

Group Dynamics
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(Refer Slide Time: 00:36)

Situational Leadership Theory(SLT) or the Life Cycle Theory of Leadership

Situational Leadership Theory, or the *Situational Leadership Model*, is a model created by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard and developed while working on the Management of Organizational Behavior. The theory was first introduced in 1969 as the "life cycle theory of leadership." During the mid-1970s, the life cycle theory of leadership was renamed "Situational Leadership Theory"(SLT) (although referred to as contingency theory)

The fundamental principle of the situational leadership model is that there is no single "best" style of leadership. Infact, effective leadership is contingent on the level of the followers' *readiness (ability and willingness)* to accomplish a particular task

Effective leadership varies, not only with the person or group that is being influenced but also depends on the task, job, or function that needs to be accomplished

The Situational Leadership Model has two fundamental concepts:

Hello friends welcome back, another leadership style that we will talk about situational leadership theory or the life cycle theory. That is SLT or situational leadership theory can also be considered at the same time the contingency theory of leadership. But I will discuss these theories separately with some significance that when we are talking about SLT or situational leadership theory then actually it is not only single theory that has been propounded.

This theory has been revised again by other OB professionals and how it is applicable in today's time. So we right now we are going to consider this model separately so according to situational leadership style or the life cycle leadership theory this was developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard. This is also considered as one of the classic model of leadership which has evolved while they were, working on management of organizational behavior.

So this theory was first introduced as the life cycle theory of leadership or later on it was revised and it was renamed as situational leadership theory or SLT. Although this theory is referred to as a contingency theory that is depending on the situation which leadership style is appropriate. But since 2 leadership theories and some leads and, developments were have taken place so we are discussing it under different heading.

So if we talk about SLT then the fundamental principle of this theory is that there is no single best leadership style and that is very much true. It all depends on the situational and the readiness of the followers that which leadership style will suit best as per the readiness. Now here the readiness is ability, and the willingness of the followers that if these 2 patterns willingness and ability are combining in different degrees then the leadership style will also vary from situation to situation.

So according to Hersey and Blanchard leadership it can be effective if it is contingent on the level of the follower's ability and to accomplish a particular task. Therefore we can say that effective leadership varies not only with the person or group that is being influenced. But also depends on the task job or function that needs to be accomplished. Because sometimes the person is willing but the task is not fitting with the competency of the follower.

Sometimes the task is as that it is it matches the ability of an individual but the person is unwilling. So to fit in every aspect that is readiness job, task and situation then SLT plays a major role now according to Hersey and Blanchard they have identified 2 fundamental concepts of situational leadership style.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:29)

2)The individual or group's performance "readiness level," also referred to as "maturity level": The level of maturity is defined by three criteria and is task-specific as the degree of achievement motivation, willingness to take on responsibility, and amount of education and/or experience

High	Medium		Low
M4	M3	M2	M1
High maturity	Medium maturity, higher skills but lacking confidence	Medium maturity, limited skills	Low maturity
Individuals are able to do the task on their own and are comfortable with their own ability to do it well. They are able and willing to not only do the task, but to take responsibility for the task	Individuals are ready and willing to do the task. They have the skills, but are not confident in their abilities	Individuals are willing to do the task but lack the skills to do it successfully	Individuals lack the knowledge, skills, abilities, or confidence to work on their own, and they often are unwilling to take the task on

The first is the leadership style and the other is the readiness or the maturity level. That means to what extent the ability and willingness will combine all together to form a best fit for the leadership style. So if I talk about the, leadership style then Hersey and Blanchard have identified 2 leadership styles the task style and the relationship style. So as the term implies we by now we must have understood very easily that what is star style relationship.

So in task style the leader organizes and defines the roles of every person in the group and dictates or basically states the role job role of every follower and explains, the target members are to do when, where and how and they are to do them. That means the in the task style leadership the leader will actually state everything that how the job when and how has to be performed? The guidelines are very much clear and very much straightforward to the followers.

Whereas in relationship style the leader has close person and relationship with the members of the group and, there is an open communication and psychological and emotional support. It is not about providing directives but it is beyond that leader and followers share a very strong emotional and psychological support with each other. So the task behavior or the relationship behavior that the leader provides to the followers is actually the amount of support they receive and they give to each other.

So based, on this the leadership styles has been classified into 4 domains that means the task and relationship has been classified or expanded into 4 domains by Hersey and Blanchard. And these are very much relevant to the appropriateness of the situation that means in what kind of situation which kind of leadership will be more effective. So they have identified four expansions of leadership styles S 1, to S 4 in S 1 it is telling S 2 it is selling S 3 is participating and S 4 is delegating.

(Refer Slide Time: 05:39)

S1	S2	S3	S4
Telling	Selling	Participating	Delegating
Leaders tell people what to do and how to do it	Leaders provide direction. But they attempt to sell their ideas to get people on board	Leaders focus on relationships and less on providing direction. They work with the team and share decision-making responsibilities	Leaders delegate most of the responsibility to the group. They monitor progress, but are less involved in decision-making

So in s 1 that is telling the leaders tell people what to do and how to do it that means the members are very much dying to the task or maybe they are not that much skilled to perform the task on their own. So under such circumstances the leader has to tell the followers what and how they

have to perform. The other is, selling leaders provide direction but they attempt to sell their ideas to get people on board.

That means maybe the followers are skilled enough to perform the job but at the same time they need some detailed directives to perform the tasks so that the followers can take interest in those directions and then come into the job. The other is participating leaders focus on relationship and less on, providing direction they work with the team and share decision making responsibilities.

That means here the relationship style is more dominating at this level where readiness is there in terms of willingness and ability and there is no intrusion of the leader and most of the time the task is being performed by the followers itself. That means the leaders focus on relationship and less on providing, direction. And they work with the team and share decision making responsibilities.

And the other is delegating in this kind of leadership style the leader has minimum interruption and followers take their own or make their own decisions so as to achieve or accomplish the organizational goals. The leaders delegate all the responsibility on the group members so that they can take their own decision and, perform on their own terms and condition.

In fact this is the best and proportional leadership style but again to reach that this kind of leadership effectiveness there has to be a perfect blend of understanding the situation the followers the leader and which leadership style. So identifying followers or putting every following in these 4 categories will help the leader to decide that under what, circumstances or situation particular leadership style will be effective based on task and relationship.

That means readiness is also there now once Hersey and Blanchard have identified the leadership styles and have expanded them to 4 that is telling, selling, participating and delegating. They have also identified the other component that is readiness that means they have talked about the maturity, levels that to what extent the followers are subordinates are mature enough to understand that group goal understand the tasks they have to perform and most importantly the readiness to perform the task.

Sometimes what happens the followers know what the task they have to do or perform but sometimes they are not willing or sometimes they are willing to do it but they do not possess that kind of, knowledge skills and abilities. So combining all these kind of situations and

understanding of the task Hersey and Blanchard have identified the maturity levels into 3 categories as high medium and low and again further divided into 4 levels.

4, 3, 2, 1 that is for level 4 is high maturity that means individuals are able to do the task on their own. That means there is a perfect, blend between leadership style ability and willingness of the employees. They are comfortable with their own ability to do it well and they are willing to do the task but to take the responsibility of the task. That means they are more immersed in their job that they are performing their job without any direction and they are using all their knowledge skills and abilities to perform effectively.

The, other level is M3 that is medium maturity higher skills but lacking confidence so individuals are ready they are showing willingness to perform the task they have the skills but not confident in their abilities. Just to build up that confidence then again wish leadership style will be more appropriate here the question is that how the leader will come into the picture. So maturity; level is medium, confidence is missing but knowledge skill competency and ability is there.

So willingness is there but not ability is there but willingness is missing the other is medium maturity limited skills. Individuals are willing to do the task but lack the skills to do it successfully. That means willingness is there to perform the task but they do not have the confidence. So under such circumstances a proper, direction is required from the leader so either it has to be a blend of task style and relationship style or it has to be either task or relationship.

So in both these levels and medium level M 3 and M 2 the leadership style has to be defined by the leader at that particular moment because willingness is there ability is not there. Whereas in M3 that willingness is there again ability is not there but, the degree is differing high ability or low ability. And the other is m one that is low maturity where individuals lack ability also and at the same time they are not willing they are unwilling to perform the task.

Because then there is no link between knowledge skin and abilities then the follower find it difficult to blend their willingness and ability. Definitely then in the circumstances the, leader has to adopt a task style where detailed directives are required to perform the task. So in all the 4 levels ability and willingness both are going hand in hand but the level of maturity is missing.

So according to the maturity level the leadership style can be defined accordingly but before starting this discussion I also stated that this has been considered separately because this was, revised later on by some other terminology as well.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:53)

*Situational Leadership Model II (Blanchard et.al (1969) made some changes to the model and relabeled the maturity levels as the "development levels" to avoid stigma around the idea of immaturity, and making some distinctions in M1 and M2, to D1 and D2 in the subsequent version

Development levels: Blanchard's situational leadership II model used the terms "competence" (ability, knowledge, and skill) and "commitment" (confidence and motivation) to describe different levels of development

According to Blanchard, Four combinations of competence and commitment make up what we call "development level"

D1 –Low competence with high commitment (*Enthusiastic Beginner*)

D2 –Low/middling competence with low commitment (*Disillusioned/Distracted Learner*)

D3 –High competence with low/variable commitment (*Capable but Cautious Performer*)

D4 –High competence with high commitment (*Self-reliant Achiever*)

In order to make an effective cycle, a leader needs to motivate followers by adjusting their leadership style to the development level of the person. Blanchard postulates that Enthusiastic Beginners (D1) need a directing leadership style, while Disillusioned Learners (D2) require a coaching style. They suggested that Capable but Cautious Performers (D3) respond best to a Supporting leadership style and Self-reliant Achievers need leaders who offer a delegating style

So Hersey and Blanchard proposed their situational leadership theory but blanket in collaboration with other OB professionals they identified another model of SLT. That is situational leadership model 2 which was developed in 1969 and there was some revision in the theory based on the maturity levels. That means they renamed the maturity levels as, developmental levels because they thought that it is a stigma if we are identifying any follower based on their maturity levels.

So just erode that stigma they proposed a new theory of developmental levels and it has 2 components that are competence and commitment. So initially it was based on readiness that is willingness and ability now in the revision they have incorporated developmental levels, in place of immaturity and have identified developmental levels at 2 parts. That is competence that is ability knowledge and skill and commitment that is confidence and motivation in terms of willingness itself to perform the task at different level.

So according to Blanchard 4 combinations of competence and commitment make up what we call developmental level. So they have proposed 4 combinations the first is D1 where employees have low competence with high commitment so they have labeled such type of followers as enthusiastic beginners. That they are willing to work but they do not have those knowledge masculine abilities at this level what leadership will be more appropriate.

The other is D2 low or middling competence with low commitment that means the employers or the, followers are disillusioned or distracted learners because the competency level they have attained to some level but the commitment level is low. The confidence is low and the motivation is also low the other is high competence with low or variable commitment. That means they are capable but at the same time they are cautious performer they are not sure about their performance that to what extent, they can do.

Now it is an individual or followers mindset that whatever knowledge skills and abilities they have to what extent they are confident or mature enough to accept and perform. So in D3 level high competence is there but the commitment is shaky it is shifting it is fluctuating. That means high competence is there with low or variable commitment it is fluctuating whether sometimes follower, would say I will do it or sometimes a follower would say I will not be able to do it.

And the last is high competence with high commitment that means they are self-reliant achievers. Now this is again a very extreme case definitely such type of performer's followers employees subordinates exist in every organization. But the percentage is very less but yes definitely we can categorize them in D4, category where they can be labeled as or identified as highly competent with high commitment.

Because they are self-reliant they have complete knowledge about the job they have complete knowledge about their skills they have complete knowledge about the organization and they have complete knowledge or they are in complete touch with the leader that how they have to perform the job. So bringing a, slight difference by either blanket and his associates they have identified the maturity levels as the developmental levels and how it can be improved or enhanced based on imposing or executing a particular leadership style to make it more effective and functional.

So this is how these maturity levels have been identified as developmental levels by Blanchard and at all and according to them, enthusiastic leaders can be dealt with directing leadership style. Delusion learners require a coaching style or mentoring style the capable but cautious performers respond best to supporting leadership style. And self-reliant achievers need leaders who offer a delegating style this is all about situational leadership style.

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Situational Leadership Model-I
(Hersey, 1969)

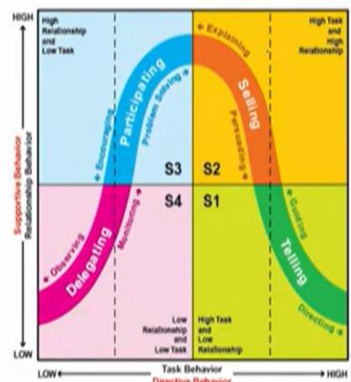
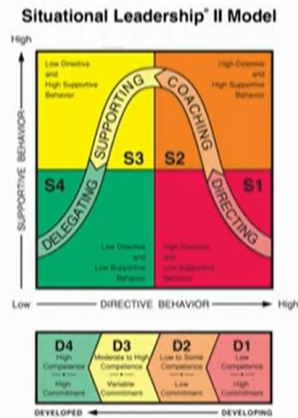


Figure 1
Original Situational Leadership® Model Leadership Styles

Situational Leadership Model-II
(Blanchard, Kenneth H., Patricia Zigarmi,
and Drea Zigarmi et al., 1985)



Here is the diagram that how these 2 theories or models of situational, leadership have evolved based on certain revisions. Initially it was developed by her in 1969 and how they have identified based on directive behavior and supportive behavior or task behavior or relationship behavior right. And the other diagram is situation leadership model which was developed by Blanchard Kenneth Zigarmi in 1985 and they have included the maturity or the developmental models of, situational leadership style.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:55)

➤ Another theory of SLT has been proposed in the management discourse developed by Vecchio(1987)

According to Vecchio, SLT focuses on the followers. Successful leadership depends on selecting the right leadership style contingent on the followers' readiness, that is, the extent to which followers are willing and able to accomplish a specific task .

Vecchio identified four behaviors dependent on follower readiness:

- i) if followers are *unable and unwilling* to do a task, the leader needs to give clear and specific directions to perform the task
- ii) if followers are *unable and willing*, the leader needs to display a high task orientation to compensate for followers' lack of ability and a high relationship orientation to get them to accept the leader's desire
- iii) if followers are *able but unwilling*, the leader needs to use a supportive and participative style
- iv) If the followers are *both able and willing*, the leaders do not need to do much

The significance of this theory lies in acknowledging the importance of followers and building on the logic that leaders can compensate for followers' limited ability and motivation

Now since it has been revised twice first it was developed by Hersey and blanket later on this was revised by Blanchard and his associates. Third time again Vecchio in the 1987 also revised situational leadership theory in a different form although readiness component existed at that time. So according to Vecchio SLT focuses on the followers definitely and successful, leadership depends on selecting the right leadership style contingent on the followers readiness.

Vecchio has not talked about directly about the leadership style but he has simply focused on the readiness of the followers. So the relationship between leadership style and follower is there but readiness is very important. So that is the extent to which followers are willing and able to accomplish a, specific task. So; more focus was on follower's readiness rather than on leadership style.

So we can interpret that Vecchio in his new model of situational leadership theory they have talked about only or focused only on the readiness of the employees. So they have identified four behaviors depending on follower's readiness the first is if followers are unable and unwilling to do the task then the leader, needs to give clear and specific directions to perform the task. Now here Vecchio has identified only the behavioral patterns in terms of readiness.

So for Vecchio behavior of the follower is very important and then only the leadership style is coming into the forte. So according to Vecchio the first kinds of leaders are unable and unwilling and for that the leader needs to give clear and specific, directions to perform the task. The other is followers are unable and unwilling then the leaders needs to display a high task orientation to compensate for followers lack of ability and a high relationship orientation to get them to accept the leaders desire that means holding the followers as per the leader's desire.

So here high task orientation working style is more important for such kind of, followers readiness that is unable and willing the third is the followers are able but unwilling under such circumstances to deal with such kind of behavioral patterns of employees. The leader needs to use a supportive and participative style where the leader is motivating influencing and encouraging employees to use the knowledge skills and abilities and overcome that demotivation in form of, raising their level of morale.

So this is how the behavioral pattern has been handled by virtue and the last is if the followers are both able and willing this is the most win-win situation that has been discussed by Vecchio in his model that the leaders do not need to do much. Because it is like grab for 2 parties a leader and the follower they are gravitating towards each other and how they are, fulfilling all the gaps or the loopholes in the organizational goals and how they are accomplishing those goals in a very well organized manner.

So the significance of this theory lies in acknowledging the importance of followers and building on the logic those leaders can compensate for followers limited ability and motivation.

But this is only possible according to Vecchio when the leader first of, all in the first instance identifies and understands the behavioral pattern of the followers so his major focus was on behavior and then it was leadership style.

So this was another theory of situational leadership theory that has been proposed in the management discourse developed by virtue in the year 1987.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:52)

The Managerial Grid

The **managerial grid model** or **managerial grid theory** (1964) is a style leadership model developed by Robert R. Blake and Jane Mouton

This model originally identified five different leadership styles based on the *"concern for people"* and the *"concern for production"*

The model is represented as a grid with *concern for production* as the x-axis and *concern for people* as the y-axis; each axis ranges from 1 (Low) to 9 (High)

- **Concern for People:** this is the degree to which a leader considers team members' needs, interests, and areas of personal development when deciding how best to accomplish a task
- **Concern for Production:** this is the degree to which a leader emphasizes concrete objectives, organizational efficiency, and high productivity when deciding how best to accomplish a task
- ✓ This theory identifies five basic styles of leadership on the grid and represents the varying components of concern for people and concern for production

And the other is managerial grid now just to mention that since we are talking about, situational leadership given by Hersey and Blanchard then we are talking about the revised model by Blanchard and his associates. And then by Vecchio you based on leaders behavioral pattern next is managerial grid. These are the theories which are considered as the classical theories of leadership which are old but at the same time they are effective in their own way and they form a strong base to, understand leadership behavior in management organizations.

So let us discuss about this another theory that is the managerial grid theory developed by Blake and Mouton. They were also OB professionals they have performed profound researches in the area of leadership styles. And this leadership style originally developed to identify 5 different styles of leadership based on concern for people, and concern for production.

Those means leadership styles were contingent upon concern for people or concern for production. That means the leader is either concerned for the people in the organization or they are concerned only for the production or both. So based on the leadership or leaders motive what leadership style is more effective. So according to Blake and Mouton they have proposed a, management grid that means 2 axes have been proposed o_x and o_y .

X axis has been represented with the concern for production and y axis has been represented with the concern for people. And how it concern has been rated by employees and the leaders on a scale of 1 to 9 that is from low to high. So according to this managerial grid 2 concerns

Have been highlighted concerned for people and, concern for production. So according to this concern for people this is the degree to which the leader considers team members needs interests and areas of personal development when deciding how best to accomplish a task.

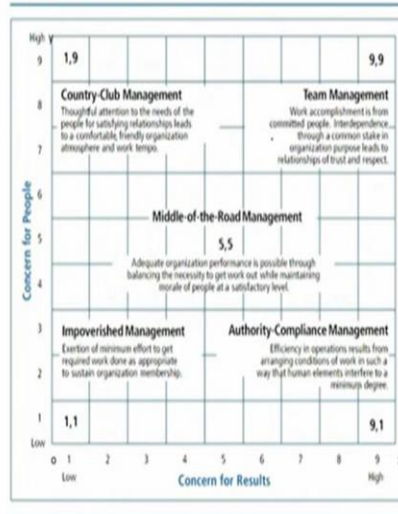
That means the leader is completely focusing on the followers interest and focus in the organization and understanding the followers interest and needs. Then only the leader is, functioning to achieve the organizational goals that mean his more focus is on the people's requirement. Or it can also be mentioned that the leader sometimes mostly focus on the psychological needs of the followers.

And the other is concerned for production this is the degree to which the leader emphasizes concrete objectives. He lays down the objectives in a very straightforward and, concrete manner how the goals have to achieve that detail plan is also led by the leader and he also identifies the organizational efficiency based on the available resources and what should be the level of productivity of the employees.

So, all the decision making lies in the hand of this kind of leader where the concern is only production. So the theory identifies based on these 2, concerns for people and concern for production this theory identifies 5 basic styles on the grid which represents the varying components of concern for people and concern for production. That means with all the different kind of combinations and permutations 5 leadership styles have been identified on the grid.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:33)

Figure 4.1 The Leadership Grid



Based on the managerial grid theory, a manager's position on the grid can be determined by a questionnaire developed by Blake and Mouton and can play an important role in organization development

This is the leadership grid that has been developed by Blake and Mouton. And we, can see on this diagram that on x axis it is concerned for results or production and on y axis it is concerned for people. So as soon as the preference for every any concern is going up and down a particular leadership style can be identified. So if I say that if the concern for people and results is very low that is 1, 1, 1 o 1 then it is actually a very low level of situation that has been, identified by the OB professionals.

Where the management is impoverished that means the manager is not making utmost efforts to get required work done by the subordinates and to sustain the organizational development. That means the manager is just focusing on his own personal status quo there is no concern for the individual employee there is no concern for the development of the organization. He is, only secured or feeling he just want to feel secured about his own job and status.

This is a very dangerous situation in the organization where leadership is very weak and at the same time the employees performance is at the lowest. So this is impoverished management which has been defined at lowest 1. 1 the other is team management diagonally across it is team management 99 line. This is the most, appropriate the best combination of leader and the leadership in terms of concern for people and concern for production.

Here work accomplishment is done based on committed people interdependence is there because common stake is there people and goal or production. Everything is interdependent people performance and commitment is there because their focus is production. and organization purpose leads, to relationship of trust and respect that means people have concern for the production and the leader has concern for the people and for the production both.

So if there is so much of interdependency on each other that it is a holistic situation where everything is being considered appropriate in terms of people in terms of relationship in terms of leadership style in terms of production. So this is, the most perfect situation in any organization as it maintains or sustains the organization. And also maintains a relationship with the employees the other is 1, 9 that is country club management.

These leadership styles actually focus on a thoughtful attention to the needs of the people for satisfying relationship and leads to a comfortably comfortable friendly organization atmosphere and work, tempo. That means the leader's concern is high for the people and not that much for the organization. So the result is one nine as we can say see the figure on the grid on top of this country club management it is 1, 9 that means concern for people is very high and concerned for result is very low.

So under such circumstances the leadership style becomes very, skewed because only the concern is, for people and not that much for management. And the other is 9, 1 as we can see to the right of the grid extreme right on x axis that where the efficiency in operations results from arranging conditions of work in such a way that human elements interfere to a minimum degree. That means the leader is completely focusing on the production and has least focus on people.

So based on this also this, is extreme condition of any leadership style or leadership on the grid that the concern for people is missing that means the leader will not tolerate interference of any human element or human behavior in the functioning of the organization. And only autocratic leadership style will play a major role to achieve the organizational goal because the focus is on or the concern is for production.

Now, based on these four leadership style also the fifth leadership style is in the middle of the road where concern for people is also there and concern production is also there and it is very much balanced in an appropriate manner. So when we are at the 5, 5 that means the concern for people and concern for production is balanced then there is adequate organizational performance which is possible, through balancing the necessity to get work out while maintaining morale of people at a satisfactory level.

That means reward or reinforcement encouragement motivation is also there and at the same time relationship management is also there with the followers. So it is being highly balanced which is very much considered appropriate in some situations. So based on leadership grid or

managerial grid, the x-axis and y axis which concerns for people and production only or based on these 2 factors 5 kind of leadership style have been identified by Blake and Mouton.

So based on the management theory a manager's position on the grid can be determined by a questionnaire developed by Blake and Mouton and can play an important role in organizations development. That means the scale that has, been developed by Blake and Mouton the scores are very much receivable on the questionnaire and those scores can be very much copied on the graph. And with all the permutations and combinations effective leadership style can be easily identified for a particular organization.

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The resulting leadership styles are as follows:

1. **The impoverished style (1,1):** In this style, managers have low concern for both people and production. Managers use this style to preserve job and job seniority and protect themselves by avoiding getting into trouble. The main concern for the manager is not to be held responsible for any mistakes, which as a result leads to fewer innovation decisions
2. **The country club style (1,9):** This style has a high concern for people and a low concern for production. Managers using this style pay much attention to the security and comfort of the employees in hopes that this will increase performance. The resulting atmosphere is usually friendly but not necessarily very productive
3. **The authority-compliance style (9,1):** Managers using this style mount pressure on their employees through rewards and punishments to achieve the company goals. This leadership style is commonly applied by companies on the edge of real or perceived failure and is often used in cases of crisis management
4. **The team management style (9,9):** In this style, the high concern is paid both to people and production. Managers choosing to use this style encourage teamwork and commitment among employees. This method relies heavily on making employees feel themselves to be constructive parts of the company
5. **The middle-of-the-road style (5,5):** Managers using this style try to balance company goals and workers' needs. By giving some concern to both people and production, managers who use this style hope to achieve a suitable balance while maintaining morale of employees at a satisfactory level

So the result is that the impoverished style is the style which leads to fear innovation decisions because neither, that is concerned for people and there is concern for production. In the country club management style that monster is usually friendly but not necessarily very productive. This is but obvious then when leader is just focusing on relationship management with followers then the attention is very much less or there is no attention on the production or organizational goals.

The other is the authority, compliance style under some circumstances the leadership style is commonly applied by companies on the edge of real and perceived failure and is often used in cases of crisis management. That is the applicability that there is no authority is there compliance is there but under crisis if any financial crisis or resource allocation crisis has taken place then this kind of leadership style plays a, major role because people have no experience how to execute any strategy in a very appropriate manner.

Under such situation authority compliance leadership style plays an effective role the other is that pain management. Which; is the most constructive style as it makes the employees feel comfortable and also they aligned with the organizational goals for effective and high production. And the last is, the middle of the road style the managers using this style try to balance company goals and workers needs there is a balance.

And by giving some concern to both people and production managers use this style with the hope to achieve a suitable balance while maintaining morale of the employees at a satisfactory level. So that means relationship orientation and that means concern for people and concern, for production goes parallel. So this is how these classic theories in terms of situational leadership style or managerial grid they are considered as the classic theories or models of leadership which are still effective in their own way.

And are considered as one of the most classic and prominent theories in leadership literature. So I just end up my discussion with this module today and we will, meet in the next lecture thank you so much.