

FRAGILITY TO RESILIENCE: MANAGERIAL APPROACHES IN A BANI LANDSCAPE - A CASE REVIEW

R. Christina Jeya Nithila*, R. Jeya Kodeeswari**

Abstract. *The VUCA paradigm has been superseded by the BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, and Incomprehensible) framework in today's rapidly changing business environment, necessitating that managers modify their approaches to leadership. BANI draws attention to the emotional strain and unpredictability that people experience when navigating issues like the transition to hybrid work patterns and the quick speed of change. This is an especially intimidating atmosphere for new managers, who have to handle both new leadership demands and previous peers. In order to succeed in a BANI environment, one must cultivate strong leadership abilities, comprehend team dynamics, and redefine positions in order to remain adaptable and flexible. The adaptive strategies that managers must implement in order to succeed in this challenging environment are examined in this abstract.*

Keywords Leadership, BANI, Paradigm, Resilience, Strategies

INTRODUCTION

The world we live in today is described as being in the BANI environment (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, and Incomprehensible). As the old VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) paradigm gives way to this new one, management and leadership approaches must change as well.

The abbreviation BANI captures the emotional state of individuals as well as the difficulties of predicting the lightning-fast pace of events (telecommuting and confinement yesterday, hybrid offices and work/personal balance today). There is no turning back or looking ahead. In order to tackle these problems, managers must modify their procedures.

A challenging and frequently perplexing environment awaits novice managers. In addition to managing former coworkers, they also need to meet management standards and adjust to new roles. Success is mostly dependent on the development of leadership abilities, comprehension of team requirements, and precise job definition.

COPING STRATEGIES FOR MANAGERS IN A BANI SETTING

Brittle: Never count on plan A to work; always have a backup plan. The company is not as strong and solid as it believes.

A culture of cooperation, openness, and communication is therefore required.

Anxious: When everything is in control, we tend to feel happy and less overwhelmed and powerless. This calls for empathy and tact.

Non-linear: maintaining an open mind to better adapt, as “set in stone” plans will just add to the workload and slow down the group or company. We define non-linearity as unpredictable. Managers must separate themselves from the idea of predictability and get ready for any unforeseen events.

Incomprehensible: Since it won't always be feasible to track things back to their beginnings before making a judgment, we must allow for openness and intuition to make up for this issue. The lesson is that you are fooling yourself if you believe you know the world.

Maybe BANI describes us more than the environment we live in.

Agility within the Organization and Leadership

To succeed in the BANI environment, an organization needs to be agile. Systemic knowledge, leadership growth and sharing, resilience, emotional and collective intelligence, and effective communication are all necessary. Additionally,

* Associate Professor, Xavier Institute of Business Administration, St. Xavier's College, Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu, India.
Email: nithilainc@gmail.com

** Associate Professor & Head, Department of Business Administration, Lady Doak College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India.

in order to thrive, managers must use adaptable and inventive ways.

Handling Commitment and Change

Effective management of commitment and change is a must for managers. This entails figuring out their management style, being aware of the organizational culture, and conforming to the standards and values of the company. It's crucial to be able to adjust and react to the shifting needs of your customers.

Working Remotely and Hybrid

Managers face particular difficulties when it comes to hybrid and remote working. In order to properly coordinate and interact in a virtual setting, they must acquire the necessary abilities. Organizing online collaboration, conducting remote meetings, and adjusting to various personalities and working styles are all included in this.

Techniques for Newly Hired Managers

To succeed, new managers must concentrate on several essential areas:

Managing expectations is knowing what is expected of you and coordinating it with the team and management.

Developing a systems mindset entails seeing beyond one's direct responsibilities and learning how to impact the organization as a whole.

Collaboration and Communication: Provide efficient channels for communication and promote cooperation within the team.

Making sure the team has the tools and resources necessary to function well, particularly when working remotely, is known as resource and tool management.

Getting to know and adjust to the culture of the organization while sticking to your own management style is known as organizational culture adaptation.

CASE STUDY: TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES (TCS)

Context: COVID-19 Pandemic – A BANI Environment

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is a prime case of an Indian business adjusting under BANI (Brittle, Anxious, Nonlinear, and Incomprehensible) leadership. By using adaptable

leadership techniques and creative business tactics, TCS, one of India's biggest IT services firms, demonstrated incredible endurance and flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic—a classic BANI scenario.

An ideal BANI environment for international enterprises, including the Indian IT sector, was created by the COVID-19 epidemic. The crisis was characterized by:

Brittleness: The ability of an organization to quickly pivot due to unforeseen disturbances in business operations.

Uncertainty regarding upcoming client wants, market demands, and staff well-being can cause anxiety.

Nonlinearity: Unpredictable results when little adjustments (lockdowns, changes in regulations) have a significant negative impact on worldwide operations.

Incomprehensibility: Businesses struggled to make sense of the swift changes due to the complex dynamics of altering global marketplaces, health issues, and technological shocks.

Leadership Difficulties TCS, a multinational IT conglomerate, had notable obstacles within the pandemic:

Disruption of Operations: Lockdowns and social alienation suddenly made the company's extensive reliance on centralized offices problematic. Physical presence in offices was prohibited.

Client Uncertainty: Due to significant interruptions, clients around the world experienced erratic demand and abrupt changes in project specifications.

Employee Well-Being and Retention: It became imperative to protect the security, well-being, and productivity of its sizable workforce in the midst of uncertainty and fear.

Impact on the Global Supply Chain: Project schedules and delivery methods were impacted by significant disruptions to complex international operations and the outsourcing of IT services.

Innovative Techniques for Leadership TCS's Adoption of Agile Work Models: With only a few weeks, TCS's Secure Borderless Workspaces (SBWS) concept allowed 95% of its employees to work remotely. This approach to remote working preserved project delivery and data security while assisting in maintaining business continuity. This was an adaptive reaction to the situation's brittleness, which rendered actual offices unviable.

Managing Anxiety with Policies Focused on Employees: TCS addressed employee anxiety proactively by:

Allowing for flexible work schedules and encouraging mental health awareness through wellness initiatives.

Regular and open communication with staff members can allay worries about workload and job security.

Digital Transformation and Nonlinear Innovation: TCS took advantage of the pandemic to encourage its clients to undergo digital transformation. To satisfy the increased demands of clients who were also adjusting to remote operations and unpredictable market conditions, the company accelerated its development of automation, cybersecurity services, and cloud-based solutions. It created more value-driven, agile solutions that could handle erratic and non-linear market shifts by leveraging its expertise in AI and machine learning.

Leadership Prioritizes Long-Term Vision and Resilience: TCS's leadership, particularly CEO Rajesh Gopinathan, encouraged a resilient culture by emphasizing long-term objectives over immediate disruption. Through the use of continuous learning initiatives and investments in digital infrastructure, TCS was able to upskill staff members and provide a more flexible workforce that could respond to sudden market shifts.

Relationships with Clients and Flexibility: TCS prioritized the needs of its worldwide clientele, many of whom were severely disrupted, by providing flexibility. In order to match the shifting demands of its clients, the company modified its service delivery models, reevaluating deadlines and contracts. Relationships and trust were preserved during a tense and uncertain period because of this attentiveness to customer demands.

Data-Driven Decision Making: TCS used a data-driven approach to decision-making in order to address the situation's ambiguity. To negotiate the complications brought about by the pandemic, it used real-time monitoring of personnel productivity measures, client needs, and worldwide market trends along with advanced analytics.

OUTCOMES

Business Continuity: During the pandemic, TCS maintained a high level of operational continuity, ensuring that client projects were not significantly disrupted and that services were delivered on time.

Employee Satisfaction: Despite global uncertainties, TCS maintained excellent employee engagement and retention by implementing adaptable rules that guaranteed the well-being of its workers.

Revenue Growth: TCS demonstrated its ability to adjust to non-linear changes in demand by reporting robust financial performance even during the epidemic, with digital services accounting for over 50% of its total revenue.

Therefore, TCS's leadership approach during the pandemic exemplifies how a company can thrive in a BANI world. By focusing on resilience, adaptability, and a long-term vision, TCS turned a brittle, anxious, and incomprehensible situation into an opportunity for innovation, growth, and employee empowerment.

This case study highlights the importance of leadership strategies that embrace flexibility, empathy, and foresight, critical to navigating the challenges posed by a BANI landscape. Thus TCS's experience underscores how agile leadership and a resilient workforce are crucial for thriving in a BANI world.

CONCLUSION

In the BANI setting, leadership and management call for adaptability, creativity, and empathy. To successfully negotiate this intricate and ever-changing terrain, managers must hone their communication, problem-solving, and change management abilities. Being a leader in an uncertain and unpredictable world requires flexibility, learning, and evolution. This is the secret to success. A world where managers, as noted by McKinsey, are crucial

Businesses that maximize the potential of their middle managers give their stockholders profits that are three times higher. Effective middle managers possess deep industry expertise and a grasp of business strategy, making them talent magnets, trainers, and navigators who know how to bring out the best in their team members. Last but not least, by offering the framework, direction, resources, and psychological assurance needed to do the task at hand with purpose.

However, nobody has managerial abilities from birth. In addition to investing in coaching and training leadership skills, managers must also empower, trust, and most importantly, value their middle managers in order to foster an atmosphere where middle managers can perform their duties properly. Businesses should view middle managers as professionals in their own right, offering them better pay, incentives for good leadership, and other benefits. The organizational transformation that is necessary in these times can be greatly aided by managers having more authority at the intermediate level.

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