

ROLE OF ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP STRATEGY IN MANAGING UNFORESEEN GLOBAL CHALLENGES OF MNC OF JAPAN IN INDIA

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Abstract

Japanese multinational corporations (MNCs) in India must employ adaptive leadership strategies to effectively handle unexpected global challenges. With greater flexibility to adjust to new opportunities and challenges, adaptive leadership enables leaders to successfully manage changes, promote innovation, and propel success in the quickly changing environment. Emphasizing the value of developing a culture that promotes ongoing learning, experimentation, and creativity, Indian MNCs have been successful in setting up conditions that allow their leaders to remain flexible and adjust to the quickly shifting global landscape. Adaptive leadership is widely recognized as being necessary to address the growing difficulty of global challenges, underscoring its applicability in the face of unforeseen global challenges. Thus, the history of adaptive leadership highlights how crucial it is to help multinational corporations (MNCs) navigate unexpected global challenges in India's fast-paced business environment.

Keywords

Adaptive leadership, Indian business ideas, Global leadership, Japan, India, MNCs, Innovation, Unforeseen Global Challenges

Introduction

Harvard University professors Ron Heifetz and Marty Linsky developed the strategy known as adaptive leadership. This strategy is made to deal with challenging business problems. The adaptive leadership framework is a collection of abilities and resources that helps leaders concentrate on the actual, significant forces driving change. It was made to support businesses in remaining strong during starting times. After they are comprehended, leaders can apply these to address the root reasons and promote the success of both individuals and companies in India. The capability of adaptive strategies to help people, organizations, and societies. This support happens to deal with uncertainty and change making them essential in the face of unanticipated global challenges. Adaptive strategies increase resilience so that entities can withstand shocks and unanticipated disruptions. In the face of adversity, they aid in the process of getting back up and continuing with operations. The world is changing rapidly, so one needs to be adaptable.

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Adaptive tactics, which encourage a flexible mindset, enable quick adaptation to changing conditions. It is possible to reduce risks and seize new opportunities by exercising agility. They promote a culture that values lifelong learning. People and organizations have to overcome challenges to develop, learn from errors, and gain fresh insights. Adaptive strategies are often evaluated in terms of their long-term viability.

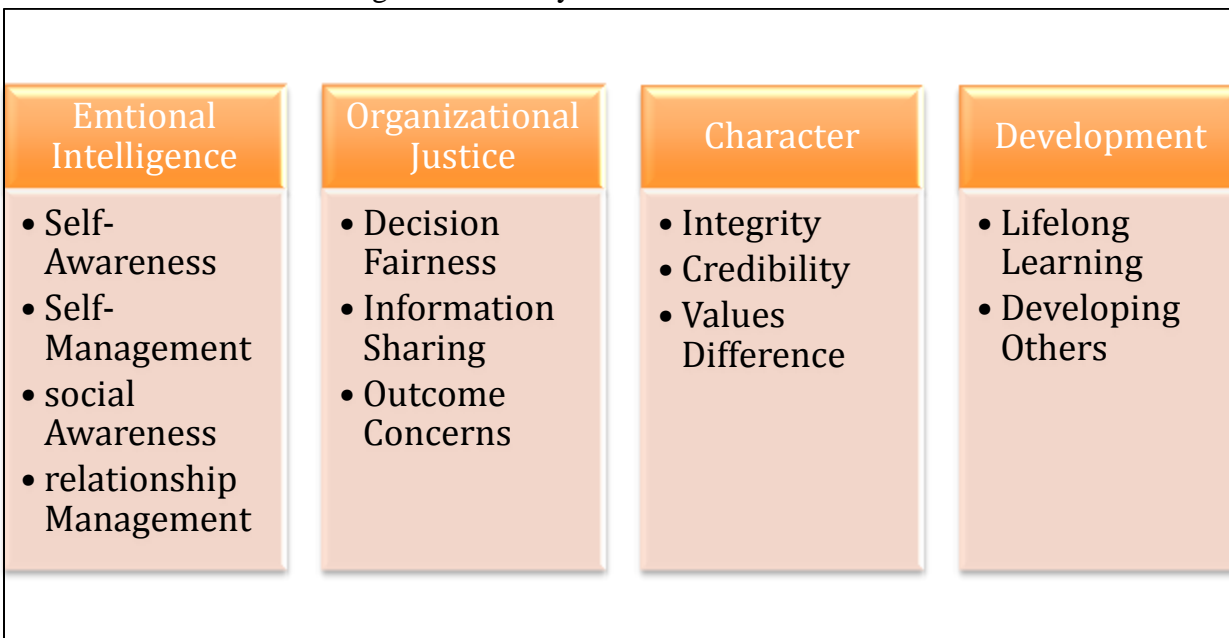


Fig 1: Adaptive Leadership Principles
(Source: Rickley and Stackhouse 2022)

Background

In India, cultural intersections are one of the most common sources of problems. Overcoming ever-changing global challenges is crucial. Pandemics, political events, and regulatory modifications are also covered (Steers et al. 2023). Adaptive leadership fosters agility, creativity, and the ability to quickly modify plans in the face of unforeseen events, enabling multinational corporations to successfully navigate these challenges. The fluctuating state of the economy is one of the unexpected global issues that often throw off company operations. Flexibility in the market is another necessary element. The complex market in India presents unique challenges. The diverse range of customer preferences should be considered in flexible strategies. Regional differences and quickly changing business regulations are also involved in the market flexibility. Global goals can be aligned with local needs through product, business model, and operation customization that MNCs can accomplish with adaptive leadership. The competitive environment is the major thing that raises business ideas in the Indian business background. Cross-cultural barriers arise when Japanese multinational corporations enter the Indian market. In contrast to the dynamic nature of the Indian market, which is characterized by diversity and agility, Tabra et al. in 2023). India faces much international competition in several

industries. To remain competitive, multinational corporations (MNCs) require adaptive leadership that cultivates a culture of innovation. Prioritizing hierarchy, long-term planning, and reaching consensus are all necessary in Japan. uses adaptive leadership to build a culture that values and takes into account different points of view, thereby bridging these cultural gaps. Constant improvement and strategic adaptability to effectively address threats from the marketplace with new opportunities are also involved in the competitive environment. It is important to have the capability to endure and bounce back from unanticipated difficulties (Rickley and Stackhouse 2022). MNCs are made resilient through the approach of adaptive leadership strategies, that guarantee their sustainability in the face of disruptions. Also, allow them to prosper in the face of uncertainty. Having the ability to adapt is essential for managing a diverse workforce in India. This work environment can enhance employees to feel free and offer their all, regardless of cultural differences. Multinational companies (MNCs) from Japan that operate business in India must manage a challenging and changing business environment. Creativity and cultural awareness are also included to guarantee success. It happens when unexpected difficulties arise.

Unforeseen Global Challenges

Japanese multinational corporations (MNCs) having business in India may run into several unforeseen global challenges. Several examples of these include:

- Geopolitical Background: Modifications in the geopolitical environment among countries may affect trade policy. In the specific way to lead the unforeseen tariffs or trade barriers that affect Japanese multinational companies' operations in India.
- Health crisis with pandemics: As the example of the health crisis Covid-19 pandemic can hold the proper impact of the supply chain procedure while maintaining availability. These factors can all have an impact on the operations of Japanese multinational corporations in the Indian business environment (Livermore et al. 2022).
- Natural catastrophes: Cyclones, floods, and earthquakes are common in India as natural disasters. Events like these have the potential to destroy supply chains, and asymmetrical infrastructure, and alter production schedules for Japanese businesses.
- Regulatory Alternations: keeping abrupt modifications to laws or policies by the Indian government can have an impact on several sectors. This affects the dynamics of the market and the plans and tactics of Japanese multinational corporations (Chung et al. 2020).
- Disruptions in Technology: according to the recent business models may be affected by the quick development of technology. Japanese MNCs in India may face more problems and challenges if they are unable to adjust to new technologies or shifting consumer preferences.

- Risks of Cybersecurity: it is known to all that businesses depend more on digital infrastructure; they are exposed to cyber risks. Critical system cyberattacks have the potential to impair operations and compromise private information.

Strong local partnerships, diversified supply chains, agile responses to changing conditions, and effective risk management strategies are all necessary for Japanese multinational corporations operating in India to lessen these challenges (Jakobsen and Worm 2022). Businesses have complex relationships with a variety of cultural norms, market dynamics. The requirement to be flexible in a rapidly changing global environment is also one of the important parts. To handle unpredictable global challenges, Japanese multinational corporations (MNCs) operating in India must implement adaptive leadership. This includes nurturing talent, bridging cultural gaps in communication, and creating an inclusive work environment. Building trusting relationships with local authorities and stakeholders can also help overcome unforeseen obstacles.

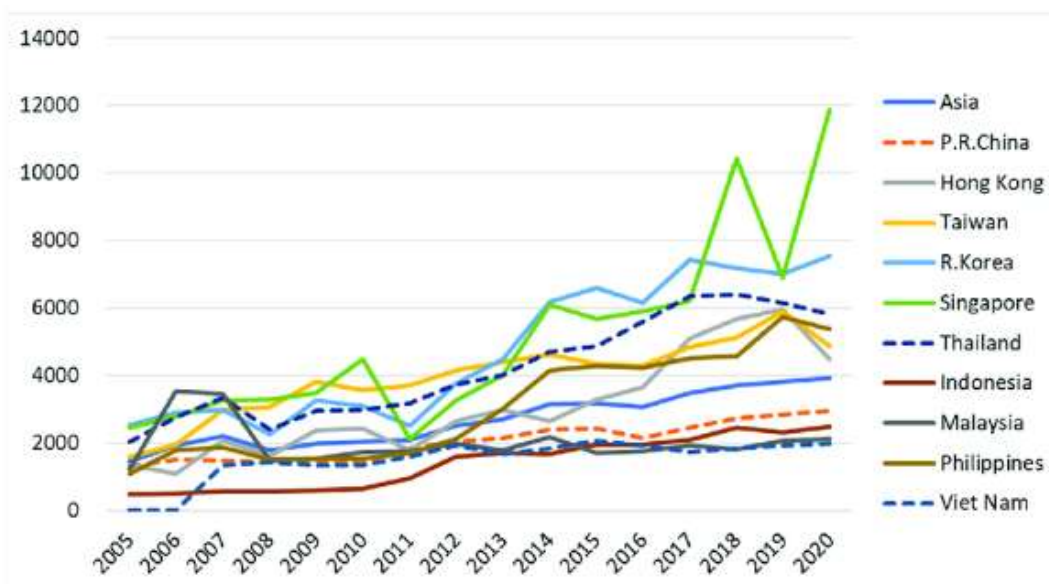


Figure 2: Direct investment assets per Japanese MNC (electrical machinery, million yen).
(Source: Octora 2021, p.732)

Japanese MNCs operates a global scale. It includes branches, subsidiaries, and affiliates in various countries. Japanese MNCs are proactive in a wide range of industries. It reflects the diversity of the economy of Japan. It often lead in research and development. Here is the data from 2005 to 2020. It analyses the direct investment assets per Japanese MNC.

Importance of Adaptive Leadership

The term "adaptive leadership" describes a style of leadership that emphasizes leading successfully through complexity, uncertainty, and change. It entails assisting people or groups in overcoming obstacles by modifying approaches, actions, and mindsets to deal with changing circumstances. Rather than being merely reactive, adaptive leaders actively anticipate and

address change by promoting learning, creativity, and resilience (Bhurase 2023). Here are mentioned some of importance,

- Adaptive leaders are malleable and receptive to change. They can adjust their tactics and strategies in response to changing circumstances.
- They foster resilience in both themselves and their groups, promoting tenacity and the capacity to overcome obstacles or setbacks.
- Leaders with emotional intelligence are very adaptable. Their comprehension of emotions, both their own and those of others, enables them to effectively navigate complex interpersonal dynamics (Filatotchev et al. 2020).
- They create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere by showing empathy for the viewpoints and experiences of their team members.
- Despite their flexibility, they keep the team or organization's goals and course straight, offering direction even in ambiguous situations.

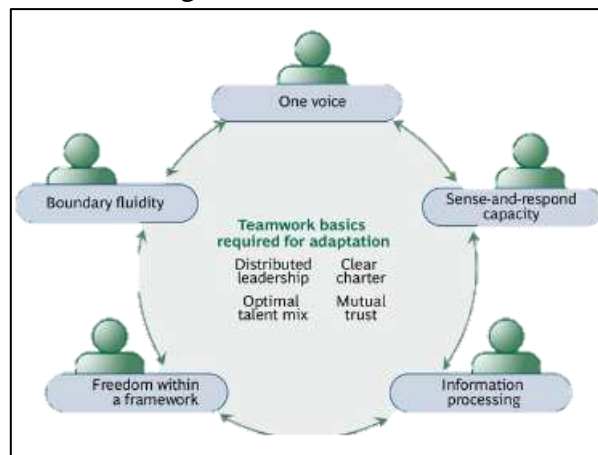


Fig 3: Traits of Adaptive Leadership

(Source: Miah et al. 2022)

Adaptive leadership is particularly helpful during uncertain or fast-changing times, as it enables leaders to steer their teams or organizations through challenges while encouraging a creative and flexible culture.

Cross-Cultural Considerations

Multinational corporations (MNCs) must confront dynamic and unpredictable challenges because adaptive leadership can handle uncertainty and flourish in it. Multinational corporations (MNCs) operate across diverse markets that have distinct legal, social, and economic contexts (Matsuura, 2023). Adaptive leadership, which adjusts strategies, protocols, and techniques to fit different circumstances, is one way that leaders can handle this complexity. Unexpected difficulties like abrupt changes in the market, economic fluctuations, or geopolitical shifts are frequently encountered in dynamic environments. Global business is inherently uncertain. Through the promotion of resilience and a proactive stance to foresee and prepare for possible

disruptions, adaptive leadership empowers multinational corporations to manage uncertainty. Quick changes necessitate creative fixes. MNCs with innovative cultures are encouraged to solve problems creatively and adjust to new market trends and technologies through adaptable leaders. MNCs work with a wide range of demographics and cultures (Octora 2021). Stiff, conventional approaches might not work in unstable situations. Workers in multinational corporations must adjust to new markets, roles, or business plans. Proactive risk management is emphasized by adaptive leadership. Adaptive leadership facilitates the ongoing assessment and modification of tactics in order to remain ahead of the curve.



Fig 4: Cultural Nuances between Japan and India
(Source: Munjal et al. 2021)

Explore the cultural nuances between Japan and India that may influence leadership approaches,

1. **Respect and Hierarchy:** Japan has long placed a high importance on deference to authority and a hierarchical organizational structure. It is expected of leaders to make decisions and seek input. India, on the other hand, respects hierarchies but is more open to dialogue and open communication, even with superiors (Mukherjee 2023). Indian leaders frequently strike a balance between being approachable and having authority.
2. **Team against the Individual Orientation:** India has a more individualistic approach to decision-making, whereas Japanese culture places more emphasis on group harmony and consensus-based collective decision-making. Indian team leaders may promote individual initiative and inventiveness.
3. **Communication Styles:** Japanese people mainly rely on non-verbal clues and communicate indirectly and implicitly. Indians, on the other hand, tend to value

expressiveness and direct, verbal communication, and they frequently prefer face-to-face interactions.

4. Time Orientation: Indian cultures may have an attitude toward time that is more laid-back. It can favor relationships and flexibility over rigid schedule adherence (Ciravegna et al. 2023). Japanese cultures place a higher value on punctuality and schedule observance.
5. Conflict Resolution: Japanese culture highlights harmony over outright confrontation with conflict. Indian culture may view disagreement more amicably and value different viewpoints with proper conversations or interactions.
6. Ability to Make Decisions: Japanese leaders randomly place a strong emphasis on reaching a consensus and soliciting feedback from a range of stakeholders. All of these can take some time. Indian leaders may be more likely to make decisions quickly. Not only that they even may need to consult and bargain.
7. Maintaining Work Ethics and Work-Life Balance: The lengthy work hours and strong work ethic of Japanese workers are popular (Kung 2022). On the other hand, Indians can be just as committed. But in this case, they might place more value on striking a work-life balance, especially in some fields or locales.

Leaders must have an open mind, embrace cultural diversity, absorb knowledge from diverse perspectives, and embrace a flexible leadership style that duly acknowledges and incorporates cultural nuances. This rapid evolution could help put the significance of adaptive leadership in managing unforeseen global challenges in context. It emphasizes how important it is for leadership strategies to incorporate adaptability.

Collaboration and Innovation

In adaptive leadership, teamwork and creativity are essential for building resilience and adaptability to change. The following is how they help:

- Adaptive leaders bring people together who have different experiences, backgrounds, and levels of expertise (Pereira et al. 2021). This diversity of thinking produces a wide range of concepts and viewpoints, which are essential for solving challenging issues and adjusting to shifting conditions.
- Innovative environments highlight collaboration. When people from different departments or disciplines collaborate, they exchange ideas by asking questions and coming up with proper solutions that might not have occurred on their own.
- Cross-functional teams hold variety of skills and viewpoints. That is formed through action from adaptive leaders. To share Adaptive Solutions, all of these may be required (Chukwu et al. 2023). These groups are free to collaborate, share ideas, and create flexible solutions that address issues as a whole.
- Giving feedback swiftly to change is made possible when team members collaborate. Teams that function well together can exchange information and identify emerging trends

or issues quickly. Adapting procedures or strategies in response to evolving requirements or challenges is also included.

- Teams can lower individual risk after combining their combined inventiveness, hypothesis testing, and exploration of novel concepts. It also includes the possibility of enhancing discoveries. Cooperation makes cultural adaptation easier in international management (Golgeci et al. 2021). In a multicultural environment, teams with varying cultural backgrounds can collaborate well by acknowledging, valuing each other's cultural quirks and advantages is also important in this purpose.

Aspect	Importance in Adaptive Leadership
Teamwork	Essential for building resilience and adaptability. Brings together diverse perspectives and skills.
Creativity	Essential for generating innovative solutions and adapting to change.
Collaboration Innovation	Innovative environments thrive on collaboration, fostering the exchange of diverse ideas.
Swift Feedback and Adaptation	Effective teams facilitate quick information exchange and adaptation to emerging trends or issues.
Reduced Individual Risk	Team collaboration lowers individual risk, encouraging shared responsibility and collective success.
Cultural Adaptation in Teams	Collaboration eases cultural adaptation, crucial in international management with diverse backgrounds.
Role in Adaptive Leadership	Adaptive leaders leverage teamwork and creativity to navigate dynamic environments and promote resilience.

Table 1: Aspects and importance of Adaptive Leadership

(Source: Pereira et al. 2021)

This is a crucial skill for adaptive leadership. Adaptive leaders foster environments where teams flourish, adjust rapidly, and continually change to meet challenges by leveraging the power of innovation and collaboration. They acknowledge that cooperation is essential to adaptive leadership in navigating dynamic and unpredictable environments because it stimulates innovation, speeds up problem-solving, and increases organizational agility.

Methodology of the study

Using adaptive leadership, a Japanese multinational corporation operating in India can manage unanticipated global challenges by taking a methodical approach. The following methodology outlines how to incorporate strategies for adaptive leadership. Perform a thorough examination of the local, regional, and global environments to pinpoint possible obstacles and how they might affect operations in India. To foresee possible disruptions, evaluate the geopolitical, economic, social, technological, and environmental aspects. Create a framework for adaptive leadership.

Clearly define and convey an adaptive leadership framework that includes the values, guiding principles, and tactics for handling unforeseen circumstances. Assist leaders at all levels in adopting adaptive strategies that foster adaptability, resiliency, and creativity. Encourage the leadership team to have a thorough understanding of Indian culture, market nuances, and regional business practices. Modify leadership strategies to conform to Indian decision-making processes, communication preferences, and cultural norms. Create cross-functional teams with a range of skills and viewpoints from various MNC locations and roles. To overcome obstacles as a team, promote cooperation, honest communication, and knowledge exchange among teams. Make investments in continuing education initiatives that help leaders become more adept at crisis management techniques, cultural sensitivity, and adaptive leadership. Representing a culture of experimentation and learning the mistakes are seen as teaching opportunities. Using this methodology, Japanese MNCs in India can better align their adaptive leadership strategies. It will help to handle the ever-changing global challenges they face. It makes it possible for the company to leverage various types of viewpoints and promote innovation while being adaptable, proactive, and responsive in handling unanticipated disruptions.

Data analysis and findings

Adaptation of the leadership approaches to align with local cultural specifications may encounter resistance from leaders. This happens after being accustomed to different management styles (Xie 2020). These are just a few of the obstacles that a Japanese multinational corporation operating in India may encounter. It will happen when implementing adaptive leadership strategies to manage unforeseen global challenges. Persuading stakeholders to adopt adaptable tactics may prove to be difficult.

- Poor comprehension of the local Indian culture, market dynamics, and business practices could make it more difficult to apply adaptable strategies (Mees-Buss et al. 2019). These mentioned are specifically suited to the Indian environment.
- Japanese multinational corporations randomly have hierarchical organizational structures. That may manage quick decision-making and the ability of lower-level leaders to smoothly manage unforeseen challenges (Sudan et al. 2023).
- Risk management is valued highly in some Japanese corporate cultures. This may conflict with the adaptive leadership's requirement for measured risk-taking and experimentation in response to changing circumstances.
- Language barriers and communication style differences between Japanese and Indian teams can make it more difficult for them to collaborate and share information effectively, which is difficult for adaptive leadership.
- Limited talent and financial resources can make it more important boundaries to adopt adaptive strategies. Specifically, when it comes to technology adoption, skill development, and training (Bereznoy 2019).

- The need to produce results fast may cause tensions in strategic priorities. The adaptive leadership approach, which values innovation along with long-term adaptability, may not agree with this pressure.
- Control is preferred because it may be challenging for Japanese multinational corporations to decentralize decision-making. This can give local teams access to two essential adaptive leadership components. (ChandibaiPotsangbam and Barman 2019).

Collaboration is the major need of the leadership. It is committed to cultural differences while maintaining organizational structures. Feedback of the receptive learning and shifting the circumstances to overcome these difficulties. MNCs in Japan should have some flexibilities to overcome these challenges with persistence. Making interaction to successfully implement adaptive leadership strategies.

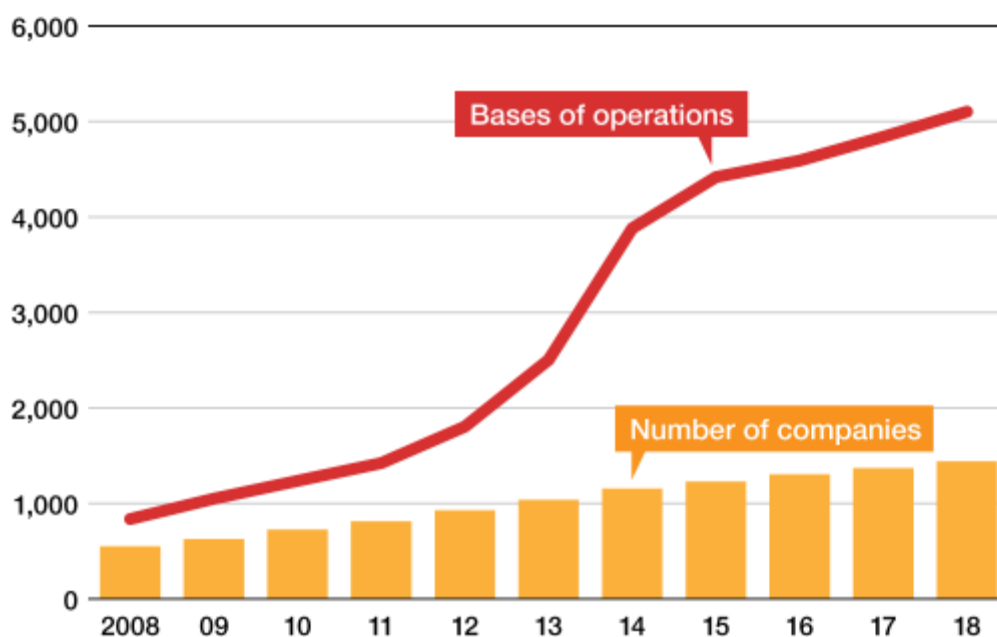


Figure 5: Japanese MNCs in India

(Source: Sudan et al. 2023, p. 562)

Multinational corporations (MNCs) operating in India must employ adaptive leadership strategies in order to effectively manage unforeseen global challenges. This circumstance is subject to the advantages and results of adaptive leadership listed below:

- Multinational companies based in India that possess adaptive leadership are more adept at promptly adjusting to dynamic situations and effortlessly handling both opportunities and obstacles.
- Adaptive leadership places a strong emphasis on flexible and agile ideas to increase the organization's ability to solve problems and make decisions, which in turn fosters creativity and innovation. It promotes creativity and innovation, which leads to a range of original methods for addressing problems (Potsangbam 2020).

- Adaptive leadership creates an environment that values ideas and encourages creativity, which boosts output and improves the working environment.
- The ability of MNCs to collaborate across units is the cornerstone of their competitive advantage. Adaptive leadership has the potential to promote effective collaboration amongst diverse MNC units (Adekunle 2021).

MNCs of India need to refer to adaptive leadership strategies to effectively manage various types of global challenges. Enhancing adaptability, innovation, improvement in the work quality, communication, and development in culture to facilitate organizations' effective navigation of the ever-changing business environment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, local groups are capable of making informed decisions. decision-making ability enables rapid reactions to evolving conditions. That is customized to the particulars of the Indian market. It will take some time, effort, and continued funding for training and development programs to help new leaders manage the competition that is needed for adaptive leadership. Making an environment that values adaptability is also a part of it. Japanese multinational corporations (MNCs) that want to operate in India are now better prepared to face difficult global challenges. And the reason is adaptive leadership strategies have been put into practice. In these organizations, resilience, innovation, and the process of adaptability are encouraged by the need to maintain competitiveness and agility in a constantly changing business environment.

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