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# Gandhi's Leadership: The Oceanic Circle Beyond Time and Geography

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Dissertation, Pepperdine University (1996)

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the works of the leader Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi in order to uncover his philosophy of life, his leadership views and actions, and to demonstrate ways in which these are consonant with current leadership thought. ;The dissertation was guided by the following research question: What indications are there in Gandhi's writings and the writings of others about him that reflect his philosophy of life, his views on leadership, and his leadership behaviors that are consonant with contemporary leadership thought? ;This qualitative study utilized techniques of descriptive research in systematically examining Gandhi's works and the writings of others about him. The study also examined works of contemporary leadership experts. A set of philosophy of life indices were created which served as the operational definition for "philosophy of life." These indices are: one's meaning of life, values/beliefs, aspirations and attitudes. A set of leadership indices were also created which served as the operational definition of "leadership." These indices are: transformation, service, vision, relationship: leader follower, decision making, communication/interaction, conflict management, teaching and learning. ;Sources for this study include works by leadership scholars, works by Gandhi, and works about Gandhi. Significant quotations and anecdotal data were gathered from these sources, sorted and coded under appropriate indices that served as the basis for formation of chapters. Chapters were developed using Gandhian leadership themes combined with views asserted by contemporary leadership experts. ;The findings of the study indicate that Gandhi's philosophy of life and his leadership are consonant with contemporary leadership thought. His leadership included: vision building, a transformation process, conflict management, service, character, decision-making, communication, quality in business management, valuing women's

roles, and lifelong learning/teaching in organizations--all themes that appear in chapters of this dissertation

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