Development of a Firm Level Strategic Shared Leadership Scale

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The concept of shared leadership at strategic level has been examined in this article. Strategic shared leadership has been defined as the process of two or more leaders based on formal structure and their informal influence shapes strategic decisions of organizations. Data was collected based on structured questionnaire survey of managers and analyzed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. A scale has been developed to operationalize the concept which has five factors: Informal Authority Base, Financial Decision, Future Direction Setting, Open Communication, Organizational Change, and Formality. The factors are made up of items characterizing the shared leadership process based on collective decision-making, informal and formal sharing of roles and responsibilities.

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Shared Leadership

In shared leadership, two or more individual leaders lead a team, group or an organization (Carson, Tesluk & Marrone, 2007). In modern times, some have advocated that it is always better that two or more individuals lead an organization rather than one individual's leading (O'Tool, Galbraith & Lawler III, 2002) .This would help as the presence of more than one leader individual complement each other at cognitive and social organizational skills level but also at an emotive level (Mehra et al., 2006). Presently the rapid changes in macro-economic conditions in the context of Indian business organizations require the concept of shared leadership to be considered upon at the strategic level of organizations. The authors termed the concept as strategic shared leadership (SSL). At strategic level, organizational leaders decide on its vision, direction and commitment of substantial resources and the nature of its being. Strategic decision making (Lee-Davies, Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 2007) involves high stakes. In modern times, the informa-

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tion pool relevant for a firm has become varied, complex and immense. Two or more individuals can better absorb the information, deliberate amongst themselves and then decide on the best course of action. In shared decision making process, information is exchanged amongst leaders with increased intensity and frequency iteratively (Lee-Davies, Kakabadse & Kakabadse, 2007). Researchers indicated that the concept of SSL requires more attention from future researchers (Carson, Tesluk & Marrone, 2007; Fitzsimons, James & Denyer, 2011; Bhattacharyya & Jha, 2013).

Literature Review

Discussion on shared leadership was initiated in the modern literature by Gibb (1954) when he talked about the concept of distributed leadership. Gronn (2002) proposed that leadership could actually be conceptualized in a continuum with focus and distribution occupying the two extremes namely autocratic to shared leadership functions and influence. The construct of influence in leadership literature is grounded in the work of many researchers (Yukl, 1989; Kozlowski & Klein, 2000; Morgeson & Hofman, 1999).

Lee-Davies, Kakabadse and Kakabadse (2007), proposed that in an organization, leadership is not necessarily hierarchical. The lower level managers and staffs interact with each other and with senior and middle level managers continuously. These interactions are not dialogues but polylogues. Polylogues provide multiple inputs from different levels of organization; these inputs are continuously deliberated, analyzed and then used for the best suited organizational decisions.

Denison, Hooijberg and Quinn (1995); Carte, Chidambaram and Baker (2006); Hooijberg, Hunt and Dodge (1997), had talked about the leaderplex model in which leadership behavior manifested as eight roles: innovator, broker, producer, director, coordinator, monitor, facilitator and mentor. From the shared leadership perspective different members can assume different roles in the leadership team. Kahai, Sosik and Avolio (2004) had proposed that shared leadership behavior will be more pronounced in the facilitator and mentor roles than in any other roles. Carte, Chidambaram and Baker (2006), empirically established that monitor behavior of leaders was shared but production oriented producer behavior was not shared in the context of high performing virtual teams. Yang and Eric (1996) studied shared leadership based on the leaderplex model and figured out that the mentor, innovator, producer and director roles were shared rather than the roles of facilitator, broker, coordinator, and monitor.

Arnone and Stumpf (2010) wrote that in certain cases shared leadership can be justified by the very fact that two heads are better than one. They further stressed upon that generally at the stra-

tegic organizational level the current shared leaders had previously been functional or divisional heads. The very individual (co-leader) with whom the other individual (co leader) was competing now has to collaborate to share the organizational leadership. Arnone and Stumpf (2010) also wrote that the presence of shared leadership in a firm increases sales and net profits and intensifies business growth and expansion initiatives of the firm.

Waldersee and Eagleson (2002), studied re-orientation in the context of hotel management firms and figured out that shared leadership was exhibited by two leaders, one exhibiting adroitness in one function and the other in some other function. They also indicated that sharing of leadership thus can be in difference of styles, one displaying a concern for relation and the other concern for task. Judge and Ryman (2001) studied strategic alliances in the US healthcare industry and pointed out that in the strategic alliance process two or more leaders of two different firms essentially has to demonstrate shared leadership for the success of the alliance. In the cases in which the views of the other leader were not accommodated, the alliance faltered.

Sally (2002) drew lessons on shared leadership from the republic of Rome. He advocated that because of the complexity and uncertainty of forces affecting a business in modern times, the old practice of consuls in republican Rome regarding sharing of leadership roles and tasks is insightful. He found that shared leadership can be successful when the co-leader's joining and exit timing from an organization are similar. Further, the co- leaders should have the same office and the shared leaders should have a veto power on the vital organizational decisions. Sally (2002) also pointed out that shared leaders should draw power from the same general power systems in the organization. Townsend (1970) wrote that the two leaders should pass on the information to each other on a daily basis for more effectiveness.

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Shared leadership according to O'Toole, Galbraith and Lawler III (2002) is the way forward for social organizations and human endeavors rather than single leadership. Townsend (1970) a former CEO of Avis wrote that CEO's task should be divided in to joint leadership and the joint leaders should complement each other, fitting one's strengths with others' weakness. Carson, Tesluk and Marrone (2007), indicated that shared leadership has two antecedents, internal as well as external. The internal team environment is of a shared purpose, social support and voice. Shared purpose means a common objective of a team; social support stands for emotional and psychological support of one member to another. Voice (Seers, 1996) stands for participation and input. External factor includes external coaching. For student teams' external support in the form of coaching helped in better shared team

performance (Carson, Tesluk & Marrone, 2007).

Klein, et al. (2006) studied extreme action medical trauma centre, considering four perspectives namely, contingent leadership, functional leadership, flexible leadership and shared leadership. These researchers explained each perspective of leadership and its relevance for extreme action team. While explaining shared leadership, researcher's suggested that the effective leadership of extreme action teams may go beyond the influence of a single formal leader. Rather, leadership may be shared among several team members, holding different positions in a trauma centre. McCrimmon (2005) provided a viewpoint that in certain organizations the leadership is distributed or shared and to some this may seem as a team which is 'leaderless'. But actually such a team is 'leaderfull' (Raelin, 2003) as everyone in a team acts like a leader (Serban & Roberts, 2016). They also reflected that shared leadership does not necessarily provide thought leadership. Leadership may also be viewed as shared responsibilities with members of formal and informal teams (Yammarino et al., 2012)

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Research Gap

Based on the literature review following gaps were identified. Wood and Fields (2007) had developed a scale to measure the extent of shared leadership. The scale had 10 items with four point Likert scale. The scale had a Chronbach alpha of 0.89. The shared leadership scale was adapted by them from the scale developed by Hiller (2002). The factors developed by Hiller (2002), were based on the theoretical work done of Porter-O'Grady and Wilson (1995). The items were representing goal setting, visioning, challenge action plan, leadership evaluation and accountability, decision-making, resource allocation, problem solving, obligation fulfillment, opinion and information sharing amongst leaders. Carson, Tesluk and Marrone (2007), measured shared leadership following a social network approach given by Mayo, Meindl, Pastor, (2003). The measure used was density, which is the aggregation of leadership displayed by team members as perceived by other team members. The measurement was carried out by using only one item question. These attempts did not duly consider shared leadership in terms of distribution of leadership functions amongst team members, formal and informal positions of leaders, responsibility and authority of leaders as perceived by managers. The work of Wood and Fields (2007), Carson, Tesluk and Marrone (2007), Hiller (2002) and Mayo, Meindl, Pastor, (2003) did not develop the scale at the strategic shared leadership level which is the practice of shared leadership amongst top management team members in strategic decisions.

Sample & Data Collection

The sample size of the research was of 257 managers and consisted of middle and junior level managers working in India for various public and pri-

vate firms including multinational corporations. This research attempts to develop a strategic shared leadership scale based on the perception of the followers or the non- constituents of shared leadership at the strategic level. Thus the responses from junior and middle level managers were administered. The sampling details have been tabulated in Table 1.

Table 1 Sampling Details

S.No	Parameters		Value
1	Total Sample Size		257 managers
2	Average age of respondents		43
3	Maximum age of respondents		59
4	Minimum age of respondents		22
5	Average years of managerial experience of respondents		21
6	Maximum years of managerial experience of respondents		35
7	Minimum years of managerial experience of respondents		3
8	% of male respondents		92
9	% of female respondents		8
10	Junior level managerial response percentage		41.6
11	Middle level managerial response percentage		58.4
12	Percentage distribution of respondents according to the organizational function-Marketing		4.3%
	12a	Finance	4.7%
	12b	Human Resources Management	4.3 %
	12c	Operations	37.4%
	12d	Information Technology	15.2%
	12e	Strategic Management	3.9%
	12f	Other functions of organization	30.4 %
	12g	% responses from manufacturing sector	60
	13	% responses from services sector	40

The data were gathered by personally administering the structured survey questionnaire (Malhotra, 2007). The initial questionnaire had 50 items divided into three parts. The first part captured aspects of strategic shared leadership decision making. Part two captured the formal and informal aspects of strategic shared leadership. Part three, captured the demographic details of the respondents. All items were positively worded. Reverse scoring of items were avoided as it reduces the validity of the questionnaire (Schreiesheim & Hill, 1981) and add to systematic error (Jacson, Wall, Martin & Davids, 1993). The respondents responded on a five point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree).

Measures

The scale for this research followed a deductive scale development using a typology prior to data collection. The literature review provided the definition of the construct to be examined and was used to develop the items (Schwab, 1980). The content validity in the development of item was thus based on "logi-

cal partitioning" or in other words "classification from above" (Hunt, 1991). Hinkin (1995) found that more than 80% of the studies used deductive scale development. Thus in this deductive scale development study the role of theory was very important. Firstly, theoretically derived items were generated by the authors and then a content validity assessment was carried out by a detailed study of the items by three academicians and five practitioners. The content adequacy was examined immediately after the development of the items as prescribed by Schreiesheim et al. (1993) and this helped the authors to replace and or refine items for questionnaire preparation and survey administration. The five point scale was chosen because it captures variance sufficiently (Malhotra, 2007).

Analysis &Results

The analysis of the recorded survey data was done by Exploratory Factor Analysis (Hair, et al., 2007). Before conducting factor analysis the data was checked for normality. The data is considered to be normal if the value of skewness falls between -2 and +2 and if the value of kurtosis falls between -7 and +7 (Hair et al, 2010; Byrne, 2010).The values of normality have been tabulated in Table 2.

The data was further subjected to multicollinearity test. Multicollinearity is addressed by looking at variation inflation factor (VIF). If VIF is less than 5 there is no presence of multicollinearity in the data (Hair et al, 2010; Byrne, 2010). The values of multicollinearity have been tabulated in Table 3.

Table 2 Normality of Data

Factor	Skewness	Kurtosis
Informal Authority base	-0.042	-0.125
Financial Decision	-0.884	0.886
Future Direction Setting	-1.276	1.577
Open Communication	-0.743	0.412
Formality	-0.231	-0.492

Table 3 Test of Multicollinearity

Factors	VIF values
Informal Authority Base	1.247
Financial Decision	1.487
Future Direction Setting	1.413
Open Communication	1.439
Formality	1.193

The data was then factor analyzed which is a statistical method to identify reduced set of underlying dimensions or factors of a complex social phenomenon. The method of factoring selected was principal component analysis (PCA). Orthogonal rotation utilizing varimax method was carried out so as to capture

the maximum variance. Orthogonal rotation is the preferred rotation if the researchers are convinced about no correlation among emerging factors. If orthogonal rotation and oblique rotation provide identical output (Costello & Osborne, 2011), then it is clear that the emerging factors are not correlated. The outcome factors of shared leadership were measuring different and uncorrelated aspects of shared leadership. Therefore, orthogonal rotation was performed. The factor loading above 0.4 is generally considered for factor analysis (Hair et al., 2007). After examination of the items which were insufficiently loaded (less than 0.4 loading) or cross loaded with high loading two factors were dropped from the analysis. An iterative analysis was done to get the resultant factor loading structures. It was determined that the factor structure which best represented the data from the questionnaire was that of the 10 factors (with 35 items) based on the varimax orthogonal rotation.

All the items with high loading on two or more factors were dropped from further analysis and scale preparation. The overall percentage of variance explained by the ten factors is 66.97. The KMO sampling adequacy score was found to be 0.79. KMO & Bartlett's Test of sphericity is a measure of sampling adequacy. It is performed to calculate case to variable ratio for the analysis being conducted (Williams, Brown & Onsman, 2010).

The shared leadership scale had an overall Chronbach α value of 0.88. Chronbach α score above 0.7 is considered satisfactory (Malhota, 2007; Chronbach & Meehl, 1955). As pointed out, the scale explains 66.9 % of the variance of the construct. The 10 factors delineated from the factor analysis have been discussed here. Factor 1 contains four items. The items are on the leaders association with the organization and the leaders association with each other. Variance explained by the factor is 8.86 % and the Chronbach α value is 0.86. This factor has been termed as Association**.** Factor 2 is named as Mutual Accountability. It contains items like joint sharing of success or failure of decisions by the leaders. There are four items in this factor. The variance explained by this factor is 8.15 %. The Chronbach α value is 0.81. The third factor captures the leader's informal base of the command, power and respect in the organization. This factor can be termed as Informal Authority Base. There are four items in this factor. The variance explained by this factor is 7.1 %. The Chronbach α value is 0.78. The fourth factor has items regarding financial management of the organization, like sharing of budgetary decisions, investment decisions and working capital decisions between the leaders. This factor has four items and explains 6.93% of the variance. The factor has a Chronbach α value of 0.75. This factor can be named as Financial Decision**.** Factor 5 explains the leader's behavior on shared goal setting regarding the organization. It contains items regarding the joint creation of mission, vision and strategic plans of the organization by the leaders. It has three items and explains variance of 6.65%. The Chronbach α value is 0.81. This factor can be termed as Future Direction Set-

Table 4 Item Loading on the Ten Factors

Rotated Component Matrix Output										
Items	Factor Component									
	1 Association	2 Mutual Accountability	3 Informal Authority Base	4 Financial Decision	5 Future Direction Setting	6 Domain Knowledge	7 Open Communication	8 Organizational Change	9 Non Financial Decisions	10 Formality
developing new organizational projects								.48		
organizational decisions like retrenchment								.66		
changing the firm product portfolio market mix								.58		
divestment of present business venture(s) portfolio								.75		
budgetary resource allocation				.63						
non-budgetary resource allocation									.79	
allocation of non financial resources									.80	
investment decisions				.56						
working capital decisions				.82						
procurement of capital equipments				.75						
creating the vision statements of the organization					.88					
creating the mission statements of the organizations					.82					
creating the organizational plans which are strategic (long term) in nature					.65					
Jointly share the success of their decisions		.71								
Jointly share the failure of the decisions made		.68								
Are equally responsible regarding the implementation of decisions taken		.75								
Are equally responsible regarding the outcome of decisions taken		.77								
Command identical informal respect in the organization			.73							
Command identical authority in the organization informally			.76							
Command identical power in the organization informally			.78							

Command identical respect in the organization informally	.69									
Occupies similar status in the organization structure										.77
Occupies similar hierarchal position in the organization										.83
Are looked as generalist with specialized expertise base				.55						
Have thorough understanding of the functions of the organization				.71						
Have good understanding of broad external factors affecting the organization				.70						
Have good understanding regarding the industry				.66						
Have long association with the organization		.75								
Have nearly equivalent work experience in terms of years		.82								
Have worked with each other in the past		.86								
Are working together since the last 3 financial years		.81								
Practice open communication with each other						.64				
share external information received by one with others						.73				
Formally meet each other regularly in scheduled meetings						.78				
Meet each other informally as and when required						.62				

Note - Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

ting**.** The sixth factor is named Domain Knowledge and the items consisted of the leaders' understanding of the organization, broad external factors, industry and as a generalist with specialized expertise base. The variance explained by this factor is 6.64 %. The Chronbach α value is 0.74. This factor has four items. Factor 7 has been identified as factor of Open Communication. Each item in this factor captures the different ways leaders communicate openly. It is done by meeting formally or by social gathering which is informal in nature. For shared leadership to be successful continuous formal and informal meetings among the leaders in an uninhibited manner are important. It will result in sharing of different kinds of information. It explains 6.62% of the variance. The Chronbach α value is 0.75. Factor 8 has four items. It is called Organizational Change. It consists of items deliberating on leaders' organizational management initiatives on retrenchment, new organizational projects, divestment and altering of firm product market mix. It explains 6.04 % of variance. The Chronbach α value is 0.62. Factor 9 has two items. It is composed of items regarding non-financial and non- budgetary resource allocation. This factor can be termed as Non-Financial Decisions. It explains 4.83% of variance. The Chronbach α value is 0.66. The tenth factor consists of two items. It explains 4.74% of variance. The Chronbach α value is 0.74. It contains items on leader's formal respect in organization based on hierarchical organizational structure and

can be termed as Formality. The detail of individual item loading on the factors has been shown in Table 4.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted to test the emerged 10 factors of scale. Maximum Likelihood Estimation algorithm was used to calculate the fit indices of the model (Hair et. al., 2010). The parameters representing model fit consisting of five factors were reported (model 1). The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) presented the following values: Chi-square value is 116.37 (p = .000; df = 67). The model goodness of fit has been valued by GFI which is 0.941, AGFI with a value of 0.907. The TLI, CFI values were 0.935 and 0.952 respectively, the RMSEA value is 0.054 and CMIN/DF value is 1.737 (Table 5)

Table 5 Model Fit Values

		GFI	AGFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	CMIN/DF
Model1	Default model	0.941	0.907	0.935	0.952	0.054	1.737
	Independence model	0.531	0..458	0.0001	0.0001	0.211	12.39

To test the measurement model the authors calculated factor reliability, internal consistency and convergent validity. It was proposed by Barclay, Higgins, and Thompson (1995) that to measure individual item reliability, factor loadings of each item on its respective variable should be studied and the value should exceed 0.6. All factors of the questionnaire exceeded the mark. The reliability indices of the factors were tested using the internal consistency measure of Chronbach's alpha. The construct in the present study had internal consistencies ranging from 0.67 to 0.82, which exceeded the guideline of 0.7 suggested by Nunnally (1978). Only factor informal authority base had value less than 0.7. The average variance extracted (AVE) was used to calculate convergent validity. Fornell and Larcker (1981), suggested that the value of AVE shall exceed the 0.5 level. AVE for all constructs exceeded the guideline value of 0.5, ranging between 0.51 and 0.63 (Table 6).

Table 6 Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

	CR	AVE
FOR	0.767	0.631
IAB	0.677	0.513
FD	0.728	0.572
FDS	0.826	0.619
OCM	0.760	0.547

Based upon the results of CFA and measurement models, factors like Association, Mutual Accountability, Domain Knowledge, Non-Financial Decision and Organizational Change were dropped. Further, two items from Informal Authority base and one item from Financial Decision Making were dropped because of lack of association with factor in CFA. This occurred because these items were operational in nature. The final questionnaire had 5 factors with 14 items. In Table 7 strategic shared leadership scale values have been presented.

Table 7 Shared Leadership Scale Values

Factor Number	Factor Name	Chronbach α value	% of the variance explained	Number of items
1	Association	0.86	8.865	4
2	Mutual Accountability	0.81	8.15	4
3	Informal Authority Base	0.78	7.1	4
4	Financial Decision	0.75	6.93	4
5	Future Direction Setting	0.81	6.65	3
6	Domain Knowledge	0.74	6.64	4
7	Open Communication	0.75	6.62	4
8	Organizational Change	0.62	6.04	4
9	Non-Financial Decision Making	0.66	4.83	2
10	Formality	0.74	4.74	2
	Total	0.88	66.97	35

Discussion

Previously researchers have developed scales on shared leadership (Wood & Fields, 2007; Hiller, 2002; Carson, Tesluk and Marrone, 2007). In the SSL scale, the first factor is 'Informal Authority Base'. Theoretically, two leaders can be called as shared leaders if they occupy similar positions in organizational hierarchy. Interestingly, the response of the managers indicated that they perceived leaders at the strategic level as shared leaders, when leaders have substantive element of informal authority. This informality is with reference to the respect commanded by the leader in the organization informally. This could be based on power derived from knowledge or experience (Northouse, 2010). Hofstede (2001) found that power distance plays a significant role in countries like India. The findings of this study indicated that a leader can become shared leader at the strategic level if he or she demonstrated leadership even at low levels of power distance but informally commanded respect and authority in the organization. The second factor is Financial Decision-making which comprised decisions like capital budgeting, investment and working capital management. These are inherent in strategic decision making. Organizational financial decisions have implications not only amongst the employees but also amongst the banks, shareholders and creditors (Brealey, et al., 2007). Managers engaged in 'Financial Decisions' carry considerable responsibility. From the findings of the study it was evident that managers perceived the presence of shared leadership in an organization if leaders jointly undertake budgetary decisions.

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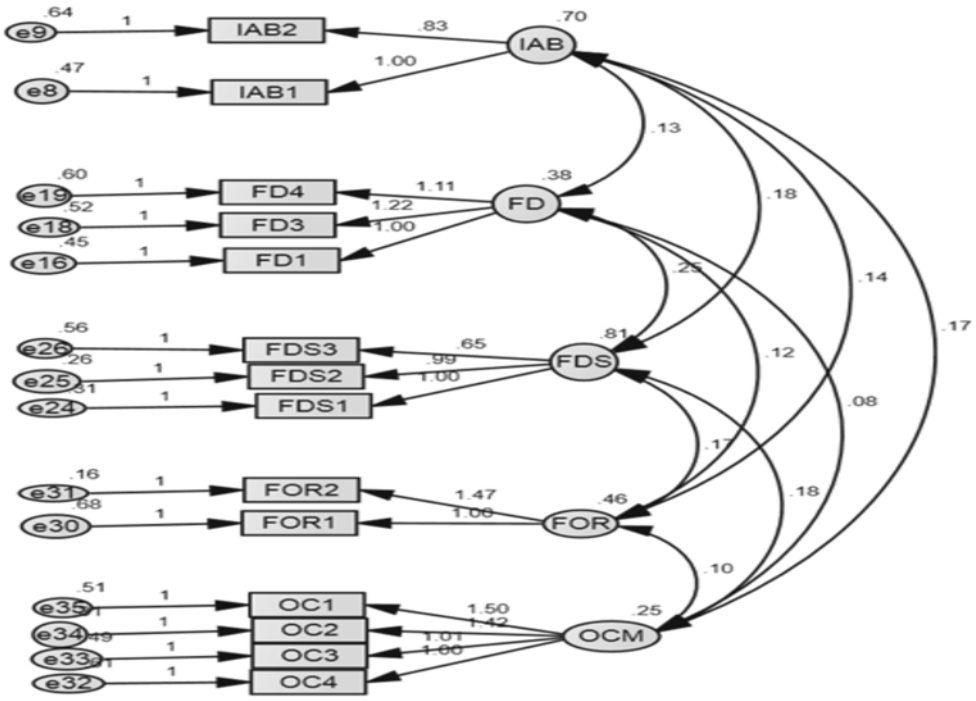
The third factor is 'Future Direction Setting'. Managers observed that if there is shared leadership at the strategic level in an organization then the leaders would

together set the mission and vision of the organization. In other words the future of the organization would be decided amongst and by these leaders. Further, the strategic plans of the organization would be implemented by these leaders when they mutually enact the strategic plans. Colins and Poras (1996) had talked about building a broad company vision. A flurry of diverging opinions can be very constructive for building such a vision. The genesis of these diverging opinions (Lee-Davies, Kakabadse and Kakabadse, 2007) can be formed from the multiple heads of the shared strategic leadership teams. The fourth factor is named 'Open Communication'. It emphasizes the fact that in the strategic shared leadership team, like any other team to function and perform; the members freely communicate with each other. Further, they should share their information (gathered individually) with others. To do this the members shall rely on scheduled formal meetings on web platforms as well as on other formal and informal talks and gatherings as and when they are required to do so (Wood and Fields, 2007). The last factor is 'Formality' and it is self explanatory in the sense that leaders have positional power and this legitimate power often is derived from the superior position in the organization. The responding managers viewed this superior similar positional power shared by the two leaders in the organizational hierarchy and structure (Sally, 2002).

Fig 1 CFA Results of Final Factorsof SSL Scale

IAB- Informal Authority Base, FD- Financial Decision, FDS-Future Direction Setting, FOR- Formalisation, OCM- Organisational Communication



Conclusion

The authors in this research study developed a scale of strategic shared leadership residing at the strategic level of an organization. As mentioned earlier the scale had ten factors made up of 35 items explaining 66.97% of variance with a reliability of 0.88. Authors further conducted CFA and validity testing to establish factor structure. The results then indicated five factors with 14 items.

The operationalized SSL instrument has immense practical usage. The SSL scale can be used by managers' specially organizational development (OD) consultants to measure the extent of existence of strategic shared leadership in client organizations. The OD specialists can get a rich insight regarding the SSL process in the organization. Since SSL scale developed in this study covers a wide range of themes it can be applied to access individual versus individual(s). Secondly this theoretical work can help practitioners to comprehend the interaction and influence of individual versus organizational elements. The OD specialists and managers alike can figure out the facilitating factors as well as the inhibiting factors relating to SSL practice (as in the adoption of SSL process) in organizations. The OD specialists and mangers can formally engineer the structure of the leadership process to standardize and institutionalize the strategic shared leadership system in the organization. This could be based upon modulating the ten factors outlined in the study namely enhancing Informal Authority Base (IAB), practicing Open Communication (OC), desired optimal use of Formality in joint exercise of Financial Decision Making (FDM) and shared Future Direction Setting (FDS) between co-leaders.

Limitations & Future Research

This study was just the beginning of the field of SSL by development of the scale to measure the constructs. Future researches would take the construct variables and develop models to better understand and explicate the process of SSL. Contextually, this study was focused in the emerging economy of India. Future researches can work on models across various cultural silos as defined by the empirical works (Schwartz,1994; Smith, 2004). Future research work can be considerate to these contextual boundaries.

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