**A Hidden Leader: How Parents Affect Their Children to Become a Strategic Leader**

It is known that an outstanding leader can influence followers, surroundings, even his child. Then, the question is how a strategic leader affect his children? What kinds of parents or characters of strategic leaders can influence their children? The paper is aimed at how parents influence their children, and the author will have his real cases to analyze how his mother influence him to become a strategic leader.

**Definition**

First of all, it is important to know the definition of "leadership" and "strategic leadership" because it can help to have real concepts when reading this paper. In Wikipedia, the leadership is described as a person who has a kind of ability to lead or guild other people to complete the common task ("Leadership", 2019). The business dictionary also mentioned that a leader can hold a dominant position and can influence others ("Leader", 2019). How about the strategic leader? A Strategic leader is a person who can think out smart ideas and bring success to the organization when it can meet the long-term goal (Nevins, 2019; "Strategic leadership", 2019). In other words, a strategic leader can jump out of the daily works to see the bigger pictures or visions of the area that he or she is working for. When we combine those two concepts, we can find that a strategic leader will have a higher vision than a common leader, which is important for the team, the person, or someone else because a long-term plan can help people establish a clear plan for themselves. For strategic leaders, it is to combine the power of leaders with the overall mobilization of internal and external resources of the organization, achieve the long-term goals of the organization, dynamically adjust the value activities of the organization, and actively compete for the future and seize the commanding heights of future business opportunities while gaining a firm foothold in the market competition.

What kind of person is a standard strategic leader? There are so many qualities a strategic leader will have, such as loyalty, responsibility, self-control, self-awareness, motivation, open-minded, and so on ("Ten Qualities of a Strategic Leader", 2016). Leitch, Lancefield & Dawson had found that a good strategic leader has ten principles to help him succeed (2016). Distribution of responsibility, honesty, and open mind, multiple solutions for different issues are the first three principles, which can help strategic leaders effectively in decision making, transparency, and innovation; create a relatively safe environment for failure, communicate with other leaders, multiple opportunities for in-service training, time-to-time transformation are four principles for strategic leaders help their followers; self-awareness, self-reflection, and be open to change are the last three principles for the leader himself to be improved (Leitch et al., 2016). In concluded, Strategic leadership is the ability of leaders to put forward and fully promote the realization of vision based on the systematic analysis of stakeholders, self, and strategic situations.

How about parents? How parents influence their children to become a leader? Can strategic leaders who are parents have strategic children? Those questions will be answered later; right now, the paper will focus on the reasons why parents are hidden leaders. Parents are under pressure from their children, giving them enough attention to meet their physiological needs, and this pressure will decrease as they grow, but it will not disappear. At the same time, parents are also under pressure from themselves to make sure their children have abilities to deal with the world in the right way. When every effort is put into this process of balance, it is easy to take shortcuts, which is the key to raising children into controlling, and this part is what we called parenting. Lukens in his article had pointed out that a good parent has an effective education which involves setting boundaries, explaining why those boundaries exist and then believing that children can react on their own when they face some exact problems (2016).

# **Why parents are hidden leaders?**

It is no escaping the fact that parents are hidden leaders. They are the ones who are the main actors in running the family and all familial matters. Throughout history, the role and function of parents have duly been recognized by the other significant actors. Family is the crux of any civilization, and the role of parents is much significant in it. According to the famous historian and social thinker Will Durant who wrote “The Story of Civilization” opined that “the family is the nucleus of civilization”. His quote is the manifestation of the fact that family life and parental influence is much important in any human society as it prepares the strategic leaders of tomorrow. In this view, Parents are the hidden leaders as they transform the lives of their children by cultivating important virtues in their personalities.

# **Literature review**

## **5 Similarities between Leadership and Parenting**

This world history is replete with many effective leaders who changed the course of history with their intellect and wisdom. Some of the great strategic figures that this world has produced are George Washington, Nelson Mandela, Winston Churchill, Thomas Jefferson, Martin Luther King Jr, and et al. All these leaders and their biographical accounts were studied by the social philosophers, and they tried to divulge the secrets behind such strong talent in those individuals. As a result, they found a correlation between leadership and parenting. In this context, the science of parenting and leadership is quite similar in nature and essence. This is well-evident in the articles and researches such as in Forbes that illuminated the similar nature of parenting and leadership. This article listed in Forbes (Gleeson, 2014) explored the same concept and came up with magnificent discoveries. The first and foremost, the author mentioned that both leaders and parents are similar because they are same in their disciplinary nature. It is mandatory for both parents and leaders to maintain enough discipline in their followers as no sphere is successful when there is a lack of discipline. This is the chief characteristic of both leadership and parenting as they focus on maintaining the set pattern of life among their descendants.

Secondly, parents and leaders are similar in the sense that both sections are accountable for their deeds and actions that are done with the use of their authority. Good parents and good leaders are both responsible in their conduct, and it is their similarity as well as they do not hesitate from being accountable for their actions. The third similarity between parents and leaders explored by the Forbes is the praise that they offer to those who are below them in rank and age. Subordinates and children want to hear positive feedback from their ultimate guardians, which improves their efficiency level in their fields such the appreciation from a manager. Fourthly, the respective element is also similar between parents and leaders. Both categories need to be respected as it is mentioned by the Gleeson in his article. No relationship can work when it is bereft of respect and reverence. Parents and leaders need respect and obedience in their commands, and this is mandatory for children and subordinates to follow them wholeheartedly. Lastly, restraint is the similar attribute between parents and leaders, which s much needed to maintain the functional equilibrium in the family or any social group. Being aggressive is counterproductive as it augments the negativity among people. Both leaders and parents need to master this art of restraint to manage their unruly kith and kin. Hence, these are the top five similarities between parenting and leadership, as mentioned in Forbes which are highly pivotal in cultivating strategic leadership spirit among individuals.

**Why Good Parents Make Great Leaders**

Good parents make good leaders beyond a shadow of a doubt. Sociologists and political thinkers have undergone various researches to find the symbiotic relationship between good parents and great leaders. Their studies illustrated numerous reasons to come up with the conclusion that good parents make good leaders. The article in the workplace therapist (Why Good Parents Make Great Leaders | Brandon Smith, 2019) explains various reasons that great leaders are produced by great parents. In this study, the author Brandon Smith opined that great parents make good leaders because they set a defined culture where what is allowed and what is prohibited is stipulated. In this way, parents set a normative pattern for their children to follow and stick fast to. This creates a feeling of a social fact in the minds of children as opined by max weber, and they do not deviate from those key values. As a result, children follow that code of conduct consistently as it is internalized by them. Furthermore, the good parents are committed to their team first, which is the manifestation of their rational thinking. Children immediately realize that they are being directed by the strong, unified team rather than any confused one. This feeling boosts the psychological health of children, and they remember this principle of teamwork all their life. Smith further mentions that good and effective parents raise their children in such a way that it augments their leadership skills. Such parents try to inculcate the right amount of confidence level in their children and the challenge seeking approach. This type of brought up is much essential when it is about producing effective leaders in the world. This is the kind of parenting that has produced powerful leaders in the annals of history. Moreover, this study depicts that good parents hear their children regularly to get their feedback about different things. They extract information from their children to assess the real perception of the different phenomenon of life. Most parents do not follow this approach, and their children feel suppressed in their personalities. With all these measures, good parents also pay keen attention to the development of their children, and they do not sacrifice this step for any other thing. Thus, all these reasons reveal the fact that good parents make good strategic leaders as both are intertwined in nature.

**Rethinking Parent Involvement**

The role and significance of parents cannot be underestimated by any means. This concept has researched again and again, and the finding remained the same that parents hold much importance in the wellbeing of any individual and society in general. In this way, this science of parenting needs reformation as it is pivotal in producing efficient human capital. This remodeling of parenting is most necessary where the population is at risk and most vulnerable. This state of affairs necessitates that there should be more involvement of parents in educational activities. The article in ASCD organization reveals that there are two categories of parents. One is the supportive category, and the other one is the rarer parent. This research (Broner and Ventura 2016) undertook a pilot project and published its findings on different modes of parenting in society. Several primary and secondary schools were monitored and the participation of parents in their children and their learning activities. It was a selective kind of involvement, as only some of the categories were allowed to assess the role of parents. Besides, the children expressed their concerns on parental behavior as well. The findings substantiate that support parent who is active as well perform better in their roles rather than those who are unsupportive and inactive. As a natural corollary, the children of supportive parents are shining stars in the academics, and become strategic leaders in future.

**Parents’ personalities affect children**

Parents leave an indelible mark on their children. This remains uncontested in this world that parents are the first and the ultimate cradle for their children. Whatever parent do in their real life, gets transferred to their offspring in both intentional and unintentional ways. In this way, the personalities of parents affect children in all dimensions. A famous historian and social thinker Karl Marx said, "A man is the product of his circumstances". This is the defining line in the pages of history that a man gets shaped by what he is offered by his family and fellows. Since parents offer the first interaction to a newborn child, their values and beliefs leave an impression on their children. This widely held opinion is cemented time and again by the psychologists and philosophers such as Plato. Even the (Khaleque 2015) reveals that if parents do not focus on their children, they become unhealthy members of society. The neglected behavior of parents is not good for the young personalities of their children as they take approval and sanction from their elders in every aspect of their lives. Hence, parents and their personality’s traits are much meaningful and significant for their children as it directs the future of the children in society.

**Children easily imitate parents' behaviors**

Children arrive on the planet earth with too naïve minds and souls. They lack enough rationality and logic to frame their actions in the modern world. Besides, they are such young creature who cannot feed themselves, and purely depend upon their parents for food and survival needs. According to one of the most famous sociologist Horton. N. Hunt in (Horton and Hunt 1980), children by cultural conditioning where they learn things by imitating others. This cultural conditioning is the leaning behavior responses by repetition and imitation. In this case, they imitate their parents first and perform the same actions, which are frequently done by their parents. As a result, the behavioral traits of parents become part of the individual's personality. In this way, those parents who have negative behavioral traits and responses often shift this negativity to their next-generation knowingly or unknowingly. In short, the naïve souls and naïve minds of undeveloped personalities become susceptible to imitating parental behavior and sometimes the negative behavior of parents destroys the leadership potential in children.

The person I think should be learned is my mother (explain with true examples)

I think my mother has the complete personality which embodies all the vital ingredients of a good soul. She is the lady which is my inspiration and her life is the testimony to this fact.

**Combine examples with two theories (trait theory, servant leadership theory)**

It is often said that "Behind every successful person, there is a woman". It is cent percent true because individuals are not isolated souls, and they do get affected by those around them. Parents are. Undoubtedly, the first agency of learning. The social institution of the family is incomplete without the due importance of a mother. She is the woman who shapes the contours of domestic spheres and all relevant matters. This is same for my mother as well who perfectly handled every situation throughout these years. As Trait theory suggests, leaders are born with some peculiar qualities, so my mother has some individual characteristics that accentuate her leadership style. For instance, once the family was going through the financial crisis, and my mother effectively used her investment to save us from bankruptcy. Her quality if far-sightedness ameliorated the financial crunch of the family, and it was much relieving for all of us. This was the exact display of the trait theory as she possessed the inherent trait of saving and investing in the right things.

Furthermore, my mother also displayed her unique personality when she was upbringing us. A woman makes or breaks home in a way that it depends on her performance on key domestic areas. My mother is the perfect epitome of the servant-leadership theory (Dennis, Kinzler-Norheim, and Bocarnea 2010) as she focused on inculcating the right values among all of us. She served us with a focus to develop our potential as best as possible so we can live our lives fruitfully and successfully. Once, I stole some money, and it was my mother who handled this misadventure very intelligently. She punished in a way that I learned about the nasty nature of stealing and never committed it again. This is how she managed and developed my personality in my early years. This is how the strategic leadership training starts from homes and the private sphere where primary groups play an active part.

**How mother influences? Her behavior.**

It is no hoodwinking that woman and her status as a mother is the most cherished one in his society. Throughout history, the role of mother is revered the most among all members of society. A mother and her personality are the most vital element in homes as it is the most active agent of change. Her behavior, perception, views, beliefs, values, past experiences impact the way her children think and behave. The significance of mother can be assessed from the statement of Adolf Hitler, "Give me educated mothers, I will give you an educated nation." This statement shows that leaders are developed when mothers are rational and pragmatic in their conduct. Conversely, no leaders appear on the surface when mothers are uneducated and irrational in their means and methods to develop offspring. My mother influenced me throughout my founding years and developed the hidden leadership potential in me. She even molded my vision when it was necessary and it is surely due to her efforts that I became a strategic leader. Hence, the role and function of a mother are significant when it is about producing a crop of leaders in the world.

**Discussion**

**Family influences belong to what kind of leadership theory? "Born to be" theory? Behaviour theory? Servant theory?**

Different social theories of leadership and many biological theorists argue about the true leadership quality in individuals. For some, leadership traits can run through generations as they claim that unless the behavioural dynamics do not point toward leadership ability. The protogonists of trait theory opine such things as the presennce of some special attrbutes in an individual that make him a strategic leader. Whereas, the behavioral theroists refer to the social aspect of leadership which suggest that any individual can be influenced to become a leader. In doing so the societal atmosphere plays an important part. An everyday individual learn new thing, they get to interact with new fellows, they get the chance to display their leadership abilities and the most curious ones start adopting the traits of any leader. This is how society builds a leader. In all such happening, a family plays an important role. For example, it simultaneously provides the generic traits and helps in making the interaction of the individual with the outer world more practicable. Following are some theories which can help in analyzing that family influences belong to which kind of leadership theory.

Stogdill's theory of trait leadership theory (born to be theory) suggests that biological factors are responsible for making leaders in society. He rests his findings on each genetical facet which he believes is responsible for making of a human being. For example, the colour of hairs, eyes and hairstyle etc. he argues that such leaders already have the desire to become different from many people around them. This desire for change in them comes from observing their family hierarchy. They see that, unlike other people. Gradually they start believing that they have been bestowed with such abilities, and they are the ones who can rule a specific group of people, community or in some cases people within a country. In this hierarchy, a mother remains a central figure which with times keep on infusing change in the individual. Unlike other theories, this born to be theory suggest that achievement drive, leadership abilities, integrity, self-motivation and confidence and emotional maturity are some prerequisites of leadership abilities.

Another theory which talks about leadership abilities is Derue's Behavioural theory. He maintains the opinion that behaviour focused approach tends to create an individual a leader,. For him the behavioural raised make the one stand apart from the society. It happens when an individual is bestowed with a different thinking pattern I:e he denies the suggestive approaches and tends to create a way for his or her self. Similarly, he argues that in the case of both genders, these individuals are motivated by the role of their mother. Since they have spent a considerable time living inside the womb of her mother, therefore, naturally they have those guts. In their early childhood and up till a certain level of their adulthood, they keep on influencing from their mother. This pattern in some cases changes abruptly and after this change, normally a father takes that place. Otherwise, this place is filled by another person who is the most loved one. In such cases, it is the opposite sex.

Robert Greenleaf's theory of leadership is another theory which sheds light on the leadership pattern. He argues that a leader in a society, in a country or a clan takes the appreciation from its people. He or She tries his best to insert the best traits of his self into his community. In a very social sense, this theory means that any leader makes it easy for its people to have the pleasures of life which he or she has. He provides them with each opportunity which can uplift them and in this way he is seen as the most respected and cared leader. In a family, normally a mother plays this role, in society any notable person, in a country any social leader and the world, anyone can show these traits of being a master. It is mandatory for the leader to take this influence solely from society or its people.

Considering these theories, it is right to argue that Behavioral and Servant- leadership theories influence leadership abilities. The amlgamation of both theories actually explains the development of strategic leadership with the means of family and its ever-present influence. Since the role of mother in both these theory remain of considerable importance, therefore family influences remain pertinent to leadership abilities.

**The differences parenting style in China compares to the US**

The parenting style varies as per the geographical locations. This world is divided into various zones and sphere that have their way of life. In this way, it is not something strange that parenting style varies according to the continents of the world. This is well manifested when one observes the parenting style in the Communist state of china and the United States of America. It is observed that in the totalitarian state of china, parenting is taken as a strict discipline which is much regulated in every aspect (Zhang 2007). Chinese parents are too methodical and regulated in their approach and they are never approved of any deviation. Their children lack the right amount of freedom in their lives as they are living under the total surveillance of their parents. They lack leadership skills and potential. On the other side, the parenting style in The United States of America is much different than that in China. In the progressive country such as the USA where everyone is entitled to enjoy the American Dream has a different upbringing. Every child is handled logically and rationally to mold his personality (Weis and Toolis 2010). There is no show of authoritarian parenting style. Instead, parents follow the Democratic style of leadership (Hakim and Mayasari 2018) where the focus on the wellbeing and feedback of their children as well. In this way, parenting styles vary according to geographical locations and cultural settings.

**Conclusion**

**What kinds of parents are more likely to train their children to become a strategic leader?**

In a nutshell, it may be concluded from the above discussion that parental role holds much significance when it comes to developing strategic leadership potential in their children. A family is the nucleus of any civilization, which is the first agency where an individual is socialized and transformed according to the dominant behavior patterns of the family. Children love to imitate their parents and even take inspiration from their parents' personalities. This is how leaders appear on the surface of the earth when they are effectively brought up by their parents with ideal values. Keeping this prime importance of parenting, there have been several voices that are calling for more parental involvement in education and learning. So, strategic leaders are born when parents plan their upbringing process strategically and pragmatically. Educated and well-informed parents are the ones who are more visionary and far-sighted in their mission. On the other side, those parents who remain aloof from their children' activities are never influential in this noble objective of producing leaders. So the kind, supportive and active parents produce strategic leaders in society. Specifically, the role of mother is even more important, and I am its actual manifestation as my mother helped me to become a better version of myself. She used various instances to mold my perception and views. I am forever indebted to her as she is the person who made me a strategic leader today.

**Their behavior, the family environment, etc...**

In producing effective strategic leaders, family, environment and the behavioral patterns are all very important. Several findings reveal that supportive and more active parents are the real force in cultivating leadership skills in children. If parents are not fully devoted to this noble ideal, then there is no development of leadership spirit in their family members. If there is more positivity in their behavior and the environment is conducive, only then the society will have its share of strategic leaders.

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