

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON POSSIBILITIES OF LATTICE LEADERSHIP IN INDIAN SITUATION : A LEADER PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan*

Abstract :

Any Initiative in the world starts with leadership attitude even if it is of starting or managing a business, the leadership styles are transforming to various levels and kinds and in this ever changing world scenario is coming with newer concepts of management styles to get results. The level of the competitive world is almost in a gallop momentum which is getting invented the android way and is throwing its challenges to leadership cadres in any kind of activity business or services sector. The time given to recover or reestablish is like changing a flat tyre while on the move, due to which the organisations big or small from the top is struggling to get into normal, or just thrive on with the new normal. The days have gone that the one-size-fits-all image, even to give a direction of work, and leadership style of that kind is no more a practical in a complex world, and it's getting more and more difficult to deny the changing world of work. The enduring model for how companies have managed their work and their people since the beginning of the industrial revolution, the ladder represented, inflexible paradigm in which prestige, rewards, access to information, influence, power and so on, tied directly to the leadership style no longer live the way it once was. Hence the latest evolving leadership style is Lattice Leadership, which is gaining prominence, since the workforce is more technological advanced, and economic trends virtually and globally dispersed, and mostly is team based rather

* **Director- Adithya School of Business, Adithya Institute of Technology, Coimbatore, Affiliated to Anna University, Chennai, Tamilnadu**

than individual based, the lattice structure with lattice leadership is spreading more across the world. Is it possible in India?.

Keywords: Lattice ; Leadership ; Mentality ; Organisation; Hierarchy; Style.

Introduction: A lattice organization (Bill Gore) is one that involves direct transactions, self-commitment, natural leadership, and lacks assigned or assumed authority even to the bottom level. Every successful organization in the world now boasts of a lattice organization that underlies the façade of authoritarian hierarchy. Now these lattice organizations are monuments of excellence and that while traditional organisations are enjoying in the traditional hierarchical system, the lattice organisations are doing things the straightforward and easy way. The Concept of lattice organization first was practiced in 2005 at Deloitte, with introducing flexible working arrangements rather than the normal system. The lattice initiative improvised the level of responsibility at work, with the skill that matched employees personal needs, and also made employees to choose working platforms as per their wish and skills. Many companies are finding this approach so successful and very useful. The Leadership Lattice is a structured approach (through conversation and building a developmental plan) consisting of different competency verticles (like joining internal teams, being a part of non-profit boards or associations, or sitting in on strategic planning meetings) that grow and support the working levels that are looking to advance in the organization. The Leadership Lattice does three things. It **provides a roadmap** for both the coach and the employee on specific areas of growth and development needed to build the competency and commitment according to level of the employee as well as advantageous to the organization. The lattice model **challenges the current beliefs of the working levels** about the timeframe and the expectation of their role (and growing roles) in the organization. It builds discrepancy through a tactical, tangible vision to facilitate growth of a worker, which tampers the superiority complex of the hierarchies. It **frames a commitment** between the coach or the leader and the worker and, that is in writing, has a specific work plan and review dates, and ensures that opportunities will be created, which the leader and worker put to discuss in terms of growth and support and mostly on about building competency and commitment. They together find areas where further training is needed like in facilitation skills or decision making skills.



Figure:1 : The Leadership Lattice In an Organisation: Designed by Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan

Hence the concept of Lattice Leadership Style and Lattice Organisation Structure is growing as a multi-functional internal team to explore skill sets, add value to the organization and become entrenched in the mission of the organization. The lattice concept both in leadership or organisation structure deliberates that authority is distributed and legitimised in a democratic setting. The concept of legitimacy and indirect leadership authority and direct with the concept of the lattice of leadership explains the character of dispersed leadership in a democracy (Uhr 2005: 78-81). Lattice concept is primarily from the theme of democracy, and it includes the contemporary democratic themes of power-sharing across many different locations of authority. A typical lattice organisation (as shown in figure 1 below) allows multiple work and career pathways, but without the traditional top-down hierarchy.

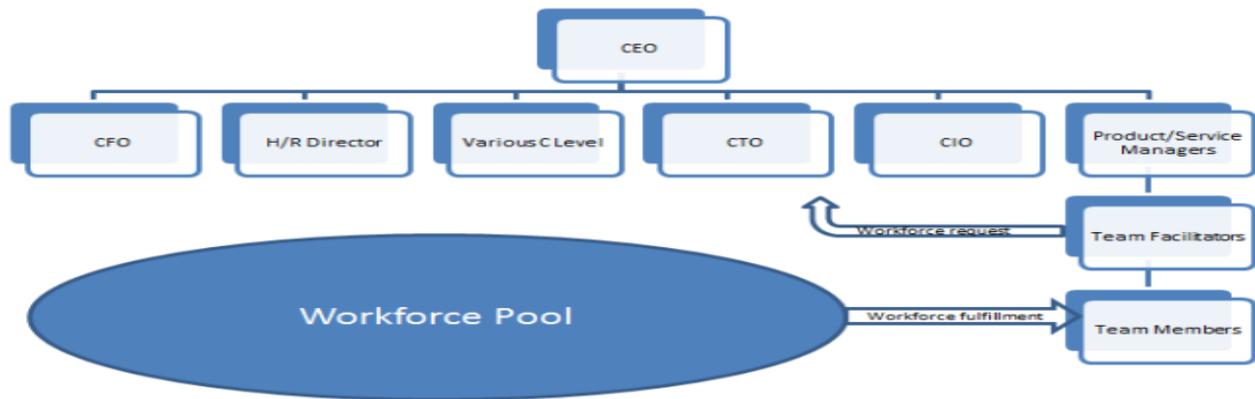


Figure :2 : Typical Lattice Organisation Chart: Reference : Concept ;Gore’s Leadership Model:Source: www.wikipedia.org

The functional organization structure above proves the aspect that Lattice provides economy of scale advantage and proficiency of expertise, while the hierarchical organization promotes clear lines of authority and performance rewarding. While assigning work by product, the initiative gives the advantage of promoting team thinking and team work with focus on the success of the product or initiative and therefore the organization is important than the individual.

Lattice structure is **not a matrix structure**, but a **evolved bit of a hybrid structure** that is one step closer to a true latticed web structure or virtual corporation. The structure provides financial and sponsor structure, and is more stable, flexible as well as fixed, which gives stability. The key advantage is that the employees report to one structure governing behavior as well as others if required which is governing work. It is flexible enough and able enough to support only a few products or initiatives and require dual planning with the hierarchy supporting the product structure. This functional organizational structure above connects the work related one by a product or service structure that is highly latticed or networked. This structure allows performance monitoring at the team level and not the individual person. Success or failure is the joint responsibility of the entire team because it chooses to inculcate itself and then accept responsibilities of individual items of work to accomplish a particular initiative. Hence creates an advantage of putting all workers to participate and contribute to development of new projects and allowing workers to work remotely or on flexible schedules. It includes permitting

employees to move laterally through the organization, changing positions so that they can gain knowledge about all aspects of operations.

The Lattice Model: A lattice organization uses a lattice model that consists of three lattice ways: **careers to suit the needs of individual workers; flexible work scheduling for a work-life balance** by taking on more or less responsibility; and full participation and providing ways for workers to **contribute ideas and suggestions** in every area of the company.

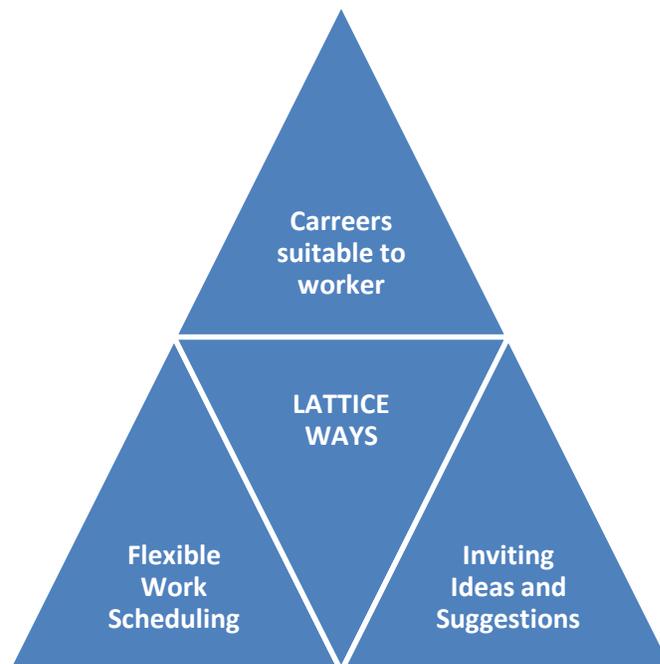


Figure: 3: Lattice Ways of Organisation Function in Modern Organisation: Designed by Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan

A lattice organizational structure automatically creates more flexibility and to makes employees to adapt more quickly to changing market conditions, and take better advantage of their talent pool. By giving workers more responsibility, the opportunity to change their work patterns, as well as to balance their work and home life, makes way for better workforce retention and improvised productivity. It empowers employees to customize their careers as they need and build careers that offers multiple paths for learning and growth. The modern applications like

cross-functional assignments, cross-country assignments, people taking time off for personal leaves and increased collaboration is another hallmark of lattice organization. **For example**, AT&T created a mass-participation system allowing any employee to contribute ideas and then work on the resulting projects.

Objectives:

- (i) To learn the growth of lattice in leadership and organisational structure**
- (ii) To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of Lattice Leadership Model**
- (iii) To examine the the organisational structure of Lattice Structure and its impact.**
- (iv) To learn from the success models of lattice structures.**

Review of Literature: (based on Management practices on Lattice Models)

Cisco , for example, builds versatile leaders by moving high-potential executives around the company. Ana Corrales, Cisco's vice president of global business operations, has made career moves to manufacturing, materials procurement, finance and customer service. Randy Pond, Cisco's executive vice president of operations, systems and processes. "This is the model for our future leaders."

AT&T's chief technology officer, John Donovan, created a social media website that invites every employee to contribute ideas, become a collaborator, provide encouragement, offer feedback and even invest Monopoly-style venture dollars. "This is meritocracy at its best, a highly diverse set of people, in every sense of the word, crowd-sourcing and crowd-storming," Donovan says. The site has more than 57,000 members and has generated more than 2,000 ideas. The first season's winning suggestions have been funded and moved from PowerPoint to prototype.

Thomson Reuters, an information services enterprise with \$12.9 billion in revenue, illustrates such integration. Its chief financial officer, Bob Daleo, transformed the decentralized finance functions of more than 40 portfolio companies into a more **lattice-like**, collaborative structure with service bureaus located around the globe. He adopted lattice ways to work, including telecommuting and other flexibility options, to meet the demands of 24/7 global

operations. Employee surveys show that 80% of employees rate the company's flexibility efforts favorably, far more than at other high-performing firms.

Lattice ways to build careers moved the company from its narrow focus on upward progression to a multidimensional career model. "Now someone can go from a business unit to a new geography to a corporate center to a division center, which provides a lot more variety, a lot more challenge and a lot more learning," says **David Turner**, executive vice president and chief financial officer of Thomson Reuters Markets. With employees working in geographically dispersed teams, the old ways of communicating no longer served. **Lattice ways to participate moved the organization** toward more interactive, transparent communication. In one instance, the finance division gave a role traditionally reserved for management—identifying improvement priorities—to employees, by launching a "pain points" portal where they can voice their views of current challenges for everyone to see. The company appoints teams to address the highest priorities.

Thomson Reuters' finance department's effort yielded approximately \$50 million in annual savings. It helped business leaders make better decisions with improved forecasting and planning, and employee engagement with performance and productivity to adaptability, the **lattice model is outperforming the ladder one.**

At Deloitte our annual employee survey shows that 90% of workers who experience **all three lattice ways** are engaged. Contrast that with the results of a major global workforce study by **Towers Perrin in 2007-'08** found just over 60% of employees in surveyed companies were engaged. Engagement is critical high levels of engagement have higher revenue growth and better returns on assets and are more profitable and productive than companies with low levels of engagement. Continuing to invest in the future using yesteryear's industrial blueprint is futile. The **lattice redefines workplace** suppositions, providing a framework for organizing and advancing a company's existing incremental efforts into a comprehensive, strategic response to the changing world of work.

Efforts to advance a company in any **one of these lattice ways are beneficial**, but the **power of the lattice is amplified** by the compounding effect that occurs when these new ways of thinking and acting reinforce one another to improve productivity, innovation and a business' ability to develop, retain and engage the right kinds of talent. Companies that act now to adopt lattice

organization will craft a bold new script for confronting the changing world of work. These forward looking companies are consigning the corporate ladder reality to where it belongs, in the history books.

Kemp (1988). Public leadership in contemporary Australia broadly takes two forms. One form illustrates the theme of ruling by detailing the ways that different centres of authority (political, bureaucratic, civic) contribute to public leadership. The other form illustrates the theme of legitimacy by tracing out less direct ways that ‘the public’ or the people collectively contribute to leadership.

Mulgan(2003) The lattice of leadership attempts to describe a style of dispersed public leadership based on a spread of locations where powers and influence intersect. The ‘veto point’ models play up the negative or obstructive potential.

The Australian constitutional system of governance provides many useful checks and balances against the worst excesses of executive self-interest. 41 Distributed Authority in a Democracy: The Lattice of Leadership Revisited The Australian political order as originally conceived one hundred years ago illustrates the preferred institutional path of nineteenth century liberal constitutionalism. Liberal constitutional doctrine was in two minds about the place of political leadership. This ambiguity is reflected in the Australian situation. The silence about the office of prime minister gives rise to two alternative accounts of ruling.

The political health of a democracy requires both dimensions of public leadership: quite direct leadership over the public by ruling powers and indirect leadership from the public that helps to define the core legitimacy of the political order (**Barber 1989**). The concept of a lattice of leadership links both dimensions by sketching out the distribution of leadership positions. This pattern of distributed leadership maps points where different forms of power and accountability intersect.

Objective :(i) To learn the growth of lattice in leadership and organisational structure

Lattice Model Prominence and its Positive Implications: Lattice model no doubt is the nature and structure for upcoming dynamic organisational leadership style where managements are able to foresee complexity. The strategies to create corporate lattice, through the employees, developments and recognition flow along horizontal, vertical and diagonal paths with thin line of democracy as a catalyst is gaining prominence. The lattice allows collaborative and customized

ways to structure work, build careers and foster participation. The traditional system of upper lower ladder which presumed work to be done in an office is disappearing, now even in India organisations are forced to adopt a lattice mindset. The lattice model is the only way which can provide more options as to the way work gets done, and it can encourage greater productivity and engagement in the world of growing complexity.

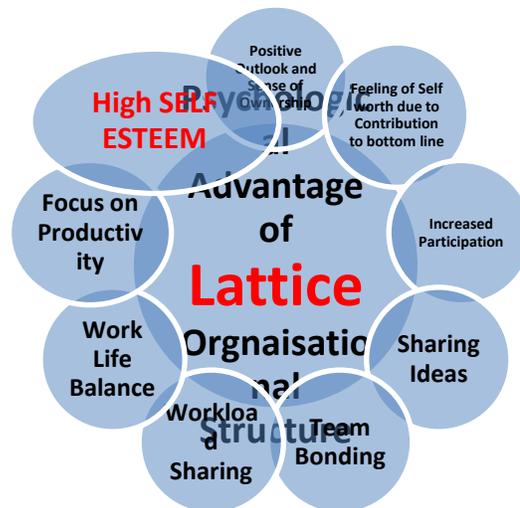


Figure:4 : Interrelated Psychological Advantage of Lattice Organisation Structure: Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan

The Psychological advantage of the Lattice Structure: The lattice structures are giving positive outlook and by contributions significantly to the bottom line, by **increasing, participation, sharing of ideas, team building, sharing workload and focus on productivity.** **The structure scientifically** improves engagement and create viable options for effective work life balance and that improves work life. Individual growth of employees in lattice ladder helps continued growth, development and organizational influence due to feasibility to move laterally, diagonally and down, as well as up. The speedy split second communicating facility allows the process of communication from the top is more collaborative and transparent as well as instant. The lattice leadership is inclusive where everyone, is expected to contribute. The full power of the lattice emerges when its various strengths of working, building careers and collaborating

automatically is connected to each other, mutually reinforcing a new formula for high performance.

Objective (iii): To evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of Lattice Leadership Model

Advantages of Lattice Organization : In recent years an increasingly unpredictable, constantly changing business environment has resulted in the need for more flexible organizations. Originally created in the late 1960's by W.L. Gore Associates, the lattice (hierarchy free) organization structure is becoming more prevalent today. The lattice organization structure is characterized by self-management as this structure has no hierarchy and no defined leadership. Gore describes the lattice organization structure as one that involves: 'Direct transactions, self-commitment, natural leadership, and lacks assigned or assumed authority.' A lattice organization structure can facilitate the creation of an ideocracy where anyone in the organization can contribute ideas regardless of position and how long they've been with the company. The benefit of this is that the best ideas can prevail and organizations can benefit from ideas they may not have heard in more hierarchical organizations where lower level employees often have a more limited voice. Employees have greater freedom to cross train and learn different aspects of the business and expand their knowledge, skills and expertise by not being restricted to one specific functional area. A lattice organization structure can also enhance employee retention as employees are empowered by having an almost unlimited amount of learning and development opportunities. Organizations utilizing this flat organizational structure can achieve competitive advantage from increased flexibility to adapt faster to the changing environment.

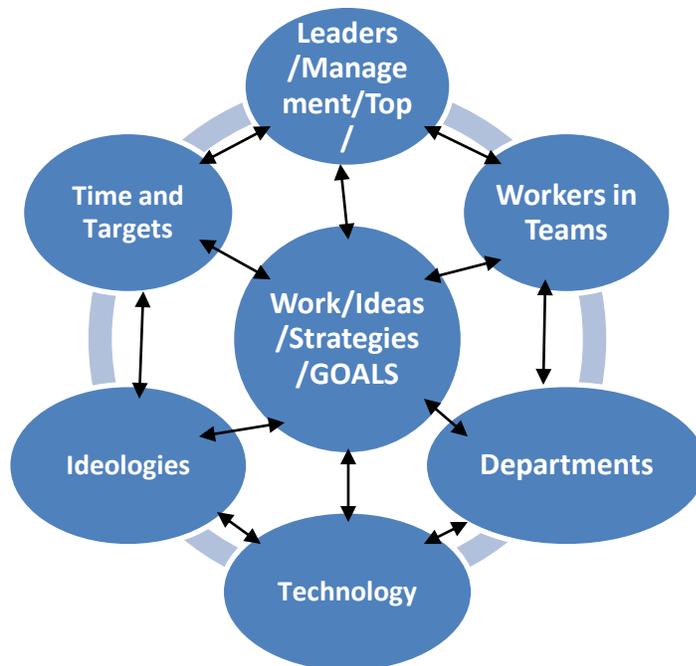


Figure:5 : The Vicious Cycle of Lattice Work Style Towards Goal than Hierarchy: Designed by Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan

Disadvantages: Any model or leadership style of organisational structure is not without problems, in this structure, at times, **not all employees have the same ability and self-discipline** to thrive without management, and sometimes absence of the leadership control can create the problem for a chaotic work environment. **Directionless Instructions and roles:** The flexibility advantage of the lattice organization that enables employees to shape their careers by working in different teams making roles hard to define also creates **problems in compensation and creating individual performance standards** a challenging area. Lattice organization structures are successful in new organizations but not without implementation challenges. Organizations looking for more flexible structure need to also create **compensation and rewards structures**, suitable methods appraising and motivating employees, and enforcing policy of talent management process within the human resources disciplines. In a lattice organizational structure, recruiting and **retaining personnel is approached so unconventionally, the traditional recruitment and selection elements are practically nonexistent.** There exists **no formal method to attract and select qualified employees.** Rather a lattice organizational structure can be formed by a group of like-minded professionals who choose to work collaboratively to achieve common objectives. Joining a lattice organization has underlying entrepreneurial components, which can be problematic if the organization's purpose and goals shift. Similar to a **results-only work environment (ROWE)**, the lattice organizational structure lacks the ability to form compensation structures according to qualifications and level of expertise. There is also a **lack of standardization to ensure salaries and benefits** are competitive, internally and externally. Compensation and performance bonuses lose their importance within a lattice structure. A lattice organization requires employees whose **discipline and motivation are off the chart** which means it needs to be self governed and not institution based hence it is bit difficult. Performance evaluation is an essential component for employee development in traditional organizational structures; therefore, a lattice organization lacks the fundamental steps to establish performance standards. The **informal nature** of these types of relationships precludes policy enforcement. In a lattice organizational structure, each person is accountable only to himself. Policies that shape a traditional workplace are loosely formed and difficult to enforce in a lattice structure, creating a potentially chaotic working environment. **Creating motivation is difficult** in a lattice structured organization because there

is no one to provide motivational activities. Another disadvantage associated with this type of organizational structure is the timeliness that decisions are made. The fact that the decisions made through the organization are done as a consensus means that there has to be a **large amount of interaction between the associates to come up with the best answer**. This can take a lot longer than the authoritarian decision-making style, in which the boss makes the decision that they feel is best for the company.

Objective: (iv) :To examine the Impact of Lattice Leadership to the employees and Leaders with reference to the organisational structure.

Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE): Back in February I wrote a blog post about companies that offer their employees unlimited paid vacation time. The unlimited paid vacation time concept is a part of a greater concept called Results-Only Work Environment, which I intend to explore further in this post and in a follow-up post tomorrow. Many of us have experienced working with individuals who while they may seldom leave their desks and may even be the first to arrive and last to leave, don't seem to accomplish much work. While most organizations pay great rhetoric to the importance of employee results, many traditional organizations fall into the trap of rewarding face time over results. As this video mocks: Pioneered by consulting group Culture RX and in practice at Best Buy's Minneapolis headquarters, a Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE) is a management philosophy focused on employee results over presence. With ROWE employees are free to come and go as they please and do whatever they want, so long as work gets done and deadlines are met. As the authors of the book 'Why Work Sucks and How to Fix It: The Results-Only Revolution' Cali Ressler and Jody Thompson explain: For a ROWE to be achieved there should be unlimited paid vacation time, no mandatory meetings, no schedules and employees should have the freedom to come and go as they please without judgment from their coworkers and managers on how their day is spent. ROWE enables organizations to create an environment of trust, which quickly helps to differentiate the employees that are getting work done from those that aren't. This concept is most suited to knowledge work environments, which are task and project focused. It is unlikely to work in a service environment.

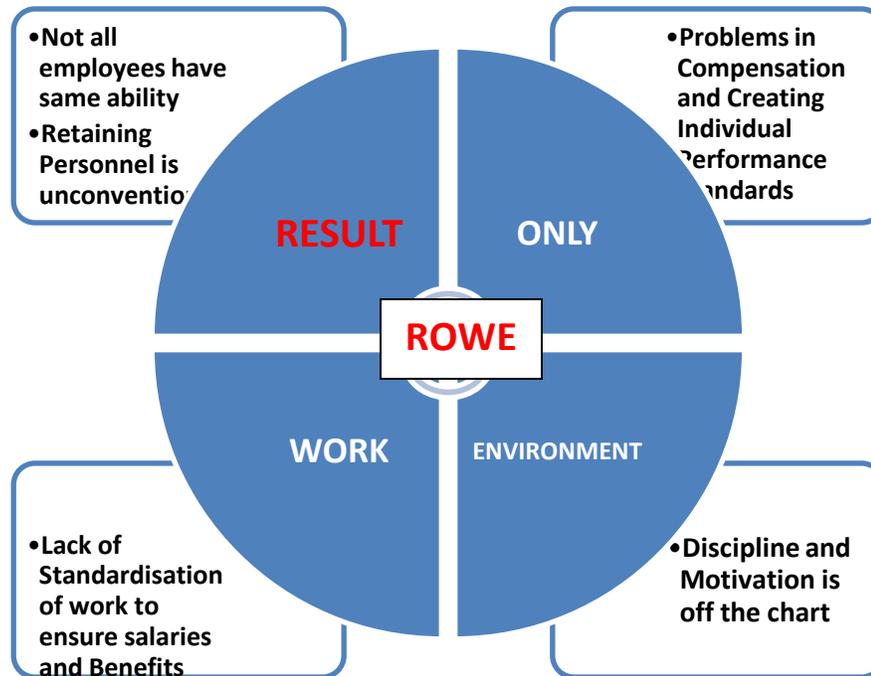


Figure: 6 : ROWE Structure of Lattice: A bigger disadvantage in India: Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan

The above structure is with the basis for a culture that binds together a belief in the individual to do what's right for the company with fast decision-making, diverse perspectives, and collaboration of small teams making everyone feel the same way, same task, same goal and same level of accomplishment, and like we are all the same way. Sharing risks and rewards and committed to what's best for the company to achieve the workers goals best by directing their efforts to the success of the corporation, to take action, to come up with ideas, to make mistakes as part of the creative process, to encourage each other to grow.

Objectives: (iv) : To examine the challenges of Lattice Leadership style with lattice structure

Challenge: Lattice model never rely on centralized, enterprise leaders to make all the key decisions but insists on the right decision by bringing together individuals with different backgrounds and styles, and make the teams become increasingly global. Historical evidence in management literature shows like the 1980s – The Active and Interactive Oriented Strategy, the

1990s the Value Chain and Optimization of Resources Strategy, the 2000s the Living Company Strategy, the 2010s – The Learning and Agile Strategy.

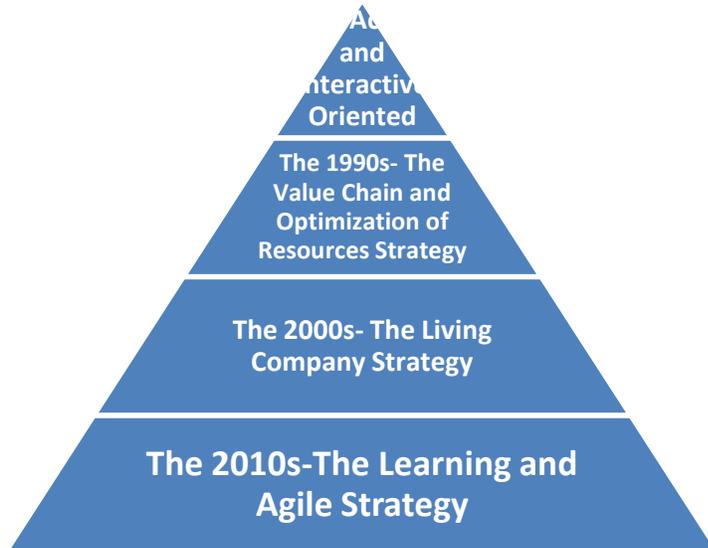


Figure:7: The Convergence to Lattice Models in 2010s: Designed by Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan

The stress about that the lattice is a radical departure from the traditional hierarchic organization structure and line of authority. Still the Indian organizations still cling to a hierarchy? There are reasons like, the indian mindset, culture from where the mindset comes, the upbringing, and the ability of the education system to nurthre leadership etc. Without doubt, there are challenges to a true lattice organization that are not easy to overcome, but it is feasible to incorporate the advantages of various organization structures into a hybrid structure and have the best in India. A hybrid solution to the organization structure conundrum uses a functionally designed hierarchical structure where work is assigned by product or initiative. The process of bringing in Lattice in India can start with usually a 50-50 split is the most efficacious with individual 360 degree input concerning the employee's behavior and statics gathered from project management and other tools that objectively record the accomplishments of all the teams on which the employee is active. It looks tough but still practicable and as far as priorities are concerned, the various product or service managers settle any potential conflicts outside of the team setting. The structure is firm where solidity is needed and fluid where responsiveness is

required. It is effective and usually the company's success and Indian think tank needs to gain a new perspective and basis of operation that leads to top management success and continuity by using Lattice.

Findings and Conclusion:

What may appear to be an effective leadership style for some organisations or country may not be equally appropriate or suitable for other organisations or country. The style depends on context, superiors, subordinates, and the situation under which a particular style is followed. The variables impacts on the adoption of appropriate style. Whether lattice leadership and lattice structure is comfortable for Indian organisation is a big question, and evidences are not convincing about that, though at very micro level in some of leading organisations it is happening. This research recommends further research on the subject, since the concept of Lattice is very primitive stage to be completely accepted, due to the following;

Psyche of the Indian Society (largely complex yet interrelated) on Leadership Behaviour:

The Influence of Joint Family System: Indian society is traditionally strong with three important aspects like joint family, caste system, and ritualism. The joint family generate authoritarian attitudes and the demand for respect for power and authority. The leadership value is installed by the family system beginning in childhood, with the head of the family embraces the commanding power of the family. The recognition for authority spreads to the social system, including work organisations. **The Influence of Britishers:** The British rule brought in authoritative leadership or autocratic leadership style at work-place which influence attitudinal change in Indians, following a high degree of authority in their behaviour towards Indian subordinates. **The Influence of Caste System:** The most powerful influence is the caste system with different rituals in the Indian society prevent the development of the exercise of discretion and the power of decision-making in situations of uncertainty. Hence the above factors have genetically coded the Indian mindset in the area of decision making. Since industrialisation has entailed many changes in the social and cultural life of people the problems of growth and to cope with the anxiety and tension are no longer appropriate in a technological change since the rate of change is very high. This implication on leaders is demanding greater consultation and participation on the part of leaders, hence lattice leadership concept is still in infancy and is still

not suitable even as a participative style in Indian Situations. **The Personality Issues of Indian Leaders and Indian Managers:** Starting from the Standard of life to standard of schooling, there is no uniformity in the attitude, personality and educational background of Indian leadership. Obviously leadership style also takes the same non-uniformity and stand at two extreme ends. What is required now is the democratic approach towards leadership. The degree or responsibility, trust, ability to delegate, train, and be employee-oriented and must be a near-participative leadership and most importantly ought to look into future too. The modern leaders requires greater participation since unionism at workplace, professionalisation of management, rapid industrial growth and technological changes demand for more autonomy and interdisciplinary approach by new generation and democratic way of living having demanded more participation. Therefore, a move towards democratic style has already begun in enlightened companies in India.

The Indian Work Culture (with multiple perspectives):The Indian mind set and psychological strength lies in his own religious karma as he is taught through the rituals of religion and cast and is deep rooted in his activities and opinions in his daily life and hence very **good in personal delivery of output but not as a leader or in a team. Hence Indian Leaders never take the risk as easy as others.** The leaders choose a particular style and mostly authoritarian, which never succeeds to the nearest future. Indians are pampered to the maximum and is being parented for everything including the selection of a higher educational course, rather than making a decision with a gut feeling or with ambition, the decision is more often parented or family oriented, which is unlike the West, where kids are left alone to fend for them at the age of 14, but Indian kids get family protection and support for long which only makes Indian leaders rights and responsibilities top-down in the organization than a personalized bottom-up style of management. **Indian Education System:** A spineless system that discourages original thinking still bothers more about certifying and with rote learning trains students only for obtaining degrees/ certificates than giving democracy to students to learn skills they like or good at. The weightage is more for year end exams rather than testing their thinking, and almost dependent on university results than skill or employability. **India remains untapped in English** specific teaching learning methods and most middle and lower class sends their wards to Government School and the generations coming out of Government Schools is poor in English

without a minimal IQ (Intelligence Quotient), EQ (Emotional Quotient) or SQ (Social Quotient) and which in the end is now a social malice. **India's treatment of these own citizens is** a look at the vernacular social media, mainstream media market or the local language software market in is sadly lagging behind on most indicators! How far can local language markets develop, depends on Government action on this politically sensitive issue.

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