Life skills for resilient leadership during pandemic times: the current and ancient Indian perspectives

Monika Bansal and Surbhi Kapur

Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, Faridabad, India

Abstract

Purpose – Leaders today are continuously seeking models to navigate through the challenges posed by the pandemic times, so as to help the organizations flourish in the volatile business environment. This paper attempts to explore the alignment of insights drawn from the ancient Indian scripture, the Bhagavad Gita, with today's leadership requirements, towards the betterment of both the leaders and organizations.

Design/methodology/approach – A qualitative approach with thematic analysis is used to identify leadership qualities pertinent in difficult times through interviews with 15 employees at leadership positions. It establishes the alignment of the qualities with the sapient advice from the Holy Scripture, maneuvered by today's leaders to become more purposeful and impactful.

Findings – The discernments from the Bhagavad Gita holistically entwine the emotional, intellectual and spiritual aspects of resilient leaders and provide guidance on the leaders' attitude towards work, behaviour and self management, to help steer through the challenging environment. With turbulent changes during the COVID-19 pandemic, conventional leadership skills would be outmoded, and hence the leaders need to strengthen the critical shifts in their own established sets of attitudes as well as that of their workforce.

Originality/value – Under the changing work environment, while the new leadership narrative of the world beyond takes shape, this study delves both into ancient Indian wisdom and current opinion to identify a template of workable practices that would differentiate extraordinary leaders from the rest.

Keywords Leadership, Resilience, Life skills, Self management, Bhagavad Gita, India

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

In the present pandemic times, as the business landscape becomes increasingly complex, chaotic and volatile, it challenges the conventional business paradigms and compels the organizations to align their strategy with the market and technology shifts. Many successful companies, which have been vigilant about competitive moves, catered astutely to their customers, and invested aggressively in new technologies, still lose market dominance and eventually fail and die relatively young (Christensen, 1997). According to a study conducted by McKinsey, the average life span of companies listed in Standard & Poor's 500 was 61 years in 1958, and it was less than 18 years in 2016. With the same trend, 75 percent of the companies currently quoted on the S&P 500 will disappear by 2027 (Garelli, 2016), possible reasons for which could be wasted potential, resources, and adverse effect on individuals, communities and economies. Amidst such turbulent and disruptive business environment, leaders of organizations strive hard to build a sustainable organization which is adaptive to the dynamic forces and able to seize opportunities.

Scherr and Jensen (2007) stated that a leader is a person with a commitment towards the achievement of results. This definition, more often than not, speaks of a result-oriented leader and drifts towards the myopic short-term results and could imperil the long-term sustainable growth of the organization, as the organizational success is highly susceptible to the power of leadership behavior (Kets de Vries *et al.*, 2009). This predicament can be broken by having a concerted effort towards organizational renewal from the leaders. Hence, there is a need to identify the attributes that can define a leader and leadership in a more holistic manner.

The Bhagavad Gita is one of the most treasured and prominent Indian ancient philosophical and spiritual scriptures. It dispenses the sapient advice rendered by Krishna to Arjuna – two eminent leaders of Mahabharata, the epic of the feud between two clans – the *Pandavas* and the *Kauravas* in the battlefield of Kurukshetra. In that battlefield, Arjuna, on observing his own kinsmen lined up against him, became anxious at the thought of fighting with them. Krishna then counselled Arjuna, and the dialogue between the two was presented in the eighteen chapters of the Bhagavad Gita.

Bhagavad Gita has been studied through the ages with great interest in the contexts of philosophy, theology and literature. However, the ancient scripture has seldom been researched in the context of leadership. The wisdom imparted in the Bhagavad Gita encompasses many leadership lessons analogous to contemporary leadership theories and practices. This is because the Bhagavad Gita is a profound and holistic treatise embracing a long-term action-oriented vision rather than a myopic result-oriented goal. It encompasses ethical conduct, performance of actions in accordance with one's nature, skills and talents (*svadharma*) without worrying about results and performance metrics (karma yoga), leadership by example, stress management, maintenance of equanimity, diversity, motivation, self-improvement, and so on. Many intellectuals like Albert Einstein, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau have echoed the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita in their compositions. The Holy Scripture has been quoted by Senge (2006), one of the leading management thinkers, in his books *The Fifth Discipline* and *Presence*. The leadership lessons in Bhagavad Gita are analogous to the concurrent leadership theories and practices. Bhagavad Gita advocated about work and knowledge thousands of years before Frederick Taylor and Peter Drucker, and also about character, integrity, emotional intelligence before the theories on these aspects came into being.

Literature review

Conventionally described as an art of getting things done, management is an integral component of daily life, both personal and professional. The management process involves planning, organizing, staffing and controlling, with human efforts to achieve desired goals. It also aims at resolving the physical, technical and behavioral crisis through optimum utilization of the available resources. Lack of proper management induces disorder, turmoil, wastage, depression and stress. Men, Money and Material, the proverbial 3 of the 5Ms, if managed well, will lead to the illimitable success of an organization (Omoregie, 2015). Various fields of study, such as psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, economics and finance have endowed the field of management (Muniapan, 2008). Inter-disciplinary research on management have associated it with several fields of humanities, but morals and virtues, till recently, had been forsaken. Consequently, despite many organizations devising unprecedented business models and bringing about best practices, scams and insolvencies continue to plague businesses. Several companies, such as Lehman Brothers, AIG, Bank of America, General Motors, Circuit City, etc., which embodied the use of best practices in the industry have problems owing to the failure in creating morally and ethically sound practices, with majority of decisions being based on "profit" alone. It is a fallacy that management science saw the light of the day in the West and pioneered the proverbial wheel of

development all around the world and that the East was bereft of management. In fact, India has its own management principles, deeply entrenched in its rich ancient scriptures, culture and heritage, which guides its people during times of upheaval and uncertainty. In the last couple of years, the world has validated a resilient India, better equipped to manage the global crisis. Several Indian giant corporations like Tata, Bharat Forge, and Ranbaxy have demonstrated resilience and adaptive agility like no other, and few prime Indian companies are heading towards bankruptcy. Managerial effectiveness, thus, is of paramount importance in today's incessantly capricious and volatile business environment and is vital for organizations to first generate and then endure their competitive edge (Samson and Daft, 2009).

According to Mintzberg (1973), leaders have to perform ten roles to augment their effectiveness, broadly categorized into interpersonal, informational and decisional roles. To portray these roles effectively, managers require technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills, which are required in different combinations across various levels of hierarchy, with lower levels needing more of technical skills as against leaders at higher levels requiring intense conceptual skills. Since leaders work with people, they ought to have excellent interpersonal skills for communication, motivation and delegation to the workforce (Muniappan, 2008).

During difficult times and dilemmas, one may feel that the lone path to prevent oneself from being overwhelmed by emotions is to avoid those emotions. Sentiments which make one feel fearful and anxious tend to precipitate the defense mechanism of the body, which sabotage one's ability to exert resilience – communication gets distorted, coordination erodes, and the final outcome turns out to be more adversity. On that account, resilience requires tackling the emotional aspects promptly, and using 'relational pauses' by shifting the focal point from team's output of work to its feelings (Barton and Kahn, 2019). The corporations that have an outlook towards employee welfare and spirituality outperform with regard to practicality and creating value (Belwalkar and Vohra, 2016). Teams should be counseled to discuss their emotional turmoil, while listening energetically to others, demonstrating compassion and validating the feelings of all. Resilient teams perceive adversity to be that of the entire team, thus facilitating the diffusion of the emotional strain and creating the scope of acknowledging and repairing all the dysfunctional interpersonal patterns precipitated by anxiety. Such relational pauses increase the likelihood of survival of teams during crises and build relational resilience for the future.

In times of a global crisis, resilience also entails rapid learning and understanding the business environment (Barton *et al.*, 2020), and developing an effective response, by redesigning and reframing prevailing routines, roles, reallocation of resources, knowledge and idea sharing, and acknowledging emotions. Teams and leaders around the world recognize that everyone can benefit from sharing their learning and simultaneous edification through others' experience as opposed to banking upon 'trial and error' (Myers, 2018), thus helping in dissemination of best practices and building a resilient global community.

Bhagavad Gita, the ancient Indian scripture is known throughout the world for profoundly enumerating the constituents of resilient leadership in a holistic manner. Bhagavad Gita's verses 29 and 5 of Chapter 6 pragmatically revolve around a democratic and resilient leader who is able to lead his followers in extremely critical situations and assert that the democratic and resilient leadership is closely intertwined with the leader's personality in terms of his physical, mental and spiritual development, having a sense of tranquility and believing in the philosophy of interdependence (Nayak, 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an atypical global stressor affecting every aspect of life and lifestyle. It changed the world swiftly and pushed organizations and people towards uncertainty and fear. Thankfully, the wealth of wisdom in ancient scriptures such as the Bhagavad Gita aids in building psychological resilience. This study is conducted to

understand the life skills relevant to leadership in the present and post pandemic times and to showcase the alignment of the ancient Indian wisdom with the current leadership requirements. Furthermore, it endeavors to identify the leadership aspects, leadership styles and failure management as part of resilient leadership.

Research methodology

In addition to collection of secondary information from the ancient Indian scripture Bhagavad Gita, 15 interviews were conducted with employees at the mid-senior and senior leadership levels in the age group of 40 to 60 working in software/computer, aviation, education technology, healthcare, lifestyle, automotive and insurance sectors. During August 2021, telephone interviews were conducted as suggested by the respondents due to the pandemic protocol. Besides questions about their work profile and type of organization, four questions were asked with the objective of gathering the viewpoints of these employee leaders who are at the centre of leadership experience. The questions were as follows:

1. With the Coronavirus outbreak and its plethora of unpleasant side effects, multiple dilemmas and anxieties, what life skills do you feel are of utmost demand in the leaders around the world today?

2. Leadership being a behaviour based role, what aspects of leadership will be gaining popularity in the post pandemic world?

3. What can the leaders of today do to manage the personal as well as professional failures, for themselves as well as their employees in the present situation?

4. According to you, what will be the new workable leadership style(s) in the present and post pandemic times?

The responses to the questions dotted with experiences provided clear understanding of leader opinion and the common thread running across varied industries in terms of leadership. Each interview lasted until information reached saturation, became repetitive and ceased to contribute towards new information (Byrne, 2001).

Validity check

The content validity of the questionnaire was established through consultations with a panel of experts in the fields of management and academics, who reviewed the questionnaire, and as per their suggestions, the statements not commensurate with the scope of the study were removed, and some of the questions were reframed. The inclusion of greater diversity in the sampling groups, i.e., including younger leaders, in the age group of 40 to 50, as well as the veteran leaders of the age group of 50 to 60, helped the researchers to reduce the bias towards any particular type of outcome, thus establishing valid results. Another technique of data blinding was used, wherein the amount of information shared with the respondents, and the questions asked did not talk about the Bhagavad Gita. This has ensured that the research was not biased towards the teachings of ancient Indian literature with preconceived notions of the respondents. All the above steps helped in establishing the validity of the results, and thus prove the accurateness of the qualitative research.

Reliability check

Two processes were conducted for ensuring reliability. The first process comprised of recording the data in a tabular form to facilitate an overall assessment of the data collected. This also helped in quickly interpreting the results as per the record of every individual

respondent and in the concise construction of the preliminary codes for the thematic analysis. The second process used was theoretical data triangulation, wherein other research works in the areas of leadership and the Bhagavad Gita were analyzed and presented as a literature review to support the results obtained. The triangulation of data provided an additional layer of reliable stamping to the research.

The online versions of the Holy Scripture by Mukundananda (2014) and Swami (1971) were referred to for all the quoted verses and translations of Bhagavad Gita.

Data analysis

All interviews were recorded and manually transcribed to minimize the errors. The data were then recorded manually on MS Excel. Table 1 provides an overview of the responses.

Thematic analysis of the responses was implemented using NVivo 7 software. This included several readings of the transcripts, formation of preliminary codes built on response data followed by assemblage and conversion into specific themes which were further classified into two categories of Leadership Life Skills and Resilient Leadership. The Thematic Maps I and II are diagrammatic representations of the same which provide clear graphic guidance (Sharkey and Caska, 2019) while alleviating repetitive review of themes.

Findings

The first category of Leadership Life Skills, as depicted in Figure 1, includes the seven themes of Empathy, Interpersonal/Team Skills, Communication, Time Management, Adaptive Agility, Decision Making and Problem Solving which come across as mandatory skills in the present and post pandemic continuum. What surfaces is a strong amalgamation of empathy, "personal connection with team members" be it physical teams or "hundred percent remote teams distributed across time zones", time management to cater to "no work life balance due to work from home" with the adaptive agility in terms of survival, solution and people orientation extended to inclusive decisions. These become the requisites for "balancing company growth objectives with people morale objectives" leading to organizational sustenance and relational resilience.

Similarly, Figure 2 illustrates the second category of resilient leadership, as comprising of three themes:

Leadership elements where values, empathy, "clear vision" and farsightedness handhold to navigate through uncertainty and prompt the willingness to adapt to technology or change, manage stress and ensure "prioritization of health and wellness and work life balance of self and staff" so as to balance profit and people.

Failure management which includes acceptance of "self and employee failure and moving on", rectification, alternate plan readiness "to spring back", collaboration through "online tools training", employee empowerment and development "to take on bigger roles" and vicarious learning or "learning from others' mistakes" to understand best practices and foster collective resilience.

Leadership styles where leader responses take centre stage with a shift towards time management and not micromanagement, team and individual task balance, delegation with responsibility, positive error handling, collaborative/transformational, assertive/ participative and the oft repeated decisive authoritarian with friendliness and empathy. What comes across clearly is a stress on the twin ability to manage productivity and motivation as well as a profit - employee- shareholder focus, a paradigm shift from "profit only to people also". Moreover, some respondents were of the opinion that "leadership models may not be new, but the job models are surely altered". To cater for this, what is required is a new leadership orientation with a focus on human capital and long term development.

With the Coronavirus outbreak and its plethora of unpleasant side effects, multiple dilemmas and anxieties, what life skills do you feel are of utmost demand in the leaders around the world today?	*Leadership being behaviour based role, what aspects of leadership will be gaining popularity in the post pandemic world?*	*What can the leaders of today do to manage the personal as well as professional failures, for themselves as well as their employees in the present situation?*	*According to you, what will be the new workable leadership style(s) in the present and post pandemic times?*
Ability to manage (productivity/motivation) etc. for 100% remote teams distributed across time zones, time management has become a big challenge with no life/work balance due to WFH, building personal connection with team members, showing understanding and empathy with the impacted people, balancing company growth objectives with people morale objectives	Effective communication, time management, empathy/ care attitude, balancing growth with humane perspective	Time management to balance work and family, both for self and employees, better training in online collaboration tools	Change management style from time driven to task driven, no scope of micromanagement, time management
Compassion and resilience	Tenacity	Be a life-long learner, and being a good human being	Balance of focusing on team task and individuals
Positive attitude, compassion	Values and skills	Accepting failures and moving on	Collaborative style
Adaptability and compassion	Quick and smooth decisions that are transparent and reliable, not necessarily democratic or consensus based	Have a clear vision, predict and share info, on basis of accurate data collation and analysis	Transformational / collaborative
Stress management, farsightedness and finding opportunity in distressed situation	Resilient approach, creating work life balance	Take failure as lesson to improve upon than to indulge into it	More delegation with responsibility, expressing confidence and handling mistakes with positivity
Optimistic and positive thinking, risk taking, critical thinking, complex problem solving, predictability skills	Empathetic, inclusive, technology, adaptable	Learn from others' mistakes, empathetic, collaborative, inclusive	Assertive leadership style
Empathy	Motivational	Realistic target fixing and assessment	Participative
Empathy, patience, flexibility	Communication, resilience	Be human, show empathy, put employees first when making decisions (instead of profits), be transparent	More transparency, more communication, more empathy, more balance between profits, employee welfare and shareholder benefits, more voice of employee in decision making
Adaptability, perseverance and empathy	Leadership is a contextual phenomenon and flexibility is something that will be gaining popularity going forward, very rigid notions of what behaviour, personality type and skill sets are appropriate and what are less relevant would be detrimental to effectiveness	Learn from your failures and from your success as well	It will be the same. The pandemic and its effects are not very different from large disruptions (global financial crash of 2008 for example) of the past. The essence remains the same. Those who can weather the storm remain.

(continued)

Table 1.
Leader respondent's verbatim for the questions asked

Effective communication considering increase in virtual work, respecting each-others personal space & time	Emotional Intelligence	Develop ability & mindset to bounce back	Leadership styles are an individual behaviour and all styles have their own pros and cons. I don't see any change in those styles post pandemic
Discipline, dealing with uncertainty, physical fitness	Displaying empathy, prioritisation of health and wellness of staff, displaying strength in face of adversity	Leaders should think of every failure as a step towards eventual success rather than treating it as a missed opportunity or to fix accountability or blame. Teams should be given psychological safety that they will not be penalized for failures if attempt was sincere	Decisive and authoritarian leadership styles will gain more and more prominence as it is needed to push business in an uncertain world, but the leader also will need to display utmost friendliness and empathy
Leaders need to be compassionate and specially in these current times must have positive attitude towards the unpredictable scenarios! Moreover, build confidence of people that good times will be back and ensure employees do get into some sort of lifestyle change by indulging in health related activities	Resilient leadership	Be a little patient, switch to some yoga program and make it a lifestyle change, believe any adversity is a platform for some new beginning . . . tough times never sustain only tough people do! A never give up attitude helps to fight the scenario! Manage financials in a more efficient manner and look out for some opportunity which can help sustain financially!	Leadership is all about managing humans so styles will not change due to pandemic but job styles may change . . . There may be more new job models coming up having to work from home and digital interventions will increase!
Good communication and motivational skills	Compassion and respect for individuals	Training and development of their manpower and empowerment of individuals to take on bigger roles	Providing independence to work in any environment and flexibility of working hours, yet maintaining good communication with team members
Versatility, thinking on the feet, gravitas	Multifunctional experience, tech ability	Develop professional skills and physical fitness	Empathetic, collaborative
Transversal soft skills like communication & collaboration, stress management, adaptability, analytical thinking & problem solving, empathy & sympathy	Empathy, communication, human aspect, hearing the unspoken, engagement	Proactive in perspective, connecting the dots, process based accountability matrix, real time data analytics, engagement	Leading from the front, trust in the team, technology orientation, change management

Table 1. Source: By authors

Discussion - situational shift and walking the talk

The coronavirus pandemic has been a touchstone for decision and disposition of leaders across the globe. Over and above wrecking havoc in people's lives, the economic upheaval caused by it is significant and radical, precipitating an unparalleled change. As a result, the health of businesses is amalgamated with the well being of its workforces and the entire ecosystem like never before. This has urged the companies to revamp swiftly and recognize creative, alternative mechanisms for survival. Today's leaders have to confront the demands of both the professional as well as personal fronts, while playing a pivotal role in steering their organizations across the impediment of the COVID-19 crisis. During difficult conditions, the leaders will influence the overall culture of the organisation (Uygun and Gupta, 2020) as the colleagues will look up to them to emulate.
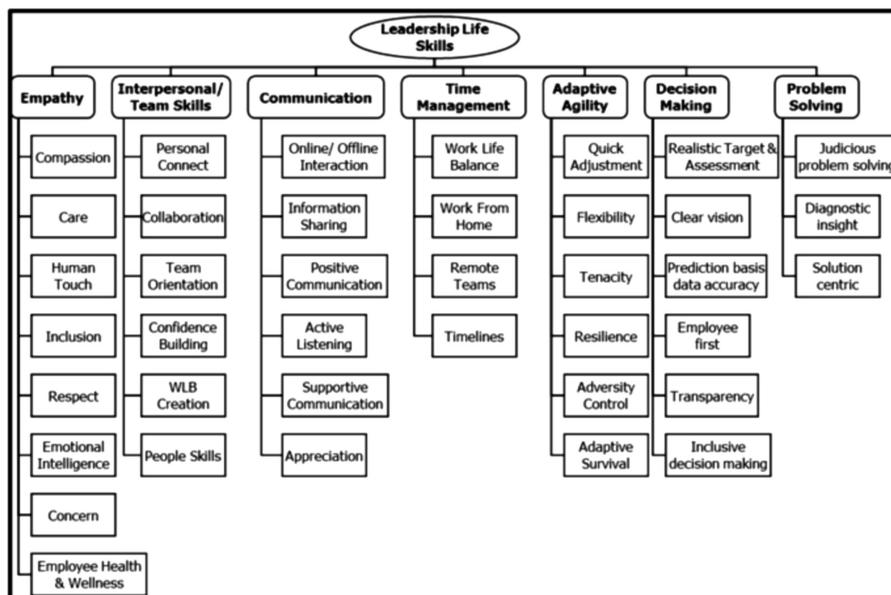
Source: By authors

*yad yad ācharati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ sa yat pramāṇaṁ kurute lokas tad anuvartate
II3.21II*

Whatever actions great persons perform, common people follow. Whatever standards they set, all
the world pursues.

With the turbulent changes in the business world in the post pandemic era, the conventional
leadership skills will be outmoded. Leaders need to fortify the critical shifts in their own
established sets of attitudes as well as that of their workforce. Self awareness and
introspection of the leader's capacities, traits, values and needs, when mapped with the
reflected indicative capacities, competencies, external actions, and behaviours provide
positive reverberations for them (Narayanan and Vijayalakshmi, 2020). The cardinal step
towards recovery of organizations would be to rediscover its purpose. Many companies and
their leaders are now looking forward to grabbing a niche to bounce back and change their
business models. As per one leader respondent, "The need of the hour is more transparency,
better communication, more empathy, more balance between profits, better employee welfare
and shareholder benefits, and an inclusive voice of employee in decision making."

*niyatam kuru karma tvam karma jyayo hyakarmanah sharira-yatrapi cha te na prasiddhyed
akarmanah II3.8II*

You should thus perform your prescribed duties since action is superior to inaction. By ceasing
activity, even your bodily maintenance will not be possible.

In lieu of narrowing down their focus, resilient leaders should disengage themselves from
bleak thoughts and move towards the ancient Indian wisdom and guiding principles to
furnish positive resonances to their followers. The current social milieu should be exploited
for the situational shift of discovering opportunities amidst crisis through unconventional
utilization of their resources to steer their organization towards stability. Many
organizations, during the present pandemic got involved in corporate social responsibility
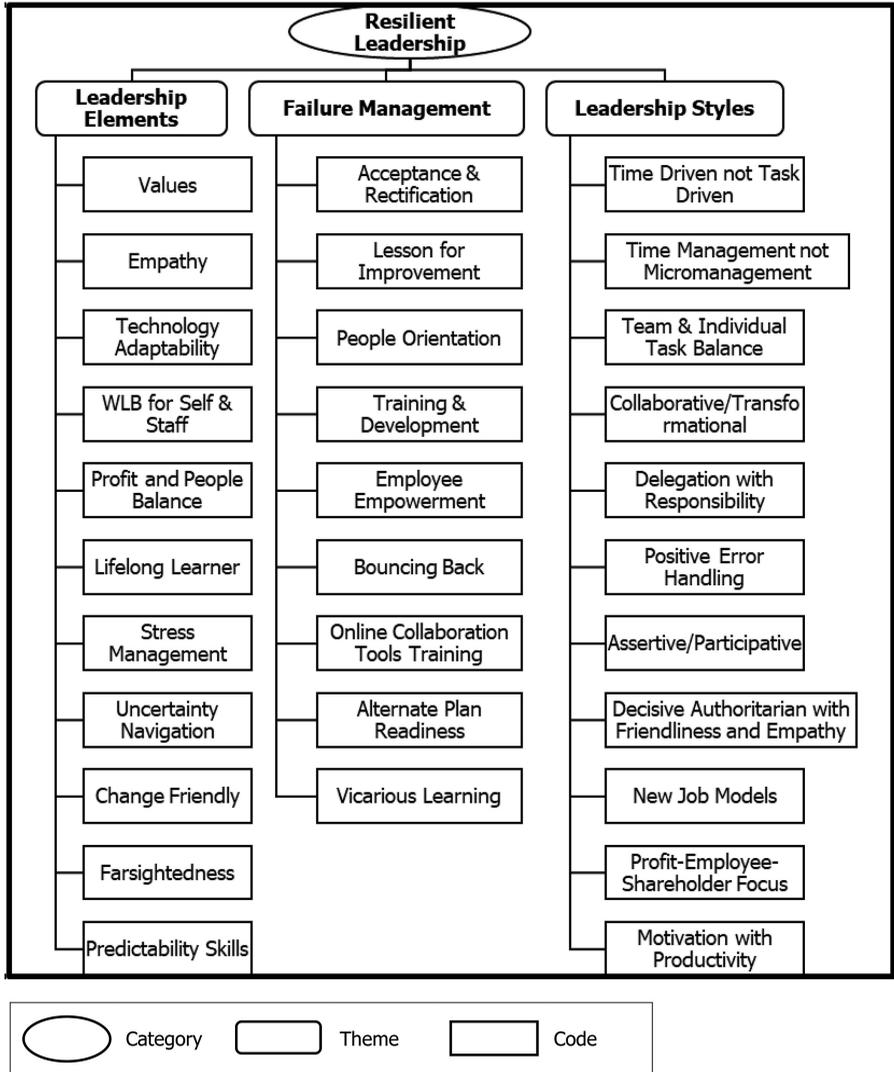
Figure 2.
Thematic Map II

Source: By authors

activities and took to the manufacturing and distribution of face masks, sanitisers and other personal protective equipments (Dwivedi and Kumar, 2021). At this juncture, this shift has to be from short-term contingency planning to mid- and long-term economic and scenario planning, ensuring the alignment of financial resources to revamp the business. Business continuity models wherein alternative work procedures utilizing new prototypes like social distancing, flexible workplace, and sanitization, along with the best use of technology need to be set up. In the post pandemic era, automation and state of the art technology should be regarded as inextricable components of business resilience instead of a mere cost-saving mechanism.

People-centric approach and better interpersonal relationships:

tmaupamyena sarvatra samam pashyati yo 'rjuna sukham va yadi va duhkham sa yogi paramo matah" II6.32II

I regard them to be perfect yogis who see the true equality of all living beings and respond to the joys and sorrows of others as if they were their own.

For leaders, the miniscule gesture of providing more support to one's employees just like his own, with the lone aim of lending a helping hand and to steer them through the crisis will help reap big dividends. While resuming businesses, leaders must consider and provide for the physical as well as the mental well-being of their employees. Resilient leaders would be expected to be kind and compassionate towards their employees with a focus on creating a sanguine and healthy ecosystem, enabling their employees to thrive. A stronger belief in *Aparigraha* or the feeling of non-possessiveness, and generosity, when practiced, has a positive impact on group performance (Bali *et al.*, 2019). Decisive leadership styles will gain more and more prominence as it is needed to push business in an uncertain world, but the leader will also need to display utmost friendliness and empathy towards the workforce, irrespective of the levels and social standing.

vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini śhuni chaiva śhva-pāke cha paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśhinaḥ II5.18II

The truly learned, with the eyes of divine knowledge, see with equal vision a Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater.

The frontrunner companies, known for being customer centric, attentive towards competitive moves, new technologies lose market leadership and perish prematurely. Similarly, the result-oriented leaders exhibit myopic focus on short term results and fail to keep an eye on long term sustainable organizational growth. New business models and best practices notwithstanding, the real icons fail primarily due to profit alone decision making and lack of ethically sound practices. What emerges is a major shift from micromanaging to macro concern for team turmoil and demonstrating compassion. The team in turn tends to respond in terms of efforts towards productivity and countering crisis. Adversity then belongs to the entire team which leads to stress diffusion, emotional repair, and survival through crisis. This resilient leadership also brings rapid learning of business environment, vicarious learning from others' mistakes, sharing relevant best practices while simultaneously building collective resilience.

Therefore, according to another leader respondent, "the twin ability to manage productivity and motivation for 100 percent remote teams distributed across time zones, and time management has become a big challenge with no work life balance due to work from home" and the solution seems to be "building personal connection with team members, showing understanding and empathy with the impacted people and balancing company growth objectives with people morale objectives". The single thread traversing the leadership firmament seems to be the human element being as important as the growth factor in present times as was consistently vouched by ancient proposition of *Vasudhaivkutumbakam* (the whole world as one family), which was buried under the debris of only profit chasing relegating people contribution and well being to the background.

Conclusion
COVID-19 is a global issue and excellent leadership is required to navigate through this crisis which provides leaders with the scope to bring about enhanced team coherence and solidarity. Businesses henceforth will continue to face drastic changes and business leaders must ensure that they devise and implement strategies foreseeing the future dynamics, which equip them with indispensable business agility to enhance productivity and gain success in

the post-COVID world. The significance of resilient leadership is not just for the continuity of business operations, but also for being both people- and result-centric. It is important as COVID-19 may not be a temporary crisis but perhaps a continuous hazard which therefore places a huge demand on resilient leadership, business agility to navigate uncertainty and progressive yet demanding alteration in organizational mindsets. A typical crisis, according to Deloitte (n.d.), plays out over three time frames:

Respond - react with the present situation, prepare and manage continuity

Recover - learn and emerge stronger

Thrive - the ability to confidently prepare for the next normal

Encapsulated in few sentences, the strong interconnectedness between the ancient Indian wisdom, as propagated by the Bhagavad Gita continues to bring paradigm shifts in the way today's leaders bring a renewed and enriching perspective towards improving ecological consciousness, communitarian roots and compassion at workplace among others. Leaders today have the significant responsibility to skillfully consider all the three time frames concurrently and work accordingly on resource allocation to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and help their organizations strive and grow.

armaṇy-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo 'stvakarmaṇi II2.47II

You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, nor be attached to inaction.

This extensively celebrated and frequently quoted verse from the Gita expounds the direction of actions towards a goal, without the consternation of the outcome of those actions. Actions get converted into passion when they are free from the subjugation of results, and passion is eternal. With such a perspective, the crisis has the likelihood of providing a huge scope to trudge ahead and add greater value and pragmatic impact on society, instead of just bouncing back to the status quo.

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About the authors
Monika Bansal is pursuing PhD at Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, Faridabad, India. She is also a Life Skills Trainer, imparting Life Skills and Employability training to graduate and postgraduate students. Monika Bansal is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: maggarwal118@gmail.com

Surbhi Kapur is Professor, Faculty of Management Studies, Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, Faridabad, Haryana, India. Besides teaching, training and instructional designing towards employability and current communication trends, her focus areas are management, gender and cross-cultural studies.