' & Bambale, 2011), it is an observable phenomenon wherein a leader embodies positive spiritual values and demonstrates reflective behaviour of one's spiritual beliefs in the act of leading. This form of leadership according to (Smith et al., 2018) leads by recognising and nourishing the 'inner life' of the subjects through meaningful work.

Servant Leadership has branched out of transformative leadership where leaders take care of the needs of the followers who reciprocally take care of the organisational needs. The leaders under this theory help followers rise to the level of leaders by fulfilling their needs and shortcomings (Dickson, 2023; Benmira & Agboola, 2021; Hunt et al., 2018). The foundation of this theory is that the leader himself is a servant first (Badshah, 2012) naturally inclined to service over exercising the power. It empowers the followers with guidance and support to realise their potential and uplift themselves to the leader's position. (Smith et al., 2018) writes that "Jesus modelled the true servant style of leadership" attributing the origin of the servant leadership from spiritual leadership beliefs—leading to serve instead of being served.

Power in leadership is pervasive. However, the leadership driven by power has a negative impression. Power Leadership was proposed around the Second World War when the leaders blinded by the power of their position resorted to coercing and force to get the followers do their bidding (Hunt et al., 2018) which was likely to disrupt the order and peace around the world if let to continue. (Badshah, 2012) suggested five kinds of power in context—referent power, expert power, reward power, coercive power, and legitimate power that could cause both positive and negative reinforcements

The concept of Charismatic Leadership dates back to the 1920s coined by Max Weber, suggested that leaders possess a special 'gift' of using their charisma to influence followers and get them to perform the tasks willingly. It made the followers believe in the heroism of the tasks or glorified importance of their performance to get the job done (Conger, 2012). Scholars argue that charismatic leadership is intertwined

with transformative leadership for influence and transform the minds of their subjects to do their leader's bidding with unquestioned obedience, out of unconditional affection and belief (Ja' & Bambale, 2011). Though charismatic leadership has the capability the charm the subjects in both positive and negative directions, evidences indicate that positive charisma is more likely to generate positive employee outcomes and organisational behaviours (Ja' & Bambale, 2011).

5.   NEW EMERGING PERSPECTIVE—THE DARK SIDE OF LEADERSHIP

Over time, scholars have pushed the study's boundaries in the study of Leadership beyond academic disciplines to pursue relevance in the social and psychological domains. The primary focus of the scholars to define what ought to be done as a leader or what makes leadership effective has today diverted into digging into the practical consequences seeking answers to what the action led to, where it comes from, what triggers it has and how is it impacting the social and economic lifestyles.

The primary focus of looking for 'good' in and out of leadership shifted when scholars began questioning the alternative consequences of transformational, charismatic and power leaderships. The idealistic notion of positivity in leaders and greater good began shaking with skepticism to the presence of an alternative reality—selfish orientations in goals and self-serving actions of influences. The dark side of leadership therefore highlights the alternative, negative part of the concept digging into the negative personality traits, leaders' behaviour and styles however successful or effective nonetheless, produce contravening outcomes.

Delroy L. Paulhus and Kewin M. Williams coined the 'dark triad of personality' in 2002(Furtner et al., 2017) providing the scholars of leadership an interesting dynamic to study leaders behaviour. The term was used for three non-pathological personality types often observed in leaders—narcissism, psychopathy and Machiavellianism (Mach for short). Although the three personality traits are negatively impressed upon the general human behaviour, some part of these behaviour and traits are seemed desirable in the leaders. Therefore, their consequences in leadership and performance remains debatable at the best.

5.1   Narcissism

Narcissism is a personality variable believed to be present in every individual varying from high to low. The origin of narcissism is traced back to Greek Mythology, to a character named Narcissus who fell in love with his own reflection. The studies (Fatfouta, 2019; Furtner et al., 2017) define narcissism as the self-image of an individual laced with extraordinary self-importance, unlimited brilliance and a sense of entitlement. It also extended to not acknowledging or arrogant avoidance of the presence of others. The narcissism concept originated in clinical or psychiatric literature that describes the behaviour of striving for admiration.

(Furtner et al., 2017) categorise narcissistic behaviour in leadership with high dominance, positive afflicted towards humour and display of more social behaviour due to the highest level of grandiose. (Fatfouta, 2019) produces dual faces of narcissism namely—'Grandiose' displaying high level of extraversion and low neuroticism & 'Vulnerable' with low extraversion and high neuroticism; both with low level of agreeableness. The papers also indicate the primary focus of the literature on grandiose part of narcissism in leadership for it majorly impacts the people in work setting and organisational environment.

Both the studies (Fatfouta, 2019; Furtner et al., 2017) suggest a dual impact of narcissism in leadership highlighting the qualities such as self-promotion, confidence, self-belief and charisma which are desirable in leaders along with the dark undesirable traits of intense desire to compete, manipulation, control and

power, which contradictory to general belief of darkness seem is necessary for task accomplishment and people management.

5.2 Psychopathy

In literal sense, psychopathy is a mark of normality hiding anti-social, egocentric behaviour and impaired empathy or remorse. This like narcissism emerges from clinical or psychiatric literature. (Furtner et al., 2017) says that psychopathy displays the highest dysfunctional impulsiveness, and manipulation among the dark triad. It is strongly associated with bully behaviours, which in leaders with the power position is strongly inadvisable. The behaviour might be effective to meet deadlines but induces fear driven motivation among subjects, creates discord and insensitivity in the environment. Therefore, aversive to social behaviour but highly inclined to cold heartedness, among the dark triad psychopathy is the darkest.

5.3 Machiavellianism

Machiavellianism, (sometimes abbreviated as Mach) became a term to describe behaviour where a person will do anything to get ahead, strongly associated with deceitfulness, high levels of self-interest, and a tendency to see other people as means to an end.

Often driven by ambition and power, this dark side of the personality overpower the positive conscience of the leaders, driving them to act for self-serving interests. The trait was conceptualised by Richard Christie and Florence Geis who categorised these leaders possessing this trait as callous and unprincipled. (Furtner et al., 2017) glorify the master manipulation of Mach Leaders who often resort to coercive controls to get through their way and achieve success.

The transformational and charismatic leadership theories empower the leaders through influence laid the foundation by extension to manipulating followers in wilful submission impressing a positive heroic self-image of the tasks in them, only to be used as a means to the end.

6.   CONCLUSION

Leadership excelling beyond the confinement of academic disciplines and practical application remains a subject matter like a bottomless well. The extensive discussion and critical analysis of scholars have identified leadership to be a process and power of influence that channelise the effort of individual or groups towards a mutual goal achievement. The theory distinguishes the concept of leadership and the leaders with the synonyms drawing the fine lines of limitations where the synonyms fail and leadership extends. Despite the rigorous work and major investment of the scholars, the lack of universal a definition and vivid differences in the academic literature from the practical reality remains.

The evolution of leadership theories is traced across the history outlining the relevance of each of the theories in the contemporary age and successful application of their premises in the real world. Each theory with unique limitations and strengths manages to contribute to the search for what is meant by effective leadership and what makes an effective leader. The study of styles and behaviours enlightens the scope of their application to meet the needs of management training, personality development and psychological behavioural studies in the wake.

Applying the concept into social sciences has helped diversify the lens beyond academic disciplines. The literature shows scholars' satisfactory inclination to dwell extensively on the dark side of leadership. However, there remains room for discoveries and empirical observation of these personality variables and the magnitude and direction of the influence in the real work environment.

TABLE 1: Theoretical Underpinnings'

Title & Author	Citation	Theme	Remarks
PHILOSOPHY OF LEADERSHIP	(Faruqi, 2024)	The paper reviews the literature on leadership theories and styles to present appropriate leadership philosophy for the 21st Century	The paper traces a brief history of leadership evolution history and provides the background for leadership philosophy. It concludes four values for a leader to live by namely Balance, Collaboration, Creativity and Recognition.
Analysis of The Traditional Leadership Theories: A Review of Contemporary Leadership Approaches and Management Effectiveness	(Dickson, 2023)	This paper reviews the literature in an attempt to analyse leadership theories and advance the knowledge of contemporary leadership. It distinguishes the leadership approach in modern times from traditional perspectives	The paper makes a significant contribution to explaining the rising leadership thoughts relevant in the present times, exploring the diverse viewpoints through the existing literature analysis. It traces the evolution of leadership theories from the traditional times to the newly evolving dynamics.
A Critical Perspective of Leadership Theories	(Sivaruban, 2021)	The critical perspective of the paper adds to the existing literature on leadership theories with empirical evidence.	The paper concludes that different leadership styles in the dynamic management environment enable the redesigning of leadership theories. With the changing business environments, there has been a development new 'resilient leadership style'
Leadership style: Is it autocratic, democratic or laissez-faire?	(Baharee Jaafar et al., 2021)	Reviews and examine the leadership style—autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire.	
Leadership: Past, Present, and Future: An Evolution of an Idea	(Hunt et al., 2018)	The review paper traces the evolution of leadership theories from the early to the contemporary age.	
Leadership Theories and Styles: A Literature Review	(Ahmed Khan et al., 2s016)	The review paper synthesised existing literature on the theories that emerged during the early 20th century.	

What Do We Really Know About Leadership?	(Silva, 2014)	The paper presents a new perspective supporting the complexity in leadership theories	The paper presents a research gap highlighting the contradicting meaning and relevance of leadership concepts in the real world from that of academics.
A Synthesis of Leadership Theories and Styles	(Landis et al., 2014)	Reviews the literature on leadership	The critical review helped identify effective leadership strategies in a work setting keeping in mind the collaborative and respectful work environment.

Source: Author

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