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## Redefining Leadership: Diverse and Global Perspectives

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As our communities become increasingly global, and countries throughout the world become increasingly diverse, we must examine leadership and psychology within a global and diverse perspective. A digital age of rapid change, instantaneous communication, and increased mobility characterises the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Good and effective leadership is essential if we are to promote international business, global economic, social and psychological well-being, and intercultural peace and harmony. Are we ready to meet the challenge?

Why isn't there more diversity among our leaders in the world today? Barron's 2016 list of the World's Best CEOs consists of 30 men; 2 are Chinese, 2 are Indian, and 1 is Brazilian. Women make up 23% of chief executives in US organisations (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009) and only 2% of Fortune 500 companies (Infoplease, 2009). Numbers by race/ethnicity are harder to come by although Whites make up 84% of board seats on Fortune 100 companies. Are white western men the ones most able to exercise good leadership and influence? Disparities in representation, earnings, discrimination and access remain as bias continues to favor those already dominant in society and leadership.

*Forbes 2015 of The World's Most Powerful People* lists nine women out of 73—a mere 12%; this contrasts with Fortune's list of *2015 World's Greatest Leaders*, of which 26% are women. Why this difference? Fortune's list show more women as leaders because their criteria was about transformational and significant change reflecting *influence* while *Forbe's* list show fewer women as leaders because their criteria was about *power* to influence and control resources.

Issues of power often result in different and double standards used to evaluate women and minorities less favourably that are rooted in stereotypes about social identities even when actual leadership behaviours are the same. Because leadership models are strongly influenced by Western norms and reflect the leadership largely of white, heterosexual men (Den Hartog, 2004), female leaders are often viewed as weak and indecisive, Asian leaders as modest and passive, Latino leaders as emotional and unstable, and Black leaders as angry and confrontational.

Rost (1991, p. 102) redefines leadership with an emphasis on change and flexibility in thinking as “an influence relationship among leaders and followers...not based on authority, but on



persuasion”. Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995) expands this to the exchange that occurs between leaders and members as opposed to leader traits while Rodrigues (2001) calls attention to the shift from individual leaders to teams, processes, and member diversity. Chin & Trimble (2014) integrates this to propose a diversity leadership model that emphasizes diversity, difference, inclusion and change. It emphasizes the values, world views, and diversity of leaders and followers which interact with one other. It emphasizes the centrality and intersectionality of multiple social identities, lived experiences, and social and organisational contexts.

Prior to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, political leadership was characterised by a conqueror-colonising

mentality by Western countries based on military power. This placed leadership in a global context of power, exploitation, and privilege designed to exploit national resources (e.g., copper, fisheries, labor, lumber, or oil) of the countries being conquered. The Industrial Revolution of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century brought about the mass production of goods that changed our way of living. Leisure time became a commodity and affluent material consumption a goal. The threat of nuclear destruction, however, gave way to collaborative models of leadership as countries sought peace and nuclear disarmament while the Women's Movement and Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s ushered in demands for empowerment and shared leadership.