

Abstract of Doctoral Dissertation

A Comparative Study of Leadership Styles in Select Public and Private Sector Organizations¹

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I. Introduction

LEADERSHIP MEANS MANY things to many people. This is due to the changing environment of leaders in different roles in different functions in different settings starting from leadership of the family to the top positions in multinational organizations. However, the essentials of leadership are the same to all leaders in all positions. Nevertheless, due to the variation in the skills required, roles played, functions performed, issues tackled and the relationships promoted, different leaders have different perceptions of leadership. As such, several attributes have been made both for the success and failure of leadership in the form of properties and processes or traits and styles of leaders. Further, even these attributes cannot provide a totally satisfactory guidance for the success of leadership. Hence, theoreticians and practitioners of leadership have gone to the extent of developing the 'contingency approach', which emphasizes that there is 'No single best way'.

Leadership is a process of influencing the behaviour, beliefs and feelings of the members of a group. The functions of leadership however, cover wide range of activities like coordinating, decision-making, policymaking, group representing, controlling, arbitrating, etc. Leadership, not being a single phenomenon, is affected by many variables and involves several skills like technical, human, conceptual, designing, creative, communicative and decision making. The main aspect of influencing people by a leader is the power, which has many sources. The leadership effectiveness covers the personality of leader, past experience, expectations of superiors, the

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