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LEADING IN THE "VUCA" WORLD – A LEADERSHIP WHEEL APPROACH

Aditya Patil	Undergraduate Scholar, Department Of Electronics & Telecommunications Engineering, Vishwakarma Institute Of Technology, Pune.
Dr. Deepak Patil*	Post Graduate Scholar, Department Of Management Studies, Indian Institute Of Cost And Management Studies And Research, India. *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT　There have been numerous attempts to understand the appropriate skills that the leaders should instill who are piloting in a world which is 'Volatile', 'Uncertain', 'Complex' and 'Ambiguous', which is acronymized as VUCA. In simple words, different methods have been used to understand the values of a perfect leader but very few studies have been found which evaluate how good a leader is in a wholesome manner. To put it in a metaphorical manner, a motorcycle cannot move ahead smoothly unless its wheels are in a perfect circular shape. If the spokes of the wheels are of different lengths, then apparently the wheels will not be perfectly circular and hence you can imagine how bumpy that motorcycle ride will be. Here, the wheels are the leaders in the VUCA world, and the spokes are the graphical measurement of the values and skills of a perfect leader. If all the required values are touching its maxima, then the wheel will be perfectly circular, and the motorcycle will run smoothly denoting that the leader is perfect, and the company will function in a smooth manner. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to build a leadership wheel which will be the quantitative measurement of how quintessential the leader is and further analyze it on a certain sample set.

KEYWORDS : VUCA, Leadership Wheel, Leader, Values, Skill Set

INTRODUCTION

Leadership cannot only be pronounced as the act of leading a certain group of people or an organization. It is clear that we can coin the term Leadership as two things of which one is a research area, and second is the practical skill encircling the moral ability of a person to guide or have an influence on other people or an entire organization in a strengthening manner. A huge number of researchers and institutions have been preoccupied over the last 4 decades in understanding leadership appropriately and making countless efforts to deconstruct the same into a unanimous set of measures. Well, in the latter years, different enormously dominant approaches of understanding leadership have been developed. For example, the model of Transformational and Transactional Leadership developed by Bass in 1985 and hence put into operation by Bass and Avolio in 1995. These approaches can be used to distinguish between different sets of leadership behaviors which can be perhaps fruitful in two separate contexts.

In today's world which is VUCA – Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous, it has been rather more intricate to measure the magnitude of how wholesome and perfect a leader is with so many new values and skills being added to their arsenal. In this paper, we have suggested a new method of measuring the magnitude of how quintessential a leader is and we have proved it on a sample set of 30 leaders in different fields of work. We call it "The Leadership Wheel". A wheel circles smoothly if it is in a perfect circular shape and if all the spokes of the wheel are of same length which happens to be the circle's radius. We have made an effort to engulf numerous skills which a leader in the VUCA world must instill into the Leadership Wheel in the form of spokes. The leader is metaphorized as the wheel.

It's not unknown that adaptive leaders have been found to be working in a more effective manner in the environment which is changing rapidly by a way in which they initially try to make sense of the challenges encountered by them as well as their supporters and then optimally resolving them.[1] To be able to survive in the VUCA world, different organizations need to do a bit more then just hire and apparently develop agile leaders; the requirement for them is to create an organizational culture which focusses on the fact of rewarding a desired behaviour.[2]

Perhaps more effective and efficient models of talent management help enable companies which a well performing to source, assess, assign and develop this kind of blend of talent around different projects and initiatives.[3] Executives are needed to emphasize on agility, dexterity, flexibility and resilience to map the VUCA environments.[4] However, the research on the topic of responsible leadership is yet in a nascent period. Whatsoever, considering it's complete approach towards ethicality, sense of valuing others and the fact of inclusivity, it is perfectly clear that this kind of leadership is the 'need for hour' in the VUCA era.[5] The daily social perception of leaders and employees and perhaps civilians happens under conditions that are volatile, complex, uncertain and ambiguous hence the researchers these days have tried to address how the above mentioned factors might qualify as the fundamental process of social categorization.[6] In a particular manner, different systems should make it a habit to explore the unknown parameters causing complex chaos. This fact promotes them to make an improvement in the capacity to generate important conditional understanding of VUCA environment.[7] It has been found that both the certain number of remedial steps taken by a company to sharpen leadership skills and the velocity in which they are found to be implemented in the VUCA world needs an improvement.[8] The main problems in the modern VUCA management are agility, the management of certain information and knowledge, the probable responsiveness to a complex situation and the amount of experimentation.[9] The understanding of learning has grown in the last few decades. However, the values which have been derived from constructivism, cognitivism, connectivism and behaviorism have been a catalyst in complexing the conduction and interpretation of technology and management research.[10] Since a lot of organizations are quite old, it's completely fair to say that there exits a considerable amount of generational diversity and apparently it has proved to become a norm.[11] The basic problems that come up with these statements of generational differences can moreover be categorized as theoretical, methodological and perhaps empirical in nature.[12] While addressing the leadership issues in the VUCA world, another terminology coined in order to sharpen the excellence in the business domain is BEVUCA i.e., business excellence in VUCA. Concept of BEVUCA can be used to potentially fill the gap and apparently provide a link between VUCA and

business excellence.[13] In business excellence, different leadership styles have been found to have an effect on the performance of an employee and their productivity.[14] When speaking about leadership and leadership roles, it has been found that women encounter a lot more number of barriers in the journey of becoming potential leaders then men do.[15] This has improved considerably in the past couple of years but, further focus needs to be drawn on this issue. A leadership dimensions questionnaire has been significant in providing a great opportunity for managers to be able to compare leadership dimensions to different leadership styles.[16] Very clearly, a leader has to be able to make a difference in his style of leadership considering the situation in order to be more efficient.[17] It is sometimes fruitful to use the leadership behavior description questionnaire to find required solutions. The manner in which the leader is described by every single member of his team by using the above mentioned questionnaire can contain a measurement error that can be zeroed down by averaging the description over members.[18] A new breed of leaders have emerged which are called as the knowledge enabled leaders who are perfectly capable of understanding a strategic relationship which lies between the acquisition of knowledge and the business processes.[19] On a general note, charismatic and human oriented leadership styles are mostly communicative in nature when taken into comparison with the task oriented leadership.[20] However, there is an immense difference between different leadership styles and cultural groups and the culture as well as the leadership have been found to be interacting in a number of ways in diverse context.[21] It is important to understand that maximum number of authoritative figures in organizational leadership agree on the fact that eminent theories on leadership are trails, contingency and about leadership styles.[22] When we speak of the fact of the drastically changing nature of higher education, it is clear that an effective leadership and devoted employees are significantly required to cope with the need foisted on universities.[23] Identities are found to be organizing patterns of skills and values and they immediately mediate the effects of skills on behaviour.[27] Different companies need to step above the mere statements of ethics, specifically those found in the CSR statements, and significantly evaluate the ethical skills of the leaders and their actions.[30]

Some authors have clearly compared different leadership styles while some of them have given different metaphorical authoritative statements which clearly unfold the change in leadership and management in the past couple of decades to the current significant VUCA world.

METHODOLOGY
A. Understanding The Spokes Of The Leadership Wheel
A wheel cannot achieve a smooth state of motion which is significantly frictionless to the passengers unless it is perfectly circular in shape. You can imagine the state of motion an individual will experience on a vehicle if the wheels are not flawlessly circular. The wheels being non-circular in shape can be a result of the existence of the spokes in different sizes. Something that is not uniform and something that'll make the ride very much hurdle-some. Well, that is what running an organization will feel like if it's leaders lack in some quintessential values and skills. We have made a metaphorical effort to compare the organization to a vehicle, the leaders to the wheel and the values and skill set of the leader to the spokes of a wheel.

There are certain particularly important values and skills a leader must instil in order for the company to function flawlessly and get significant noticeable fortunes. Below are the values and skills that a leader should have which will be further represented as the spokes of the Leadership Wheel. It is especially important to understand that a leader need not

immediately possess all these values in order to complete the circle of Leadership Wheel. However, in the notable forthcoming timeframe, the leader can cultivate the same.

SKILLS REPOSITORY FOR VUCA LEADERS					
Volatility	Attentive & Responsive	Change Agent	Cognitive Flexible	Change Alchemist	Intuitive Risk Taker
Doer Not Preacher	Agile	Matrix Environment Champion	Clarity & Certainty	Digital Evangelist	Thought Leader
Cultural Catalyst	Humble Servant	Talent Magnet	EDSO Master - Stress & Resilience	Out Of Box Promoter	Mindful Coherence
Promoter Of Diversity And Inclusion	Charismatic Transformer	Collaborative Influencer	Generational Sensitivity - From Gen X till Millenial	Risk Calibrator	Consciously Curious
User Of Telescope, Microscope and Kaleidoscope	Leading By IQ, EQ, SQ & AQ	Ethical Superhero	Master Orchestrator & Integrator	Responder & Not Reactor	Ardent Visionary
PESTLE Super Aware	Story Teller	Growth Mindset & Design Thinking	Greatest Brand Showman	AI Enthusiast	People & Machine Person
Adversity flipper	Calm YOGI	CDEL Promoter & Not CSAT Anymore	Equanimity - Mr. Cool Dhoni factor	Corporate Monk	Humble Acceptor
Transparent and Clear Player	Empathetic Technocrat	Master Negotiator	Healthy Musician	Data Driven Decisive	De-skill & Re-skill promoter
Master Innovator	Emmersive Relearner & Quick Unlearner	Critical Thinker	Synergizer	Desruption Supers	Not a Follower But a Leader Creator
Social Media Smart	Glocal	Servant Leader	VUCA Environment Promoter	Accountable Vissionary	Having contextual Intelligence

Table 1 - Skills Repository for VUCA Leaders

B. Data Acquisition & Sample Creation
In the flow of process, after cumulating the skills repository, a data of 30 leaders working in different areas of professional specialty was gathered. The professionals we aimed at contacting were Managing Directors, CEOs, CTOs, Vice Presidents, Directors, etc. working in various Multi-National Companies (MNCs). After the acquisition of data was concluded, a survey was conducted with them by sending 66 different questions which tested their skill set as in accordance to the skills repository for VUCA Leaders mentioned in Table 1. The survey was conducted with the help of Google forms. The personal information of the leaders is classified for privacy reasons. Hence, we have enlisted the data numerically in Table 2.

DATASET OF LEADERS FROM VARIOUS MNCs					
LEADER	NAME OF THE COMPANY	LEADER	NAME OF THE COMPANY	LEADER	NAME OF THE COMPANY
Person 1	AMDOCS	Person 11	WESTERN UNION	Person 21	DELOITTE
Person 2	DEUTSCHE BANK	Person 12	CREDIT SUISSE	Person 22	DRUVA
Person 3	BNY MELLON	Person 13	COGNIZANT	Person 23	UBS
Person 4	AMDOCS	Person 14	INFOSYS	Person 24	UBS
Person 5	NICE Ltd	Person 15	COGNIZANT	Person 25	ZS ACCOCIATES
Person 6	CREDIT SUISSE	Person 16	TCS	Person 26	FACEBOOK
Person 7	ACCENTURE	Person 17	TATA COMMUNICATIONS	Person 27	INFOSYS
Person 8	ACCENTURE	Person 18	ICERTIS	Person 28	HSBC
Person 9	NICE ACTIMIZE	Person 19	VERITAS	Person 29	IBM
Person 10	WESTERN UNION	Person 20	VERITAS	Person 30	LARSEN & TOUBRO

Table 2 - Dataset of Leaders from various MNCs

The survey conducted demonstrated the Leaders skill set which was scored by them in the range of 10. With this data, we created a sample set of the Leaders and their skill set scores.

### C. Analysis, Observation & Formation of the Leadership Wheel
Considering the Leader as a wheel and his/her skill set as the spokes of the wheel, the Leadership Wheel was created which proved to be a perfect and quantitative demonstration of the Leader's VUCA world's skill set scores. The length of the spokes of the wheel is proportional to the scores of skills set that Leaders marked in the survey. Based on this principle, a customized Leadership Wheel was formed for every leader after thorough analysis. Professional suggestions were delivered wherever necessary in order to improve in the VUCA world.

Figure 1 - Example of a scored Leadership Wheel

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Survey was conducted on a dataset of 30 Leaders from different Multi-National Companies (MNCs). The response to the questions asked in the survey had to be marked on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 represented worst and 10 represented the best. Considering the scores the Leaders gave themselves on the basis of understanding if they instil the required skills for Leadership necessary in the VUCA world, the Leadership Wheel was created. Out of the 30 Leadership wheels created 23 were completely out of shape i.e., non-circular in nature. This indicated that the Leaders were not the most perfect and lacked the necessary skills that a Leader should have in the VUCA world. After analysis and observations, required suggestions were made to the Leaders who lacked the necessary skills. The Leaders followed the suggestions made and apparently a significant change in their style of leadership and skill set was observed and reported by them which is portrayed graphically in graph 1. Seven Leadership Wheels out of the 30 surveyed were nearly circular with just 3 or 4 skills lacking in the required scores.
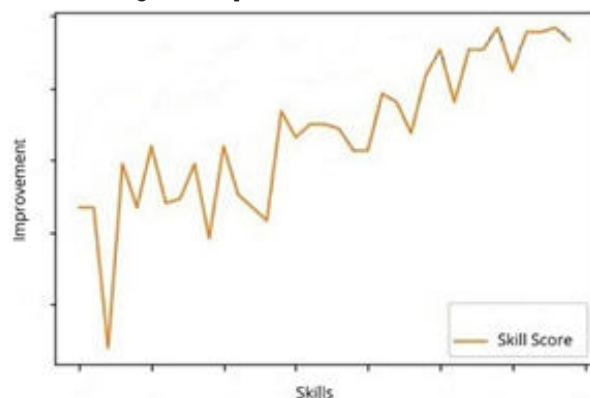
The pattern that can be observed in figure 1 is out of shape if we consider a standardized circular wheel (Ideal should be bigger and symmetrical wheel). For a Leader to be compatible in this VUCA world, a very perfect and circular wheel is not mandatory. The main goal is to reduce the friction & increase the skill quality count (on scale 1 to 10), which is achieved as per Graph 1. Smoothness will be achieved in the forthcoming time. End goal is to have a smooth and big Leadership wheel.

CONCLUSIONS

It is quite familiar to us that different leaders today try to operate in a world which is VUCA and a bewildering new environment where we find that the tempo is quicker, little is certain, and apparently the dynamics are found to be complex. Chief Executives and Management Leaders are overwhelmed as ''How to stay on top of all the things and how to lead optimally in this world?'' The fundamental goal of this research is to focus on the different challenges in leadership of our age which is globalized, volatile, hyperconnected and

apparently what it is like to be able to lead in an uncertain age of upheaval, to be able to master some personal challenges, to apparently be able to emerge in limelight continually and to strongly construct decisions under extreme uncertainty.

Our aim in this paper was to help the Leaders in the VUCA world by formulating a Leadership Wheel which could give them a quantitative analysis of their standing with respect to the skill set required in the VUCA world. Analyzing the test results, we can conclude that, our model has significantly shaped the leadership styles of the Leaders and has made them capable of handling different problems in the VUCA world in an enormously better and positive manner. Hence, the target of our model is achieved.

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