

STUDIES IN LEADERSHIP; A CRITIQUE ON EMPIRICAL AND CONCEPTUAL ANALYSES

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There appear to be two phases in the study of rural leadership in India. The first phase may be called the conventional phase and the second the progressive phase. Studies in the conventional phase have been primarily concerned with the dynamics of leadership as evidenced in village factions, economic status, caste hierarchy, gerontocracy and family prestige. Their universe has often been the self-contained little communities, their autonomous cultural systems, the restricted spheres of social influence confined to narrowly defined social networks and extended kinship ties. Their criteria of leadership were conventional and the characteristics they unearthed largely traditional. The forces of modernization did not upset the continuity of tradition; the consequences of modernization were only peripheral. As such, social change served as a remote background to, rather than an integral part of, leadership studies in the first phase. The investigators hinted at the challenges of change in passing, but seldom took the challenge seriously.

Studies of leadership in the progressive phase took into consideration the processes and dynamics of modernization. They dealt with actual as well as potential challenges to traditional authority and documented the emergence of new patterns of leadership. They discovered the 'young Turks', the progressive, innovative and cosmopolite community actors. Their universe was the changing rural communities caught up, in the mainstream of national progress. They *no* longer looked for isolated small communities cut off from the rest of the nation. The spread of mass

media, technological progress, educational revolution, impact of community development, evolution of Panchayati Raj and the growth of representative democracy were conducive to the development of new patterns of leadership. Recent studies, therefore, have evolved some modern criteria of leadership based on the changes and challenges perpetrated by the forces of modernization.

Dhillon, Epstein, Majumdar, Lewis, Mandelbaum, Ranga Rao, Harjindar Singh and many others have explained traditional leadership in terms of characteristics unique and most germane to Indian rural social system. According to these authors the most important attributes of leadership in villages of India are: position in the local caste hierarchy, wealth, especially ownership of land, reputation and size of the family, age, connections and influence outside the village, leisure time available, elaborate performance of ceremonies, knowledge of court affairs, and hospitality. Prodipto Roy, Lalit K. Sen, Fliegel, Vidyarthi, Loomis, Narain, Bhat, Kumar, Abraham and others, have in their efforts to highlight leadership in the progressive phase, relegated many of the traditional attributes to the background and ascribed high predictive validity to several modern variables in identifying progressive leadership. Some of the new determinants of leadership so unearthed are: education, literacy, exposure to mass media, cos-mopoliteness, social participation, innovativeness, secular orientation, political knowledgeability, achievement motivation and empathy.

The conventional and progressive phases

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do not necessarily represent two chronological sequences and cannot be classified as earlier and recent studies in leadership. Their difference is based on the mode of inquiry, selection of variables and, above all, the radius of their explanatory shell. There are social scientists today, especially among anthropologists, who observe autonomous cultural systems of small communities fostering traditional leadership and there are anthropologists in the guise of sociologists who delineate patterns of rural leadership solely in terms of inter-caste relations. Their investigations delve into the cultural systems of rural social organization but their treatment of the forces of change is superficial.

Having differentiated between conventional and progressive phases in the study of leadership, let us examine the principal findings of various studies.

One of the earliest investigations is that of H. S. Dhillon who studied leadership and groups in a Mysore village during 1953-54. Dhillon developed a socio-economic scale for classifying the village families on the basis of seven socio-economic factors: land owned, land mortgaged, amount of credit and debt, type of house structure, income from non-agricultural occupations, and ownership of live-stock and bullock carts. He made a detailed study of the kinship and marital ties as well as the social, economic and ceremonial relations between the village families. His technique for identifying village leaders was "to observe and analyze the situation in which the 'leaders' are expected to play their leadership roles. Occasions like court quarrels, meetings of panchayats held to settle important disputes or to settle arrangements for village-wide festivals and ceremonies like marriage and betrothal at which

"Yajman Veelya" (ceremonial offering of betel leaf and areca nuts to respected persons) are the ones which reveal who are the most important and influential persons in the village. The information obtained by this indirect method of studying such situations was supplemented and checked by direct questioning of the selected 30 respondents. Each of these was asked to name the persons who took an active interest in village affairs, were invited to attend panchayat meetings and were honoured during ceremonies and festivals."¹ Dhillon also studied the functioning of the traditional village panchayat and the statutory panchayat with special emphasis on the role played by village leaders in these organizations.

The study revealed three categories of leaders: (1) primary or major leaders (2) secondary leaders and (3) tertiary or minor leaders. The primary leaders are those whose presence is considered essential in all important meetings of the village panchayat, whether held for settling disputes, arranging festivals or for any other matter of village-wide importance. They may be entrusted with Panchayat funds and called upon to attend meetings of neighbouring panchayats. Secondary leaders are persons who dominate their respective factions and whose presence is considered essential for all important meetings of their own faction panchayats and of the village panchayat when matters, concerning their faction are discussed. Though active and influential in the village, they are seldom invited to panchayat meetings in the neighbouring villages. Minor leaders represent small kinship units of four or five families. They are not very influential in village affairs and are leaders only in the sense that they represent their

¹ H. S. Dhillon (1955) : 12.

own small groups who are not otherwise represented.

According to Dhillon, factors contributing to leadership can be classified into three categories: Social Status of the family, economic status of the family and individual personality traits. The inherited social position and reputation of the family, size of the family, elaborate performance of ritualistic ceremonies, especially at the time of marriage or death, and wealth, especially ownership of land, contribute to leadership. Other factors that improve leadership chances are age, leisure, time available, inclination to attend social and ceremonial matters, hospitality, influence outside the village either through marital relations with important families or contact with officials, knowledge of court affairs and education.

Dhillon identified 14 primary, 11 secondary and 10 minor leaders and thus concluded that the leadership pattern is diffused with as many as 25 primary or secondary leaders out of 135 families in the village. This enormous figure is particularly perplexing when we consider the fact that only a small representative sample of 30 families was selected for intensive inquiries. Obviously Dhillon's definition of a 'leader' is at once vague and broad. "The village leaders are to be understood to be respectable and influential persons who are shown respect at ceremonies and festivals and are invited to take part in panchayat meetings to settle village disputes and issues."² And Dhillon did not ask his respondents to name their leaders, instead respondents were asked to name persons who took an active interest in village affairs, who were invited to panchayat meetings and who were requested to re-

ceive or distribute ritual offerings on ceremonial occasions. This is a crude form of reputational method but Dhillon combined it with positional approach as he made inquiries of members of the village as well as faction panchayats. But even the best combination of reputational and positional approaches cannot identify effective community leaders since the said approaches fail to examine instances in which power is actually employed by individuals or groups to sway the outcome of a decision one way or the other. And Dhillon made the erroneous assumption that reality and appearance are equivalent since he decided that leaders could be identified by observing which persons were shown respect on ceremonial occasions and were invited to participate in panchayat meetings. Now, there is no plausible reason to assume that these are the effective community leaders who are active in the decision-making process and who can sway the balance of power in the village community. Thus to be reputed and respected is mistaken for being influential. Above all, Dhillon's choice of independent variables is totally inadequate and he has missed altogether most of the social-psychological attributes of leadership which are of great conceptual significance as well as empirical relevance.

In his anthropological study of "Village Life in Northern India", Oscar Lewis touched on the dynamics of rural leadership. He concludes: "An analysis of the personal and socio-economic characteristics of Jat leaders reveals that leadership depends upon the following factors in order of importance: wealth, family reputation, age, and genealogical position, personality traits, state of retirement, education, connections and influence with outsiders and

² H. S. Dhillon (1955): 115.

finally numerical strength of the family and lineage."³

On the attributes of rural leadership, Lewis and Dhillon have reached strikingly similar conclusions. Lewis's study of the North Indian village brought out: "Significant correlation between leadership and family size. Seventeen out of the 20 families of Rampur's leaders have the largest families in their respective factions. Moreover, the families of the primary leaders are generally larger than those of secondary leaders. There are only four families among the Jats which are as large as the leaders' families but do not have a leadership role. In the case of the three leaders with small families we find that they have the support of very large lineages."⁴

And the findings that emerged from Dhillon's study of a South Indian village suggest: "All of the 6 families having 12 members or more are families of leaders; 5 being families of primary leaders. On the other hand, none of the 55 families with less than 5 members have any leadership status. It may be mentioned that 4 out of the five leaders coming from the lowest socio-economic class (group IVa on the socio-economic scale) and 3 out of the 5 from group Mb although poor, are considered as important *yajmans* (leaders) because of the large size of their families and extensive network of their marital relations within the village."⁵

Again, both Lewis and Dhillon have pointed out a positive relationship between family income and leadership. According to Lewis: "Wealth is a basic

criterion for leadership. Although leaders are found among all three socio-economic classes, they clearly come from the upper levels of each and the correlation between wealth and leadership is highest as we move up the scale."⁶ Similarly, Dhillon reports: "Wealth is one of the most important criteria for leadership. Some of the persons who are not from families with inherited claims to *yajmanship* have attained leadership status by virtue of their wealth which has generally been acquired in trade."⁷

In 1961-62 Andre Beteille studied the distribution of social power in a Tanjore village. According to him, upto the 1940s power in the village was based on conventional factors like ownership of land, high social and ritual status and superior education. Brahmins dominated the system of social stratification and enjoyed an almost exclusive monopoly of conventional resources of power. But all this began to change gradually, and with increasing momentum after the freedom struggle in 1942. Numerical strength emerged as a decisive determinant of leadership and the inherited social status was relegated to the background. Beteille concluded: "The emerging leaders of the village are, thus, not members of the old landowning class. They generally belong to the class of small owner-cultivators. Their power is, to a large extent, based upon numerical support within the village and political contacts outside it. These two factors as we have seen, tend to reinforce each other."⁸

Punit has viewed rural leadership as a nexus of social pressures analytically se-

³ Oscar Lewis (1958) : 127.

⁴ Oscar Lewis (1958) : 129-130.

⁵ H. S. Dhillon (1955) : 120.

⁶ Oscar Lewis (1958) : 16.

⁷ H. S. Dhillon (1955) : 120.

⁸ Andre Beteille (1966) : 202.

parable from power and personal influence. Such a nexus of "Social pressures" cannot be "completely engulfed by the limiting factors of community life, like power, wealth and status."⁸ The attributes of community leadership and the specific attributes of individual members of the community are mutually irreducible, for leadership "approximates more and more to the consensus of the community."¹⁰

Punit implies that there are two types of leaders: natural and progressive. Natural leaders are generally respected by the entire community but are resistant to change. "These leaders are respected because they rigidly adhere to the local customs and usages and thereby become symbolic of the established social order. The more privileged classes will be supporting such leadership because it is only through such allegiance that their prerogatives may be sustained. The less privileged groups will be supporting it, because it is only through allegiance to it that a certain sense of security could be obtained."¹¹ The progressives usually emerge from the less privileged sections of the community, and are receptive to change but are less influential and cannot lead the entire community.

Ranga Rao's Andhra village is also dominated by one or two primary leaders, though, of course, a gradual growth of multiple secondary leadership is in the offing. The old authoritative leadership is still fighting the new democratic leadership. However, in the wake of Panchayati raj elections, "the present-day leadership is concentrated in the numerically and also economically important caste group. This supports Professor Srinivas's theory of the "Dominant Caste."¹²

Mandelbaum's observations on rural leadership lend support to the findings of Dhillon and Lewis. Wealth, reputation and unity of one's family, the extent of leisure time at one's disposal and willingness to keep abreast of what goes on in the community are major determinants of leadership. The ability to switch personal styles of conduct, readiness to sacrifice personal and partisan interests in the larger interest of the collectivity and esteem for high moral conduct enhance chances of leadership. "Age alone is not sufficient to qualify a man for leadership but youth is a disqualification and a reasonable maturity as father and manager is necessary. "Similarly, wealth is necessary but is not in itself sufficient. To be an effective leader, a man must use his wealth properly in extending hospitality, in entertaining many visitors, and, as we have noted above, in staging generous family and jati rites. A wide network of connections with powerful people is an advantage, so too is some education, which presumably gives entry to holders of power. Because an effective leader must communicate effectively, fluency and cogency in public speech are great assets. In addition, the rising leader of a jati should demonstrate that he intends to use these assets for the general good before he is regularly, widely and spontaneously invited to help maintain the whole jati."¹³

The studies we have examined so far portray the characteristic patterns of conventional authority, though, here and there, they give an inkling of the new and emerging patterns of leadership. Their frame of reference was undoubtedly the

⁹ A. E. Punit, p. 48.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹² K. Ranga Rao, p. 59.

¹³ David, G. Mandelbaum (1970) : 273;

past, of which the present is a symbolic manifestation. Trends of change are somewhere in the horizon but not clearly visible. However, it is now generally conceded that new generations of progressive leadership are systematically churning the dynamics of India's rural social system since the inception of Community Development and Panchayati Raj, which has led to a decentralization of governmental authority and delegation of substantive power to statutory local bodies, entrusted with the task of planning and implementing programmes of rural development at the initiative of and with the fullest possible reliance upon community resources. As Nagpaul observes: "The new social and economic forces generated by the large scale development plans have shaken up the social structure and are beginning to alter the old values and attitudes as well. The traditional leadership is also undergoing a change and new patterns of leadership are emerging on the scene. In this context, the introduction of community projects, land reforms, decentralized local administration and adult franchise which aim at the reconstruction of rural society, have brought forth the importance of leadership."¹⁴ And in recent years social scientists have been particularly interested in the emerging patterns of leadership in modernizing India, and several studies have attempted to determine the characteristics of influentials who dominate the Indian rural scene. Prodipto Roy, using Maurice Sill's data from a few North Indian villages, analyzed the characteristics of emergent leaders. He arrived at the following conclusions:

- (1) Individuals with a high income and a high level of living are

likely to become leaders in the new organizations of the village.

- (2) People with more education will participate more in these social organizations.
- (3) Members of large families are likely to emerge as leaders.
- (4) Age and caste do not seem to determine who will be leaders and who will not.
- (5) The new leaders seem to have a higher level of contact with extension agencies.
- (6) The new leaders are generally a little more secular-oriented than most village people but they are not extremely secular.¹⁵

Similarly, Barnabas's study of the 'Characteristics of Lay Leaders in Extension Work' (1958) also indicates that leaders, as compared to non-leaders, have high social status, own more land and are better educated. In his study of the 'Emerging Patterns of Leadership in Panchayati Raj Set-up in Mysore State,' Bhat found that, *in addition to the variables already mentioned, contact with banks, proficiency in languages and political affiliation were significantly related to leadership. According to Bhat: "Though there is no sudden change in the emerging pattern of rural leadership the gradual transformation to modernity is remarkably clear."*¹⁶ He has also highlighted the influence of political parties over village leadership in the context of democratic decentralization. "The ruling party is increasingly gaining its hold over the village leaders and thereby strengthening its position in rural areas. As these rural institutions are linked with

¹⁴ L. P. Vidyarthi (1967) : 58.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

¹⁶ K. S. Bhat (1967) : 143.

the state, this hold of the ruling party may ultimately result in the dominance of 'politics over society'.¹⁷ Reports of the diffusion studies done in India clearly show that leaders have a higher caste status, higher level of living, greater political awareness of the national scene and are on the whole more progressive than non-leaders. The UNESCO-sponsored study on 'Status Images in Changing India' done in 1965-66 sought to determine the characteristics associated with social status as perceived by rural as well as urban industrial informants. The study revealed that education, character, social service and income are the four most important attributes that determine social status according to both rural and urban respondents.

In 1965, National Institute of Community Development launched a nationwide survey on the awareness of community development in village India covering 365 villages and interviewing 7224 persons including 1414 leaders and a random sample of 3375 men and 2435 women. It was one of the most ambitious social surveys conducted in India and gathered a whole mass of data on leaders and non-leaders from all over the country. In their preliminary report on the data, Sen and Roy observed that the percentage of leaders is higher at about every positive score point than the non-leaders. About 54 per cent of the leaders read newspapers whereas only 20 per cent of the randomly chosen males and 5.7 per cent of the females did that. The urban linkage of the leaders is higher than that of non-leaders, and on the sacred-secular scale, the scores of leaders consistently fell toward the secular end of the continuum. An analysis of the background of leaders reveals that 55.4 per cent

of them were either Brahmins or high caste non-Brahmins; 33.6 per cent had finished middle school or more; 63.5 per cent had finished primary school; 23.7 per cent were illiterates; 87.2 per cent were cultivators and only 0.9 per cent were agricultural labourers.

Fliegel and others studied the relationship between selected characteristics of leaders and village-level adoption of agricultural innovations. In their selection of leaders, they combined positional and personal influence approaches. Five formal leaders who held official positions in various village organizations were selected. These leaders were then asked to name persons whom they contacted for authentic information on farming. The three people who received the highest sociometric scores in each village were interviewed. This method produced a representative sample of eight leaders in each village, five formal and three informal leaders.

The study revealed that extension agency contact and caste position of leaders were the most influential variables in village level adoption of improved agricultural practices. Other characteristics of leaders which were found significantly related to village level adoption in the order of importance were: secular orientation, urban contact, credit-risk orientation and level of living. The researchers argue: "Caste positions of leaders play an important role in village modernization. As a bridge between the traditional past and the new, caste still guarantees a higher social status to the leaders, which helps them to be modern (high extension agency contact, high urban contact, secular orientation and credit-risk orientation), and to influence the whole village in that direction. Some of the so-called modern cha-

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 143-44.

racteristics, such as empathy, and favourable opinion of extension programmes, were found to be dependent *on* the caste status."¹⁸ Fliegel and others are emphatic that modernization in Indian villages cannot be explained only by the presence of the so-called "modern" characteristics of leaders and that only a configuration of traditional and modern characteristics of leaders can effectively account for the matrix of social power in India.

Whereas most of the studies considered above are concerned with rural leadership in general, Lalit Sen has undertaken the most thorough-going study of opinion leadership in India. Using the data gathered as part of the larger project entitled 'Diffusion of Innovations in Rural Societies' directed by Everett M. Rogers, Sen sought to identify the determinants as well as the characteristic pattern of opinion leadership. His sample consisted of 680 farmers from eight Indian villages. Opinion leaders were selected on the basis of four sociometric questions. Respondents were asked to name one person whom they sought first for advice and information on (1) Technical problems associated with farming, (2) Obtaining Credit, (3) Health and (4) How to get the maximum return for farm products. The index of the degree of opinion leadership was calculated first by counting the total number of nominations received across the four sociometric items and then by standardizing the score for the differences in village sample size. In determining the attributes of opinion leaders Sen considered 31 independent variables which were grouped under four categories of characteristics — socio-demographic, economic, systemic linkage and social-psychological.

Sen's major findings may be summarized as follows:

- (1) Leaders are much more in touch with the outside world through visits to urban centres, education, political knowledgeability, exposure to mass media and contact with extension agency than non-leaders. They are also more progressive than non-leaders in farming as indicated by their higher scores on adoption of improved agricultural practices, farm commercialization and farm labour efficiency. Leaders are older than non-leaders and they hold important positions in a variety of community organizations in the village. They have a higher caste status and a higher level of living than non-leaders. "Belonging to a higher caste immediately establishes a power advantage for the leader over the non-leader, an advantage which is ritualized and legitimized by custom."¹⁹
- (2) Polymorphic leadership is the predominant type in the eight Indian villages, although there is an appreciable incidence of monomorphic leadership also. Generally speaking, leaders in rural India dominate not only the political life of the village but other walks of life as well. However, polymorphism in more modern villages is relatively less important than in the more traditional villages.

¹⁸ Frederick, C. Fliegel and Others (March 1968) : 85.

¹⁹ Lalit K. Sen, p. 56.

- (3) In the Indian villages, formal leadership and opinion leadership considerably overlap. It means that the power advantage of opinion leaders over non-leaders sanctioned by custom also manifests itself in their higher status in the secular power hierarchy.
- (4) "Status and authority in Indian villages are still ascribed, and the fact is recognized and accepted by all. With changing times, the leaders have sought for other secular forms of power such as holding elective and nominated offices, but the overall effect of their position is the same as before."²⁰ Yet leaders in more modern villages are more innovative than leaders in more traditional villages.
- (5) Communication flows vertically from leaders who are at the top of the village hierarchy to the lower strata and status heterophily is the determinant factor in this communication process.

These studies represent some of the major attempts at delineating the salient characteristics of emergent leaders in village India. And they have been concerned with rural leaders in general, having failed to make any distinction between different types of leaders. However, in his recent study of the 'Dynamics of Leadership in village India' the present author has made a clear distinction between community leadership and opinion leadership, which according to him, represent two analytically separable faces of social power.

Lalit Sen for his study of opinion leadership and Abraham for his study of community leadership used the same data gathered in the second phase of the diffusion project in India. These authors located opinion leaders in the same manner. Whereas opinion leadership was the focus of Sen's study, Abraham was more interested in community leadership which was identified by asking the respondents to name not more than three persons who could go and talk with the district administrative officer about a major problem in the village and take general charge of contacting officials and handling financial matters.

Abraham's study revealed that six variables, namely, farm size, extension agency contact, newspaper exposure, social participation, secular orientation and empathy explain 25 per cent of the variance in community leadership. Among the socio-economic variables, farm size is the only significant attribute of community leadership which lends support to the general assumption that leaders in village India emerge from the land-owning, economically advantaged classes. The finding that family size, age and caste rank are in no way related to leadership is in sharp contrast to that of previous studies none of which had eliminated caste as a determinant of social power. In modernizing the rural India of today the relevance of economic dominance seems to have largely overshadowed the futile exercise of ritual superiority. And the finding that social participation is the most important attribute of leadership supports Katz's contention that accessibility is an essential prerequisite to leadership. That is, the community leader is one who is actively involved in the affairs of the community, who is a member of dif-

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

ferent voluntary associations and who, above all, is willing to place his services at the disposal of the community. The study also reveals that community leaders deviate from the sacred norms associated with caste and cow, and have developed a secular world view.

On the other hand, age, farm size, social participation and innovativeness have turned out to be the major determinants of agricultural opinion leadership. It is only natural that small farmers seek advice on agriculture from people who cultivate more land and have many years of experience in farming. The very high correlation between social participation and agricultural opinion leadership suggests that membership in the various village voluntary organizations is an important asset. Secular orientation is in no way related to agricultural opinion leadership, the implication being that opinion leaders conform to the most sacred norms of the community, whereas innovativeness is positively and significantly related to opinion leadership. It is no wonder that the flow of interpersonal influence emanates from those who have successfully tried scientific farming methods, improved seeds, modern implements, fertilizers and pesticides and are reputed as progressive farmers, whether or not they subscribe to the community's sacred norms concerning cow and the caste system which have no relevance for competence in agriculture.

Abraham showed that most characteristics ordinarily associated with leadership in village India namely, age, caste rank, farm size, education, literacy, farm specialization, extension agency contact, newspaper exposure, cosmopolitanism and political knowledge-ability are still relevant one way or the other. However, they lack predictive validity and fail to explain leadership adequately when the influence

of other variables is partialled out. Instead, social participation and farm size have emerged as the most significant correlates of leadership. This suggests that a distinction could be made between the source of power and the exercise of power. Most of these variables conventionally associated with leadership (Dhillon, Lewis, Mandelbaum, Sen, Fliegel, etc.) still contribute to the source of power but do not necessarily lead to the exercise of power. For example, Abraham's findings clearly show that age and caste rank are sources of community power but they fade out as correlates of emergent leadership. Accordingly, Abraham has classified leaders into two basic categories: the potential leader and the dynamic leader. A potential leader is one who has access to the sources of power and who possesses those characteristics which are traditionally associated with leadership. A dynamic leader is one who actually exercises power and is nominated to places of responsibility by other actors in the social system. The very fact that social participation is the most significant correlate of leadership implies that people tend to choose as their leaders those individuals who are actively involved in the affairs of the community rather than those who possess all the paraphernalia of leadership but are only passive spectators of on-going community activities.

This interesting phenomenon could be explained by means of a new theory which Abraham calls the theory of the structural devolution of power. The theory postulates that in modernizing village India there is a gradual transfer of power from potential leaders to dynamic leaders — from those who only own the conventional resources of power to those who also dominate the functional spheres of the community. The theory of the structural devolution of power is further supported

by the fact that the most significant correlates of community leadership are measures of systemic linkage — extension agency contact, newspaper exposure, and social participation. Abraham also hypothesizes that the process of structural devolution of community power varies directly with the process of modernization. That is, as the pace and degree of modernization increase, more and more power is devolved and delegated to active community influentials.

These findings lead to the definite conclusion that leadership is not an innate trait common to all types of leaders but a functional relationship specific to group situations. Leadership is not determined by cultural certification based on religious tradition or strategic social location attributed to caste; nor is the emergence of leadership a sheer chance occurrence. On the other hand, leaders are picked by people on the basis of valuable services rendered to the community, and their competence and public interest. Above all, it is not conformity to conventional norms but sensitivity to collective expectancy that weighs heavily in the determination of leaders. How, then, does a community leader differ from an opinion leader?

The differences between community leaders and opinion leaders can be brought into focus in terms of the functional prerequisites of the Indian rural social system, adopting Parsons' pattern variables, especially ascription vs. achievement (or quality vs. performance) and collectivity-orientations vs. self-orientation as a theoretical frame of reference. Although opinion leaders have accepted the technical norms governing agricultural practices, they have not abandoned the sacred norms centred on holy values. But community leaders are more liberal in their outlook

and have rejected many of the sacred norms based on tradition. Whereas opinion leaders are self-oriented in their acceptance of technical norms for their utilitarian value, community leaders are collectivity-oriented in their rejection of sacred norms which discriminate man against man on the basis of untouchability. The community leader, for instance is the one who is responsible for initiating and implementing programs for the benefit of the community as a whole and therefore, has to be oriented to the collectivity. The opinion leader, on the other hand, has adopted improved agricultural practices in order to increase his own crop yield, to fortify his economic position and also to maintain his leadership status even under the rapidly changing circumstances by adopting the most expedient norms of modernity which do not "hurt" his religious feelings: he is essentially self-oriented. That is, the opinion leader is conservative, cautious and expedient and slowly emerging out of the cocoon of tradition by accepting the most convenient and utilitarian norms of modernity. The community leader, however, is liberal, open-minded and enthusiastic about the secular law. Whereas opinion leaders tend to be older in age and tradition-oriented, community leaders tend to be younger, progressive and change-oriented. Opinion leaders are progressive in their technological orientation but conventional in their value orientation; they are rational in their self-orientation but traditional in their religious orientation.

Having reviewed a large number of studies in rural leadership, certain concluding remarks seem as appropriate as inevitable. The most fundamental question concerns the most appropriate method that can delineate the emerging patterns of leadership in village India. Literature on

the subject mentions five approaches to the study of leadership: (1) Positional or formal leadership approach, (2) Reputational or nominal leadership approach, (3) Social participation approach, (4) Opinion leadership or personal influence, and (5) Event Analysis or decision-making.

(1) Diffusion studies done in India have used formal and personal influence approaches to explain the structure of rural leadership. The study on the awareness of community development done by the National Institute of Community Development combined formal approach with sociometric nomination. And the several community studies cited above have relied heavily on reputational method. Event analysis or decision-making approach is yet to be used in a systematic study of social power in India. Social participation has been treated as an independent variable in several recent studies but no attempt has yet been made to develop a comprehensive index of social participation in the selection of community leaders. And even where opinion leadership has been studied, the scope of the flow of interpersonal influence has been restricted to agricultural information. Fliegel and others in their study of 'Agricultural Innovations in Indian Villages' combined positional and agricultural opinion leadership approaches in determining leader characteristics conducive to the adoption of improved farm practices. Sen in his study of opinion leadership failed to make any distinction between community leadership and opinion leadership and allowed himself to be carried away by the high correlation between them. However, Abraham's study has established beyond doubt that community leadership and opinion leadership represent two different faces of social power, that they are analytically separable and mutually irreducible and that the contri-

buting factors or predictive variables which can explain these two types of leadership are also different. These observations are only intended to show that any single approach to leadership can at best bring forth a distinct phase of social power and that even the most judicious combination of various approaches can only be a serious approximation in picturizing the power-matrix of the rural society; any single method of leader-selection, whether personal influence, formal or sociometric, is only a part-answer to the many-pronged question of predicting new patterns of leadership in modernizing village India. And it takes us automatically to the situational requirements of leadership.

(2) If different methods are likely to identify different types of leaders, it necessarily follows that leadership is not something that can be haphazardly transferred from one situation to another with uniform success. This functional perspective provides a conceptual framework for the explanation of the dynamics of leadership. The functional perspective suggests that a leader is a leader not because of certain personal or magical qualities inherent in him but because he performs certain functions relative to tasks which are positively evaluated by the group and are highly functional — or even indispensable — for the maintenance of the system. In other words, leadership is exhibited by different people at different times, depending on the task to be done and upon the composition of the group. As Paterson observes: "In this quest for effective leadership, the findings of research tend to point more and more to the importance of sensitivity and insight into the needs of the total situation in which the leadership is to function. The identification of essential leadership qualities per se will not insure effective results unless these qualities are determin-

ed in relation to a specific group situation and unless their functioning becomes an integral part of group behaviour."²¹ The essential idea, therefore, is that leadership is a function of situation, that every leader in every case has arisen through performing certain functions relative to some group somewhere, sometime. The implication of this approach in terms of both methodology of leadership studies and changing leadership functions in the context of modernization need to be looked into in greater detail.

(3) 'Traditional' as well as 'modern' variables are equally important in the general framework of leadership studies. The tendency of investigators in the conventional phase of leadership studies to give prominence to traditional variables like caste, reputation and size of family, performance of elaborate ritualistic ceremonies, etc. and the tendency of 'progressive' researchers to over-emphasise such abstract notions of modernity as achievement motivation, empathy, cosmopolitanism, farm labour efficiency, etc. at the expense of village factions, kinship ties and caste norms are equally regrettable. Tradition is not all static and change is not synonymous with revolution; and the new generations of leaders are not made of stuff alien to the local community; they spring from yesterday and not from tomorrow. Therefore, change and continuity, tradition and modernity, must be built into our methodological framework for the analysis of rural leadership.

(4) The present author is convinced that the distinction between source of power and exercise of power is of more than semantic interest. His recent study has given rise to the conclusion that tradi-

tional attributes contribute to the source of power and thereby builds up potential leaders. But mere ownership of certain conventional resources of power does not give them the leverage required to exercise power over the community. Rather, it is the people who are actively involved in the various village organizations, and thus accessible to most members of the community, that are acknowledged as leaders, irrespective of whether they belong to a high caste or not, and irrespective of whether or not they have the support of a large and reputed family. Therefore, the theory of the structural devolution of power which postulates that active power in India's rural communities tends to gravitate into the hands of dynamic leaders suggests a potential problem for further research.

(5) In recent years so much is being said and written about the emerging patterns of leadership in village India but precious little has been done to predict and explain the phenomena. Sen has, of course, sought to identify the determinants of opinion leadership with a measure of their predictive validity. And Abraham has found social participation and the size of the farm one operates as the best indices of leadership. It is particularly significant to note that the former — membership and offices held in various village organizations (or what Katz would call accessibility) — is the single most important determinant of community leadership. This finding also points to the immediate need for developing a comprehensive index of social participation which might provide the 'open sesame' to the newly emerging patterns of leadership in rural India. Moreover, it is imperative to draw a distinction between community leadership and opin-

²¹ National Education Association (1961) : 26.

ion leadership and probably other types of leadership, since different leaders are known to be influential in different community contexts and since the factors that contribute to their emergence are also likely to be different.

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