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Crisis Leadership of World Leaders:
Anecdotal Evidence from Global Covid-19 Fightback

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* Your scholarly comments are invited on the ideas, arguments, methodology, implications and shortcomings, if any, of this paper. Comments could be e-mailed to: rameshan@iimk.ac.in.

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Abstract

This paper evaluates the crisis response of top leaders of 21 selected countries and the WHO and UN heads in respect of Covid-19 actions. The 21 countries had accounted for over four-fifth of global Covid-19 cases and nearly three-fifth of deaths as of May 9, 2020. The study uses anecdotal evidences taken from various media sources as well as insights from available crisis management and leadership literature to make intuitive and exploratory observations and draw inferences on leader behaviour based on these leaders' actions over a 5-month period from January to May 2020. The study throws up several conclusions. First, countries vary in their Covid-19 incidence and fatalities; countries having higher incidence and fatalities were mostly those with weak leader actions on the crisis. Countries taking early and/or stronger actions generally had higher recovery-to-death ratio. Second, on the basis of the leaders' orientation towards public health & life motive, political constituency or legitimacy motive, and global opinion/image motive, the paper classifies the leaders' *action styles* as 'missionary', 'strategist', 'politician', 'gamer' and 'supporter', with the 'missionary' leaders focused just on the public health & life even when some of them had an underlying political mission, and the 'gamers' largely interested in their political constituency or legitimacy. Third, in terms of *leadership styles*, 'missionary' leaders mostly followed a positive stewardship, charismatic or transformational style; 'strategist' leaders had a mixed transactional, transformational or narcissistic style; politicians mostly followed a heroism style; and 'gamer' leaders were characterized by narcissistic, authoritarian or heroism style. Heads of WHO and UN were transactional in style. Fourth, with respect to *personal strategy* of leaders, 'nurturing self-image' was more popular with 'heroism' style of leadership and 'politician' action style. The personal strategy of 'problem solving' was followed by leaders of different leadership styles, but mostly 'missionary' leaders. Leaders who had a 'repositioning' angle to their personal strategy achieved better results from their crisis leadership irrespective of their leadership and action styles. Transactional leaders mostly preferred 'system leveraging' as their personal strategy, whereas 'play victim/villainize' was a personal strategy associated with narcissistic or authoritarian leadership and a 'gamer' action style. Finally, when the study is extended to Covid-19 data on infections and deaths of sample countries for a 3-week period beyond May 9, 2020, we find the 'missionary' leaders (on action style) as the most successful in terms of slow progress rates (<1%) of infection and death – seven of these leaders belonged to the OECD group of countries. At the same time, the worst progress rates (going up to 7.8%) were found in the case of BRI[.]S countries of the BRICS group (with the fifth one, China, being the originator of the pandemic), without regard to the action or leadership styles or personal strategy. Thus, the socio-economic-institutional state of development of the sample countries emerges as an important factor in their Covid-19 outcomes. One inference that we can draw from this last point is that the advanced countries are more likely to win the Covid-19 fight first, despite their initial severe suffering and some of their leaders' initial irresponsible actions.

Keywords: Covid-19, Crisis leadership, World leaders, Leader behaviour, Action diligence, Action style, Leadership style, Personal strategy, Action efficacy, Performance differences

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1. Introduction

A crisis unravels the worth of a leader (Forbes, 2020a). The Covid-19 pandemic is an unprecedented opportunity in recent decades not only to evaluate the crisis skills of a particular national leader, but also to compare the performance of national leaders of multiple countries. Effective crisis management requires leadership actions (Bundy and Pfarrer, 2015; Kahn et al., 2013; Pearson and Clair, 1998) such as strategic thinking to predict and proactively tackle the crisis, timely decision-making for fightback, execution of decisions as per priority, consistent management approach throughout the crisis, and transparent public communication for reassurance and compliance. The role of crisis leadership has been underlined by past research (Howell and Shamir, 2005; James et al., 2011; Pillai and Meindl, 1998).

In this study, I will evaluate the crisis response of top leaders of 21 selected countries in respect of Covid-19 actions. In addition to the leaders of 21 countries, I will also evaluate the Covid-19 crisis leadership of WHO and UN heads. The study uses intuitive and exploratory observations and inferences of leader behaviour on the selected leaders and their actions in the context of Covid-19 management. The study analyses leader behaviour based on anecdotal evidences taken from various available sources, most of which will be media news reports on these leaders' actions over a 5-month period between January and May 2020. As the study is about a topical issue that had raised a global alarm for its devastating effect and behaviour of a *wicked problem* (see Camillus, 2008; Head, 2008; Rittel and Webber, 1973), but is not yet subject to rigourous academic studies from a leadership perspective, the study suffers from two important limitations: first, as true about the general crisis management literature that relies more on case studies and anecdotal evidences (Coombs, 2007; Sellnow and Seeger, 2013), conclusions of this paper are also constrained by the use of qualitative anecdotal information on the crisis-behaviour of selected leaders; and, second, a large part of information used in the paper is drawn from contemporary print-media, rather than academic literature, whose emphasis is more on story element than on scholarly rigour. However, it was felt that in view of the importance of the Covid-19 fight to nations and the world as a whole, it is crucial to evaluate how effectively the national leaders and the world tackled the crisis, without getting bogged down by the methodology.

While the study is predominantly qualitative, it uses selected Covid-19 and related data/ information drawn from WHO and 'worldometer coronavirus' in addition to that from media reports.

2. Target Countries & Leaders

The sample selection in this study draws from the fact that the 21 sample countries or their top leaders were in Covid-19-related media glare in the past few months for right or wrong or good or bad reasons. The 21 countries comprise of the following: (i) The top-10 countries on total number of global positive cases as on May 9, 2020 as per the 'worldometer' Covid-19, viz., USA, Spain, Italy, UK, Russia, France, Germany, Brazil, Turkey and Iran (the WHO numbers were not used due to its lag by days). Six of these countries, USA, Spain, Italy, UK, France and Iran, also appear in the top-10 in Covid-19 risk ranking, and one, Germany, was ranked as a top-10 Covid-19 performer (Deep Knowledge Group, 2020), (ii) the Covid-19 crisis-origin (Forbes, 2020a) and the largest case source in Western Pacific, China, (iii) the largest case source in South-East Asia, India, (iv) seven of the top-10 countries on Covid-19 fighting performance (Deep Knowledge Group, 2020), viz., Israel, South Korea, Australia, New

Zealand, Taiwan, Singapore and Japan. The other 3 are Germany and China that are already included and Hong Kong that is not included considering the fact that its administrative actions were guided, as a Special Administrative Region, through a Chinese-aligned CEO, by China's directives, (v) the largest case source in Africa, South Africa, and, finally, (vi) Cuba, which attracted global attention for their support to many affected countries by lending medical teams. These 21 countries accounted for over four-fifth of global Covid-19 cases and nearly three-fifth of deaths.

Table 1 summarizes the selection criteria for the 21 sample countries.

Table 1: Sample Selection Criteria of 21 Countries*

Country	Criterion-1	Criterion-2 (Where applicable)
USA	Top-10 in global cases	Top-10 Covid-19 Risk**
Spain	Top-10 in global cases	Top-10 Covid-19 Risk
Italy	Top-10 in global cases	Top-10 Covid-19 Risk
UK	Top-10 in global cases	Top-10 Covid-19 Risk
Russia	Top-10 in global cases	Top-4 in Europe# cases
France	Top-10 in global cases	Top-10 Covid-19 Risk
Germany	Top-10 in global cases	Top-10 Covid performer^
Brazil	Top-10 in global cases	Top-2 Americas#
Turkey	Top-10 in global cases	Top-7 in Europe cases
Iran	Top-10 in global cases	Top-10 Covid-19 Risk
China	Origin of crisis	Top-2 Western Pacific#
India	Top in South-East Asia# cases	
Singapore	Top-10 Covid performer	Top-2 Western Pacific
Israel	Top-10 Covid performer	
Japan	Top-10 Covid performer	
South Korea	Top-10 Covid performer	
South Africa	Top in African# cases	
Australia	Top-10 Covid performer	
Cuba	International Medical Teams	
New Zealand	Top-10 Covid performer	
Taiwan	Top-10 Covid performer	

* As on May 9, 2020   **^ The Deep Knowledge ranking, https://www.dkv.global/covid
# WHO statistics

Table 2 presents selected Covid-19 data of 21 sample countries as on May 9, 2020. Table 2 also provides the names of leaders of selected countries, either President or Prime Minister, who were the top decision makers in the Covid-19 fight.

Table 2: Selected Covid-19 Data of 21 Sample Countries

Country	Covid-19 Cases	Total Deaths	Cases/ Million	Death/ Million	Top Decision Maker (President/PM)
USA	13,22,164	78,616	3,994	238	Donald Trump
Spain	2,60,117	26,299	5,563	562	Pedro Sanchez
Italy	2,17,185	30,201	3,592	500	Giuseppe Conte
UK	2,11,364	31,241	3,114	460	Boris Johnson
Russia	1,98,676	1,827	1,361	13	Vladimir Putin
France	1,76,079	26,230	2,698	402	Emmanuel Macron
Germany	1,70,588	7,510	2,036	90	Angela Merkel
Brazil	1,46,894	10,017	691	47	Jair Bolsonaro
Turkey	1,38,657	3,786	1,644	45	Recep T Erdogan
Iran	1,04,691	6,541	1,246	78	Hassan Rouhani
China	82,887	4,633	58	3	Xi Jinping
India	59,765	1,986	43	1	Narendra Modi
Singapore	22,460	20	3,839	3	Lee Hsien Loong
Israel	16,444	245	1,900	28	Benjamin Netanyahu
Japan	15,575	590	123	5	Shinzo Abe
South Korea	10,840	256	211	5	Moon Jae-in
South Africa	8,895	178	150	3	Cyril Ramaphosa
Australia	6,929	97	272	4	Scott Morrison
Cuba	1,741	74	154	7	Miguel Diaz-Canel
New Zealand	1,492	21	309	4	Jacinda Ardern
Taiwan	440	6	18	0.3	Tsai Ing-wen

Source: www.worldometers.info/coronavirus; WHO data had a lag of 4 days.

3. Crisis Management

A *crisis* is a major unexpected or un-averted disruption caused to the normal functioning or performance of an entity such as an individual, organization, a nation or the world whose adverse impact may be wide-ranging and/or long-lasting (see also Bundy and Pfarrer, 2015; Fediuk et al, 2012; James et al., 2011; Kahn et al., 2013). Crisis management has two angles – internal, which is about working on internal mechanisms to avert and manage a crisis, and external, which focuses on addressing external factors to pre-empt and tackle a crisis (see Bundy et al, 2017).

Crisis action involves three phases – pre-crisis, crisis and post crisis, each with specific management demands (Bundy and Pfarrer, 2015; Kahn et al., 2013; Pearson and Clair, 1998). A crisis is best managed when it is averted through anticipation and planning. This is pre-crisis management. A real crisis requires a crisis-management. A crisis actually occurs when it is not anticipated and pre-empted. Or, the early-warning signs were not taken seriously and necessary cautionary measures were not put in place. When a crisis actually erupts, at the least, it should attract an immediate response. By priority, its serious fallouts should be instantly controlled and neutralized. Once this is attempted, next priority should be to prevent the crisis from aggravating and creating other new consequences. Third phase of action should be to control other consequences of the crisis that can have a subsequent impact on the stakeholders. Once

these early requirements are addressed, the next action should be a detailed review of the crisis to find out its causes, and devise possible long-term solutions to prevent the recurrence of a similar crisis in future. This is part of post-crisis management. If the crisis has a high and instant as well as sustained destructive power, actions on these different fronts can be taken simultaneously by deploying adequate human and other resources on each of them.

Leaders are critical to crisis management (Bundy et al, 2017). Leaders who are stronger in strategic thinking are generally alert to threat perceptions and, hence, are more likely to foresee or recognize a crisis rapidly. Similarly, leaders could see a crisis as a threat (a problematic disruption) or an opportunity (a chance to rework on the organization/country); the latter-type might see useful possibilities in the crisis (James et al, 2011). A leader might approach a crisis defensively, say, through denial and scapegoating. For instance, President Donald Trump of USA (CNN, 2020b; The New York Times, 2020a) and Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil (Al Jazeera, 2020b) were seen in this mode when dealing with the Covid-19 crisis. The alternative is to be accommodative – through empathy and rectification. This seemed true about the Covid-19 dealings of Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern of New Zealand (The Atlantic, 2020b).

4. Covid-19 Crisis

The 2020 Covid-19 crisis emerged when China reported in late December 2019 a new virus (WHO, 2020a) that jumped from animal to human and, then, human to human and caused hundreds of thousands of infections – foretelling the prospect of a global pandemic. In a matter of weeks since January 2020, nearly 200 countries got affected by the virus – most of them highly critically while a few in a limited way. But all of them were victims of crisis spill-over (Barnett and King (2008), Greve et al. (2010), Haack et al (2014), Jonsson et al (2009) and Yu et al (2008) refer to crisis spill-overs) – owing to people movements due to their linkages with Chinese economy. The crisis churned out pictures of both un-anticipation and floppy response management – before China notified the incidence, other countries did not anticipate it; after Chinese crisis was clear and some countries began acting, many other countries still vacillated. For instance, Taiwan reacted swiftly immediately on the China news (Time, 2020); but, USA responded in a piecemeal way until it was too late. Unfortunately, following Zavyalova et al (2012), those countries that fare poorly in the Covid-19 fight might attract more ridicule than the source of the crisis particularly if the source country or other victims managed it better. Of course, some failures are pardonable because a severe crisis is said to impair managers' response capability due to strong negative emotional consequences (Kahn et al., 2013; Roux-Dufort, 2007; Vaaler and McNamara, 2004). Cooperation of leaders of affected countries can, however, enhance effectiveness of each country's crisis response (see Bies, 2013).

In the Covid-19 crisis, pre-crisis management required anticipating a global or national viral pandemic emerging any time, in light of past outbreaks, and preparing the response systems to be ready to act before the crisis goes beyond the seeding stage. It implies that every country should have anticipated the pandemic reaching its shores when the virus incidence was first reported in the country of its origin, particularly in view of millions of Chinese setting out on international tourism. For this anticipation, there was availability of a time span of at least 30-40 days considering the late-December 2019 date of the origin – such a time window might have been adequate for crisis prevention with proper pre-crisis management actions. However, crisis prevention was not achieved in any of the countries in the full sense, while some countries tried to prevent it. So, Covid-19 crisis occurred in all the 21 sample countries covered in this study.

Now, having missed the pre-crisis action, the next phase involved crisis management. For Covid-19, crisis management required immediate actions to prevent the spread of the virus by restricting it to the initial few infected. Key actions required are given in Table 3 and 4 (compiled from various sources including WHO, 2020a; 2020b; 2020c).

Table 3 lists required Covid-19 actions that are potential leadership flashpoints – where a leader's competence can manifest through effective action, both directly and through subordinate leaders. A leader who acts on them fast and effectively will address the crisis and prevent its deepening. Leaders who miss the right action will allow the virus to spread to an unmanageable level causing human suffering and preventable loss of life.

Table 3: Required Covid-19 Actions as Leadership Flashpoints

S. No	Prevention & Control Measure	Responsibility
1	IPC^ programme with a dedicated & trained team or an IPC focal point to be in place	Supported by national senior management
2	Social distancing measures	Enforcement by national, provincial & local public authorities
3	Testing facilities	Arrangements by national & provincial public authorities
4	Health care facilities	Provided or facilitated by provincial & local public authorities
5	Masks & personal protection equipment	Provided or facilitated by national, provincial & local public authorities
6	Institutional/home isolation/quarantine	Arranged or facilitated by provincial & local public authorities
7	Testing as per requirements & guidelines	Facilitated or provided by national, provincial & local public authorities
8	Treatment to Covid-19 patients as per protocol	Facilitated or provided by national, provincial & local public authorities
9	Tracing the contacts of infected persons	Pursued by provincial & local public authorities
10	Lockdown or other slowing down methods	Declared & enforced by national & provincial public authorities
11	Lockdown support measures (income support, emergency measures, etc)	Provided or facilitated by national, provincial & local public authorities
12	Supply of essential goods & services	Facilitated by national, provincial & local public authorities
13	Continued treatment to non-Covid patients	Facilitated or provided by national, provincial & local public authorities
14	Coordination at border regions	National & provincial public authorities
15	Information dissemination & public liaison	National & provincial authorities
16	Overall coordination of Covid-19 management	National & provincial leadership

^ Infection Prevention & Control
Source: Compiled from WHO and other sources

Table 4 enumerates the responsibilities of national leadership in the Covid-19 crisis and the sample countries whose leadership actually fulfilled the respective responsibilities. The responsibilities include a national leadership ready for quick absorption of the gravity of crisis, rapid decision-making and prompt issuance of action directives, and constitution of a national monitoring and coordination group to facilitate national coordination and coordination with provincial authorities.

Table 4: Covid-19 Responsibilities of National Leadership

S. No.	Responsibility	Example
1	Recognizing the danger early (e.g., with WHO first report)	Japan, South Korea, Taiwan
2	Acknowledging the danger in time (at first case or before)	Italy, Turkey, New Zealand, Taiwan
3	Determining right preventive measures before onslaught	Turkey, New Zealand, Taiwan
4	Instituting national prevention policy & action	South Korea, Taiwan
5	Getting required provincial preventive responses	Australia, New Zealand
6	Providing preventive support to provincial authorities	Brazil's failure
7	Facilitating required preventive support resources to provincial authorities	Germany, India, South Africa
8	Determining right control measures on actual occurrence	South Africa
9	Declaring national control policy & action	India, South Africa
10	Getting required provincial control responses	Germany, India, Australia
11	Providing control support to provincial authorities	Germany, India
12	Facilitating required control support resources to provincial authorities	Brazil's failure
13	Coordinating with provincial authorities for nation-wide actions	Germany, India, Australia
14	Inspiring people & authorities for coordinated national fightback	USA & Brazil's failure
15	Getting Covid-19 controlled within manageable limits	Cuba, New Zealand, Taiwan
16	Coordinating with international agencies (WHO, UN etc) for guidance	India
17	Coordinating with international community for mutual support	Germany, India, South Korea, South Africa, Cuba
18	Taking initiatives for international collaboration	India, Australia
19	Providing ideas & support for exploring & realising new approaches	India, Taiwan
20	Sustaining the public confidence in the leadership	Singapore, Taiwan
21	Facilitating information flow & media support	South Africa
22	Planning & coordinating economic recovery phase	India

Source: Compiled from WHO and other sources

5. Covid-19 Crisis Action Response

A crisis demands quick actions (Sapriel, 2003) – without an elaborate, time-consuming decision process. Key specific actions required in the Covid-19 case consisted of restricting the entry of people into domestic borders (Chinazzi et al, 2020), screening the incoming people and objects, isolating infected persons and contaminated objects, tracking and quarantining (Chinazzi et al, 2020) the vulnerable people to prevent social spread, and instituting social distancing, compulsory use of masks (WHO, 2020b) and practising of personal hygiene

(Chinazzi et al, 2020; WHO, 2020b). A related area of action is towards the whole world – to the other nations sharing the crisis. Providing moral support to other nations, coordinating the crisis efforts with them, helping them access materials and resources that can be spared from one's own requirements, and helping in creating an overall reassuring global environment in which others can focus on their crisis actions without unrelated distractions - these will be part of the crisis leadership contribution.

A look at the critical Covid-19 timeline of the 21 sample countries will complement our understanding of the alacrity with which the leaders in different countries performed their responsibilities and how far their actions could cause recovery and prevent death. Selected critical timeline is provided in Table 5.

Table 5: Critical Covid-19 Timeline of 21 Sample Countries

Country	First Case Reported	National Controls Started	National Lockdown Measures	National Dilution of Lockdown	Curve Flattening Started	Cured/ Death Ratio
USA	20.1.20	End-Jan.	NA*	Early-May	NS	2.5
Spain	31.1.20	Mid-March	Mid-March	End-April	Mid-May	6.7
Italy	31.1.20	End-Jan.	Week-2 March	Early-May	Mid-May	3.3
UK	31.1.20	End-Feb.	End-March	NS	NS	NA
Russia	31.1.20	Mid-March	End-March	Mid-May	NS	18[a]
France	24.1.20	Mid-March	Mid-March	Mid-May	Mid-May	2.1
Germany	27.1.20	Mid-March	Week-4 Mar.#	Week-3 April	Mid- May	19
Brazil	25.2.20	NA	None	NA	NS	6
Turkey	11.3.20	Early-Feb.	NA	NA	Mid-May	28[a]
Iran	19.2.20	Mid-March	Mid-March	Mid-April	NS	14[a]
China	31.12.20	Week-4 Jan.	Week-4 Jan.^	Early-April	Late-Feb.	17[a]
India	30.1.20	Week-4 Mar.	Week-4 March	Week-3 April	NS	14
Singapore	23.1.20	Mid-Feb.	Early-April	NS	NS	565
Israel	21.2.20	Mid-March	Mid-March	End-April	Early May	50
Japan	16.1.20	End-Feb.	Mid-April[b]	Week-3 May	Mid-May	16
South Korea	20.1.20	Mid-Feb.	None	NA	Early April	38
South Africa	5.3.20	Mid-March	End-March	Early-May	NS	25
Australia	25.1.20	Week-4 Mar.	End-March	NA	Mid-April	64
Cuba	11.3.20	Week-4 Mar.	NA	NA	Mid-May	20
New Zealand	28.2.20	Early-Feb.	End-March	End-April	Early-May	70
Taiwan	21.1.20	Week-4 Jan.	None	NA	Mid-April	60

 * Just presidential guidelines in mid-March for voluntary social restrictions without federal lockdown,
    quarantine or curfew, when already 4600 cases & 95 deaths were reported
 ^ In Wuhan alone   # By all provincial governments
   NS = not started   NA = not available/applicable   a = data reliability in these cases is disputed
   b = there was no complete lockdown *per se*, but only a national emergency
 Source: Compiled from various sources

The main inferences from Table 5 can be summarized as in Table 6, which classifies the countries on action diligence and action efficacy. Action diligence is represented by the time

gap between the first incidence of Covid-19 in the respective countries and commencement of national-level control actions including lockdown measures. Action efficacy is represented by the recovery-death ratio in different countries that indicates how effective were the national control actions in ensuring maximum recovery and minimum death of patients.

Table 6: Classification of Countries by Action Diligence & Efficacy[@]

Classification Criteria	Poor/ Weak	Satisfactory/ Encouraging	Good	Very Good	Outstanding
Time between First-case & Controls (TFC)	Spain, Russia, France, Germany, Brazil, India, Japan, Australia	USA, Italy, UK, Turkey#, Iran, China*, Singapore, Israel, South Korea	Cuba, New Zealand	South Africa, Taiwan^	
Recovery-Death Ratio[@] (RDR)	USA, France, Italy	Spain, Brazil	Russia, Germany, Turkey, Iran, China, India, Japan, South Arica, Cuba	Israel, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan	Singapore

@ Classes are: 0-5, 5-10, 10-30, 30-100, >100

* China's action by official dates may be 'good'; but, it is accused of hiding the November start of the virus & under-reporting data

Turkey acted in a multi-fold way even before reporting first case; but never declared a national lockdown due to Erdogan's political priorities. Turkey's reported data is taken accurate although it is disputed.

^ Taiwan acted within days of China news; but, never declared a national lockdown due to economic priorities

The most important observation from Table 6 is that the superior Covid-19 performance of sample countries indicated in Table 1 based on international evaluations is validated by the measure of Recovery-Death Ratio (RDR) – six top performing countries of Table 1, viz., Singapore, Israel, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and Taiwan, are classified as 'Outstanding' to 'Very Good' in Table 6, while two top-performance countries of Table 1, Germany and Japan, are classified as 'Good' along with seven other countries including India. However, Table 6 also reveals that many countries irrespective of their RDR classification were slow in their national reactions to the crisis – as indicated by their larger time gap between the first reported case and the onset of national control actions involving the general public. Interestingly, all the four countries with quicker national control actions are falling in the 'Very Good' to 'Good' categories on RDR.

6. Leader Performance

Compared to the action requirements of Table 3 and 4 and the quantitative facts of Table 5 along with its summary inferences on action diligence and efficacy provided in Table 6, how did the 21 leaders (*plus* the WHO and UN heads) qualitatively perform? Do the two tally? An imbalance can not only make the impact of the crisis severe, but, following Love and Kraatz (2009), Pfarrer et al. (2010), Rhee and Haunschild (2006), Zavyalova et al. (2012) and Zyglidopoulos (2001), it can also damage the social standing of leaders within a country and among the comity of nations. I look at a cross-section of accessible media reports to assess the public perception across the world about each of these leaders' effectiveness as a crisis leader. I identify three motives in their actions that will characterize their leader behaviour: (A) Public health and life, (B) Political constituency or legitimacy and (C) Global opinion or image. Based on these three motives and the resultant quality and intensity of their remedial actions, these leaders can be intuitively divided into four groups – missionaries, strategists, politicians and gamers. Missionaries are those with a single-minded pursuit – public health and life; strategists are those leaders who tried to reconcile among the three motives and had partial success on

each; politicians are those who wanted results on public health and life, but were embroiled in their political priorities (political constituency or legitimacy); and gamers are the leaders who had difficulty in shifting out of their political priorities and appeared to focus largely on their political constituency or legitimacy. In each of these cases, however, it is possible that as Covid-19 weeks passed, their styles got moderated either due to fatigue or due to changing circumstances.

Table 7 presents the classification of 23 leaders on the three factors, A, B and C, and the associated four characterizations. Between WHO head and the UN head, two global leaders evaluated, the former behaved like a politician while the latter fitted into none of the four characterizations; he just displayed a 'supporter' role as would be expected of him.

Table 7: Classification of Covid-19 Leadership on their Action Style

Leader	Motive	Action Style
Donald Trump	B	Gamer
Pedro Sanchez	A and B	Politician
Giuseppe Conte	A and B	Politician
Boris Johnson	B	Gamer
Vladimir Putin	A, B and C	Strategist
Emmanuel Macron	A and B	Politician
Angela Merkel	A	Missionary
Jair Bolsonaro	B	Gamer
Recep T Erdogan	B	Gamer
Hassan Rouhani	B	Gamer
Xi Jinping	B	Gamer
Narendra Modi	A, B and C	Strategist
Lee Hsien Loong	A	Missionary
Benjamin Netanyahu	A, B and C	Strategist
Shinzo Abe	A, B and C	Strategist
Moon Jae-in	A	Missionary
Cyril Ramaphosa	A	Missionary
Scott Morrison	A	Missionary
Miguel Diaz-Canel	A, B and C	Strategist
Jacinda Ardern	A	Missionary
Tsai Ing-wen	A	Missionary
Tedros A Ghabreyesus	A and B	Politician
Antonio Guterres	A and C	Supporter

A Public health & life   B Political constituency or legitimacy
C Global opinion or image

Among the heads of state, the missionary leaders were Angela Merkel of Germany, Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore, Moon Jae-in of South Korea, Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa, Scott Morrison of Australia, Jacinda Ardern of New Zealand and Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan; the strategists were Vladimir Putin of Russia, Narendra Modi of India, Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel, Shinzo Abe of Japan and Miguel Diaz-Canel of Cuba; the politicians were Pedro

Sanchez of Spain, Giuseppe Conte of Italy and Emmanuel Macron of France; and, the gamers were Donald Trump of USA, Boris Johnson of UK, Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, Recep T Erdogan of Turkey, Hassan Rouhani of Iran and Xi Jinping of China. As mentioned earlier, the WHO head Tedros A Ghabreyesus displayed characteristics of a politician while the UN head Antonio Guterres limited himself to a 'supporter' role.

Missionaries
Angela Merkel
In Germany, Angela Merkel adopted a low-key and laidback (CNN, 2020c; FP, 2020a), or a 'softly-softly' (The Irish Times, 2020), approach to the Covid-19 spread till the second week of March, on the assessment that the spread was manageable despite the cases rising to triple digits and a few deaths. From this point of view, Merkel's sense of ownership and responsibility as a leader can be seriously doubted – at this stage she could have been judged one of the worst leaders. May be, as someone expected to withdraw soon from party leadership she might not have seen any political utility in quick reaction or hard work. Hence, she could easily fall into the 'political', or even 'gamer', category of action style. But, later, consistent with the leadership literature recommending behavioural adaptation (Rosenbusch and Townsend, 2004), in this case a fast one, when she began amending her approach as the situation became really grim, she turned very effective with a transformational touch even after considering the decentralized structure of Germany (FP, 2020a; The Irish Times, 2020) and the fact that a National Pandemic Plan and a nodal institution were acting as national fulcrum in the crisis-management efforts. As it advanced into mid-March, the virus-risk became as dreadful in Germany as in other major European countries. However, in Germany, it progressed at a much slower rate due to actions on several fronts (HKFP, 2020). Number of deaths was substantially controlled – even by May 9, it was just a fraction of the numbers of Italy, Spain, UK or France. Further, the virus spread began slowing down after mid-April itself even as the virus was still raging in its neighbouring countries.

One analysis attributes the better Covid-19 outcomes of Germany to its health infrastructure and various control measures adopted such as testing. Merkel's act of delegating a lot of disaster management authority to her ministers reinforced the corona efforts. Yet, it was left to Merkel to reassure the Germans in March with a serious, but calm, demeanour that seemed appealing (DW, 2020; Forbes, 2020d; FP, 2020a; New Zealand Herald, 2020) – most Germans got to believe that the government could really protect them despite the initial hiccup. As Covid-19 began sweeping across the world she stepped up and bolstered the German efforts, underscoring her missionary zeal, while also supporting the international fightback and recovery by even allowing patients from neighbouring countries to be treated in Germany. Obviously, Merkel's ratings in Germany soared (The Economist, 2020d) and her international leadership profile got rave reviews. The RDR result of 'Good' of Table 6 is commensurate with this, although the delayed actions put Germany into a 'Poor/Weak' group in action diligence (TFC) in Table 6. Of course, Merkel's low profile in Covid-19 management had its own side effects – such as a leadership deficit for the common interest of European Union. However, her progress from lethargy to diligence is likely to pay off for Germany in the later (post-study) weeks as well.

Lee Hsien Loong
In Singapore, Lee Hsien Loong initiated actions immediately and decisively (Forbes, 2020c) on the news of corona virus emerging out of China, with a missionary zeal. He followed an aggressive testing, tracing and quarantining regime (Al Jazeera, 2020b) similar to South Korea's. Strict measures were enforced to limit crowding in public places. Violators were held

accountable with heavy fines and jail terms. Yet, no complete lockdown was resorted to. Singapore's resultant superior outcomes were credited to Loong's leadership and his swift multi-front actions including expert consultations (HKFP, 2020). Further, Loong faced the challenge with calm and optimism while he kept his actions transparent to the public, instead of trying to cover up like some of the other leaders elsewhere. Loong's stewardship helped Singapore in the early phase to curtail Covid-19 incidence to smaller numbers as compared to many other nations. Many even felt that Singapore was the safest country in the world to live under the Covid-19 crisis. Singapore and Loong accordingly earned international accolades and a top-10 position on corona efforts. In the later phase, when the situation got worsened, with the number of cases multiplying rapidly over the March-end level to reach more than 25 times that level in the next 6 weeks, Loong was ready to extend the restrictions and social distancing much longer despite its cost to business and people; for him, public health and life were more important than any political points. His 'circuit breaker' measures (The Economic Times, 2020a) also ensured for Singapore one of the lowest corona-death rates (less than 0.1%) among the corona-affected countries. It is no surprise, then, that Singapore's RDR position is 'Outstanding' in Table 6. Nonetheless, the prolonged restrictions could cause a fatigue in the public and a persistence issue with the leader; only future weeks will show how it works out.

Moon Jae-in
In South Korea, Moon Jae-in followed an aggressive path in containing the virus spread – with lots of testing, use of innovative strategies and active tracking of patients. As a result of Jae-in's transformational mission (with a pre-crisis record of domestic unpopularity), South Korea was able to control the crisis quite early. South Korea also tried to help other countries by exporting test kits when many affected countries were struggling to arrange test kits and other required materials for saving their vulnerable populations. Leaders of some of the major western countries consulted Jae-in on containment measures (The Interpreter, 2020) and international media praised him for his achievement. Further, South Korea's successful fight with Covid-19 with several steps (HKFP, 2020) transformed public opinion about their President, who was highly unpopular before the crisis, to the extent that he won a re-election in the middle of the corona pandemic (Hindustan Times, 2020a). For South Korea, his mission-like efforts led to a top-10 position in the world in Covid-19 efforts and a 'Very Good' RDR position in Table 6. It is possible that South Korea has fully reined the virus in; but, the reality will be revealed by the post-study weeks.

Cyril Ramaphosa
In South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa is said to have followed the dictum 'act fast, act hard' (Chatham House, 2020). His prime motto was to prevent transmission. Hence, medical experts were given an upper hand in the Covid-19 management. Within a few days after the first case was reported, a national command council was created under Ramaphosa's leadership to guide the Covid-19 battle. Emitting leadership sparks of a high-reliability organization described by Bigley and Roberts (2001), Ramaphosa's actions were timely - he closed the borders, borrowed lessons from past pandemic efforts, consulted experts, opted for a science-based approach (CSIS, 2020), used mobile testing facilities and communicated with different stakeholders including religious and social leaders. A regime of tracing, extensive testing and isolating was instituted. Hand sanitizing and social distancing were advised. Tens of thousands of health workers were mobilized to visit homes and do screening. Lockdown measures were imposed early at a thousand cases and a couple of deaths, and these were strictly enforced (Chatham House, 2020; CFR, 2020c), even at the cost of some criticisms on the level of force used. Resultant travel restrictions prevented a rapid spread. Religious leaders, who had greater credibility in African countries, were roped in to prevent risky congregations. He secured the

support of different political parties including the opposition by reaching out to them and involving them in the crisis-management process. He was acting as if on a stewardship mission – in complete contrast with his pre-crisis lacklustre transactional approach. Ramaphosa followed up his anti-virus measures with a bailout package aimed at those affected.

Ramaphosa's ongoing term as African Union chair rendered his effective intervention in South Africa a tool for the fight back in the entire Africa (Chatham House, 2020); he could also liaise with WHO as the key African link in a constructive manner. His thoughtful acts included soliciting international support for economic rehabilitation and inviting Cuban medical teams for complementing internal health efforts. Ramaphosa's efforts did not go unnoticed in the international media – many had appreciated his crisis leadership in South Africa. His domestic political woes of South Africa's pre-crisis and potential post-crisis economic problems cannot cloud his Covid-19 performance. His action style can, hence, be easily characterized as 'missionary'. This is endorsed by South Africa's 'Very Good' to 'Good' classification in Table 6 on action diligence (TFC) and efficacy (RDR). In later days, however, restrictions were eased out in a staggered way to aid economic recovery. In a developing society like South Africa, resource-deprived people cannot be kept indoors too long. He might also have been under political pressure to open up. An expectable outcome of this development could be a moderation in Ramaphosa's leadership approach and a worsening virus situation in the later weeks.

Scott Morrison

In Australia, Scott Morrison, facing domestic heat on his weak pre-crisis performance, discovered his charisma in time to confront the virus effectively. He followed a proactive and consensual approach to the Covid-19 crisis management. One of the most remarkable things he did was to form a national cabinet involving provincial heads from the opposition as well. Further, he pursued a science-based approach and put health experts in the forefront (BBC News, 2020b). This was different from the (climatic) heroism he followed in the bush-fire crisis (The Washington Post, 2020a). There was also policy participation of trade unions. Besides, he enforced an early lockdown, which the Australians were by and large willingly following (The Washington Post, 2020a). All his steps indicated he had a missionary desire to tackle the menace. As a result of these efforts, Australia was able to control Covid-19 spread earlier than many other developed countries, and, like New Zealand, become a top-10 country in the world in the corona fight. His success earned him higher domestic ratings (The Economist, 2020d) and was internationally acknowledged when he was placed higher in some of the global Covid-19 performance rankings. Accordingly, in Table 6, Australia appears under 'Very Good' in RDR. Further, a chance of Australia facing a significant virus relapse is limited given the robustness of Morrison's approach.

Jacinda Ardern

In New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern once again displayed her credential as a good crisis leader (The Guardian, 2020a); she had earlier proved her mettle of effectiveness during the Christchurch shooting and the White Island volcano disaster. Some described her a symbol of compassionate leadership (CNA, 2020a). Ardern sprang into action as if she was on a prowl to shower her charisma on New Zealand at every turn of events. She acted like in a mission and commenced the Covid-19 crisis steps even before a crisis onset happened (Forbes, 2020d). Chinese travellers were banned in mid-February without even a single Covid-19 case in New Zealand when few other countries thought about such a measure. Resultantly, New Zealand's first case was reported only on February 28, more than one month after the first case in many other leading countries. By mid-March, borders were closed for all non-residents. A complete

strongly-enforced lockdown (Scroll.in, 2020a) was declared by end of March with full 48 hours of notice. She had targeted eliminating the virus, rather than flattening the curve, as her priority. While she demoted her health minister for lockdown violations, she showed empathy to people (The Atlantic, 2020b), including foreign students, affected by the lockdown. She did not indulge in a blame game, and assumed responsibility by leading from the front.

New Zealand followed a rigourous regime of contact tracing, testing and quarantining, foretelling New Zealand's signs of success (The Atlantic, 2020b; News 18, 2020). Her popularity ratings in New Zealand were commensurate with her crisis leadership efforts as well as with her success in getting popular support for her Covid-19 efforts, including the strict lockdown. Some even consider her the best western corona-crisis leader (Scroll.in, 2020a). New Zealand also won a world's top-10 best Covid-19 performing country recognition. Further, Table 6 classifies New Zealand into 'Very Good' to 'Good' on action diligence, TFC, and action efficacy, RDR. As New Zealand's response was the most robust among the frontline countries in this study, there are chances of New Zealand being one of the first to neutralize the corona impact.

Tsai Ing-wen
In Taiwan, Tsai Ing-wen was clear about her mission – she had Taiwan's stewardship. She declared proactive measures (Time, 2020) to prevent the virus from reaching a crisis proportion as soon as the problem was confirmed in China (Forbes, 2020d). Taiwan was particularly vulnerable due to its proximity to China, intensive movement of people between China and Taiwan and the fact that it is not a member of WHO due to geopolitical factors, particularly China's heavy-handed approach (The Guardian, 2020a). Still, Ing-wen's varied actions (HKFP, 2020) were able to curtail the infection with much less severity than many other countries - that too, without a harsh lockdown like others. Her early steps included banning China flights before any other country did it, constituting a central coordination agency, setting up quarantine processes (Time, 2020) and scaling up production of personal protection materials such as masks and making it available to everyone. Taiwan even exported masks to some other affected countries (Focus Taiwan, 2020). Ing-wen's efforts earned her international appreciation in the form of Taiwan being adjudged as one of the best Covid-19 performers among countries. Taiwan's categorization in Table 6 into 'Very Good' on both action diligence (TFC) and action efficacy (RDR) should, therefore, be a normal, but commendable, outcome. Besides, like New Zealand, Taiwan is likely to succeed earlier than many other countries in controlling Covid-19 crisis.

Strategists
Vladimir Putin
In Russia, Vladimir Putin started off proactively with an earnest desire to control the virus spread, by closing Chinese borders by end-January itself (Forbes, 2020b) and declaring closure of other borders by mid-March. As a result, initially, till mid-April, Russia's corona problem did not appear like a crisis despite some attributing it to a low testing rate. It looked like its anti-Nazi victory parade scheduled on May 9 was on course before it was derailed (The New York Times, 2020c). Putin was initially a subscriber to the conspiracy theory blaming USA for the corona pandemic, which was purportedly created to harm China. Hence, first, he did not believe that it could harm Russia. But since mid-April, it began turning into a pandemic for Russia too. Then, like a thoughtful leader trying to balance his own authority with the need of the hour, Putin was willing to delegate responsibility to the provincial leaders to deal with the crisis – so much that some thought that he was washing his hands off the crisis (The Economist, 2020b). This was not fully true - indeed, he had showed support with such acts as visiting a

hospital to boost the public morale. Some argued that he was failing (The Guardian, 2020d) and the delegation of responsibility emanated from his poor crisis-management skill; or, it could be an intelligent step to diffuse accountability as well. This, of course, was a transactional approach. Whatever it was, over time it was felt that the crisis actually turned him both passive and bored as he might have felt restless about its impact on his global strongman image; and, confined to his residence, he was unable to perform his leadership magic any more. In other words, the corona crisis allegedly rendered him ineffective. At the same time, as Russia had moved to a more centralized authority over the years, not everyone was sure whether local authorities will be able to rise up to the occasion. Besides, the inability of Russia's weakened health system to absorb the virus shock was stoking political issues (FP, 2020c). Also, it is said that not too many in Russia trusted the Russian official numbers on the pandemic as accurate.

As events unfolded, the politician in Putin was on public display – earlier, after a considerable period of hesitation when declaring emergency measures to control the spread became inevitable by the end of March, Putin did not want to use harsh terms like quarantine, lockdown etc, lest people might suspect his competence and his ratings might go further down; hence, he juggled by chosing terms like 'non-working days' to describe a closure - in effect it was a full lockdown with business activities curtailed. Closure was later extended till mid-May. With Covid-19 exploding in Russia since April second half and going stronger in early May, making Russian number of cases the highest in Europe, he was still tempted to ease down controls (The Guardian, 2020d), following other countries. If that misfires, it could turn tragic, notwithstanding the low death rates in Russia. Another possibility is that further opening-up decision could be delegated to the provincial heads, thereby freeing Putin of criticisms. In a nutshell, Putin appears to be a weak or disinterested crisis-leader (The New York Times, 2020c), waiting impatiently for ways to play out his usual power games at an early opportunity - but he displayed the art of covering it up through shrewd actions of delegation and lying low for a while. In Table 6 Russia is falling in the 'Poor/Weak' category on action diligence (TFC), but under 'Good' in action efficacy (RDR), the latter indicating implicit effectiveness. However, given the many weaknesses of his leadership as well as of the Russian health-crisis infrastructure, a deterioration in Russian virus situation in the coming weeks cannot be ruled out.

Narendra Modi
In India, Narendra Modi declared a national lockdown on March 24, 2020, long after the first case was reported towards the close of January and several deaths had already taken place. But, it was almost around this time that some of the other major countries declared a closure. However, India had relatively fewer cases. Unlike those other countries, Modi was able to enforce lockdown measures relatively comfortably (Outlook India, 2020). One report says his efforts were appreciated by Bill Gates (Deccan Herald, 2020a). While there was widespread consensus in India on the need for a lockdown due to the rising Covid-19 cases moving towards 500, his popularity, timing and approach ensured the necessary compliance even from opposition-ruled provinces, giving him a transformational aura. He could also persuade the public to perform such theatrical acts as beating vessels and lighting lamps in the balconies, both in appreciation of the dedication and contribution of medical and other personnel engaged in Covid-19 action. As *The Wire* (2020a) highlighted, he reached out to the public as a 'family elder' as many Indians seemed eager for such a figure in the corona moment. Of course, the lockdown efforts were marred by the failure of regional authorities to provide livelihood support to many stranded migrant workers, thereby leading to their consequent act of hitting the roads to walk back to homes located at faraway places. Some reports also castigated him for not initiating preventive measures early, on the first incidence of infection

in end-January. These lapses apart, the most noteworthy act on his part, however, was his subsequent adaptive policy process involving periodic consultations with provincial heads, including those of opposition parties, for their feedback on extending and relaxing the lockdown (Outlook India, 2020). Despite its political interpretations, this act of a somewhat 'post-heroic' approach (see Bradford and Cohen, 1998; Fletcher, 2004) created a sense of shared responsibility among leaders across political spectrum. Besides, his Covid-19 acts had the potential to take away, to a certain extent, his pre-corona political woes (Bloomberg Quint, 2020a).

Beyond India, he also created global goodwill by his efforts at, first, a virtual meeting of SAARC countries and, then, inspiring a G-20 meeting. He also coordinated with many world leaders to safeguard the Indians stranded in those countries as well as to declare solidarity and support. Further, he backed the global efforts at crisis management by despatching medicines and other supplies including essential items like Hydroxychloroquine, a purported aid in Covid-19 fight, to different countries. A strategist behaviour was sufficiently at display in Modi's such actions. Not surprisingly, some of the ratings had reportedly put Modi at a better state in Covid-19 performance (Bloomberg Quint 2020a; CNBC TV18, 2020; Forbes, 2020e; The Economist, 2020d; The Statesman, 2020b). In Table 6, India's classification is just similar to Russia's on the two parameters. Also, it cannot be ignored that there was a continuous spike in the Covid-19 cases since the later part of the lockdown because of the emergence of specific high risk spots due to various reasons. This slowly pushed the total cases towards 2% of the world total. In spite of this, he kept relaxing the lockdown rigour, succumbing to the political mood of the opposition and the macroeconomic factors. Here his approach was more of a pragmatic politician than a crisis leader. Of course, even at this stage, his earlier decisions helped India contain the number of deaths within less than 1% of the global figure that was equivalent to just above 3% of total cases in India; comparable proportions for Italy and France at similar number of cases were much higher. He had, of course, earned praise for this (Bloomberg Quint 2020a). There was also a 6-7 week delay in reaching comparable numbers in India due to the strict lockdown and related measures. As the rigour of lockdown kept falling, he declared economic revival packages in distributed doses to fit his budgetary and political calculations. To conclude, the loosening of economic activities and easing of controls, along with the internal mass migrant movements and the political actions emanating from its heat might contribute to a worsening corona situation in India in the coming weeks, signifying a loss of Modi's leadership grip.

Benjamin Netanyahu
In Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu handled the Covid-19 crisis well, despite a delayed start of actions, earning both satisfaction in Israel and praise abroad. Through early steps at closing the borders, self-quarantine and social distancing (The Times of Israel, 2020), he could create a feeling that Israel will steer away from the serious trouble seen in other countries riding on his competence. Both Israeli intelligentsia and outside observers appreciated the role of Netanyahu's early actions in controlling the virus spread in the country. Israel's infection cases indeed climbed during mid-March to mid-April; but it slowed down after that and total deaths could be restricted to a relatively smaller number. Such success also qualified Israel to be in the world's top-10 Covid-19 performer status. As an outcome, Table 6 classifies Israel at 'Good' on action efficacy (RDR) even as it falls into 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' on action diligence (TFC) due to a delayed response. Nonetheless, Netanyahu was accused of stepping up surveillance (Al Jazeera, 2020b) and trying to use the Covid-19 scare to further his political interests (The Times of Israel, 2020) – particularly to ward off a potential threat to the stability of his regime arising from an earlier fractured election verdict (HRW, 2020; Haaretz, 2020a).

This has taken away some sheen from his leadership success on corona. Every action step that was likely to yield positive results he shamelessly claimed as his own success. He also tried to address his actions to the world by frequently connecting with his friendly counterparts in other countries (The Jerusalem Post, 2020) and then presenting their support as his personal achievement – all these clearly betraying a narcissistic tendency. In this process, he could take care of the crisis, his political interests and his international profile. Hence, he definitely qualifies to be called a strategist. At the same time, it should be recognized that given his political predicaments, his best bet to secure his leadership chair was to fight corona and get the best possible results. Therefore, Israel is unlikely to see a setback in the corona outcomes.

Shinzo Abe
In Japan, Shinzo Abe's government acted early on the Covid-19 crisis – in fact Japan was one of the three countries, with Thailand and South Korea being the other, to act in the first week of January itself (WHO, 2020a). It followed the WHO advice and took measures to prevent the virus spread – it had started contact tracing and virus investigations in early January. Abe had constituted a coordination team consisting of health experts early and had declared various action steps from time to time. As a result, in the early weeks of the Covid-19 outbreak, Japan had a comfortable situation. Despite this positive development, a right decision to get the 2020 Summer Olympics postponed by one year was taken, albeit with some initial resistance, in view of the global scenario. This earned some plaudits for Abe's leadership (Bloomberg, 2020) and some agencies ranked him and Japan higher in the Covid-19 performance. This is also clear from Japan's grouping under 'Good' on action efficacy (RDR).

However, situation changed in the later weeks as gaps in the Japan's health system were clear (The Diplomat, 2020b) and Abe dillydallied with a mild approach (Forbes, 2020e), avoiding stricter actions (The Japan Times, 2020) fearing political fallouts. As cases started rising, Abe's leadership image was dented (Bloomberg, 2020; Financial Times, 2020) despite the fact that Japan's numbers were lower (The Economist, 2020e) at just a little above 1% of USA in total cases and less than 1% of USA in deaths. His indecisiveness and confusion were apparent. One view was that he was slow in declaring a state of nation-wide emergency measures (The Diplomat, 2020b) – even at the end of March he declined to do it despite demands to do otherwise. This was, no doubt, a political consequence and revealed his transactional inclination, particularly in view of Japan's rigid social set up. This was, indeed, rectified in the late first-week of April; but, Abe refused to institute strict lockdown measures even at this stage, seemingly due to political apprehensions again. Table 6 testifies the action delays (East Asia Forum, 2020) by classifying Japan in the 'Poor/Weak' category. As a matter of fact, Japan never had lockdown measures similar to many other major affected countries. Nonetheless, one particular stay-home image of Abe circulated in the social media that was interpreted as conveying an aristocratic aura, did not make his case better. Unsurprisingly, his review ratings tanked (East Asia Forum, 2020; Forbes, 2020e; The Diplomat, 2020b; The Economist, 2020c; 2020d; The Japan Times, 2020). Yet, considering his crisis management efforts, political calculations and international positioning together, along with his sombre approach, he behaved like a strategist, notwithstanding its apparent shortcomings. And, one should also keep the fingers crossed as to how his mixed actions might turnout as results in the ensuing weeks.

Miguel Diaz-Canel
In Cuba, Miguel Diaz-Canel continued with the tradition of sending out its medical teams to crisis-inflicted areas. His medical teams were assisting several dozens of Covid-19 affected countries including Italy (Usnews.com, 2020) and South Africa. In Cuba itself, Diaz-Canel decided to regulate the entry of foreigners in the second half of March despite Cuba's

dependence on tourism as the main source of revenue (Caribbean Business Report, 2020). A full closure was soon to follow. Social distancing and avoidance of travel were advised to the Cubans. Taking advantage of Cuba's well prepared health system, health workers moved from house to house to monitor the incidence of the disease. As a result of these efforts, Cuba had relatively less infections; its death rate was about 4%, which is low compared to dozens of developed countries. As a measure to address the economic hardships of corona actions, those who lost jobs in the private sector as a result of restrictions were informed that they will be due for a portion of their salary and priority in government relocation jobs (Caribbean Business Report, 2020). In mid-March in the midst of the corona horror, Cuba allowed a British ship that was turned away from several Caribbean ports, to anchor and evacuate passengers (Usnews.com, 2020). Cuba under Diaz-Canel had earned the respect of the world in the Covid-19 actions as evidenced in the gratitude and praises it received from many countries, including Britain. To sum up, Diaz-Canel acted like a pragmatist, and transactional, balancing the virus battle with the economy's needs and Cuba's desirable international relations; hence, he can be called a strategist, but a different one as compared to Vladimir Putin, Narendra Modi, Benjamin Netanyahu or Shinzo Abe who had their political compulsions arising from their stressful national environments to be a strategist. Diaz-Canel's actions also put Cuba into a 'Good' category on both action diligence (TFC) and efficacy (RDR). In view of Cuba's health preparedness and favourable internal circumstances, Cuba is less likely to see significant deterioration in its virus situation in the later weeks.

Politicians
Pedro Sanchez
In Spain, one of the hardest hit nations on Covid-19, Pedro Sanchez evoked a mixed response on his crisis actions (Huffington Post, 2020). He was too slow in his response (Daily Sabah, 2020b) as he could not fathom what was in store – he tended to consider the threat as an isolated one. He allowed huge gatherings in sports complexes and other places (Business Insider, 2020) even when signs were too clear about the danger. He was possibly playing a hero. Finally, he declared lockdown measures in mid-March (The Statesman, 2020c), which many considered as too late (Business Insider, 2020), and he offered his own justifications for the delayed measure. Later, when the crisis was not fully tackled, one issue bogging the Spaniards down was his eagerness to relax lockdown when many were suggesting otherwise (Huffington Post, 2020; Deccan Herald, 2020b). It is apparent, hence, that Spain's international characterization as a top-10 risky nation on Covid-19 was justified. In Table 6 too, Spain's position is 'Poor/Weak' on action diligence (TFC) and a slightly better 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' in action efficacy (RDR). Nonetheless, there were improvements in Sanchez's approach as time passed, and the worst crisis might soften in Spain by early May itself. If these are true, it is possible that the Covid-19 situation in Spain will see stability or a betterment in the weeks following this study.

Guiseppe Conte
In Italy, one of the early victims and worst affected countries, Guiseppe Conte initially took a slow political approach (The Irish Times, 2020) and downplayed the crisis. His ministers accused the media of hyping up (Business Insider, 2020). There was a lack of consistency in government actions that created confusion (Forbes, 2020a). Italian leadership faced accusations that, enamoured by the tourism revenues and Italy's strong China relations, it advised Italian citizens to embrace the Chinese visitors disregarding the global opinion about the latter, thereby inviting and aggravating the crisis. Conte initially even discouraged the testing initiative in an affected province (HKFP, 2020) perhaps acting on his misperceived notion that the larger number of cases was due to higher testing (Business Insider, 2020). He also did not act to

expand health intervention fast enough thereby slowing down government machinery as the crisis peaked. Even cities closer to epicentres were slow in enacting restrictions such as stay-home and social distancing. It looked like Conte was trying to be Italy's hero on a misperceived notion. This grievous lack of understanding probably put Italy to a long spell of death, devastation and misery. Luckily, he was forced to recognize the gravity of the crisis; gradually he moved into drastic decisions (The Irish Times, 2020), to pursue an act of a stringent and prolonged lockdown (The Statesman, 2020a). As lockdown continued in order to contain the now-flared up pandemic, it caused immense resentment in the public (Huffington Post, 2020). A curious turn of events was when Conte had to admonish the provincial heads for hurried easing of lockdown (Hindustan Times, 2020b). Despite such belated toiling, Italy came to be considered one of the top-10 riskiest countries to live under Covid-19. Also, thanks to the flip-flops, in Table 6, Italy is in the 'Poor/Weak' category in action efficacy (RDR) despite a 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' position in action diligence (TFC). However, as in the case of Spain, refinements were visible in Conte's approach to the crisis as weeks passed and cases and deaths began piling up and peaking; his recent surge in popular rating (Forbes, 2020e) is a testament to this. Hence, he might have a chance to see better leadership results in the coming weeks.

Emmanuel Macron
In France, where the virus incidence was severe, Emmanuel Macron's inept approach was considered a prime cause of the high number of cases and deaths (Vox, 2020). Macron looked like imitating the Italian and Spanish 'heroes'. France was said to have the best health system (Vox, 2020) in Europe and a strong centralized government in place (FP, 2020a; Vox, 2020), both of which were thought ideal for effectively managing such a health crisis as that of Covid-19. However, France's strengths did not come to help the crisis; rather, the manifested system was one of constraints and ironies – with severe shortages and disgusting redeployment of facilities (Vox, 2020). The federal government was accused of slow response and miscalculations until the problem became very serious. France had the first cases, of entire Europe itself, by the last week of January. More were expected to surface due to the Chinese connections. While January and February saw exhortations for personal hygiene and hospital inspections for preparedness, the urgent actions required for social distancing, tracking and intensive testing did not add up much. The Chinese dependence on supplies was another bottleneck. Even masks were in short supply. France had a formidable stockpile of masks till a few years earlier that was built as part of its epidemic planning; however, evolving political factors led to its dismantling, and the Chinese supply source was cited as a prominent factor in doing this. Many rural hospitals were also not there anymore due to fund cuts over the years. At some point in the corona crisis, patients had to be taken to neighbouring countries for want of cost-effective facilities. While France was thus struggling, Macron had an irresponsible tour of Italy, where he visited public places, mingled with crowds and shook hands without paying attention to medical advice – without even a mask (Arab News, 2020). Later in early March, France closed schools in some worst-affected regions; but, many other public-gathering activities continued. Macron himself attended a theatre performance and visited other sensitive places, may be to prove a political point.

One tipping point for France was a mid-February church gathering in France involving delegates from many countries exploding into a huge source of corona spread by end of February not just for France, but for many other countries (Reuters, 2020; Vox, 2020). By this time, the Italian situation was already getting out of control. Still, it took mid-March for Macron to 'find a new spirit of solidarity' (FP, 2020a) and declare some serious national control measures while still permitting shopping. He even had the audacity in the peak of the pandemic

to continue with a scheduled mayoral election throughout the country. While the French public complied with the lockdown measures and voted in the elections in a low turnout, they did not appreciate Macron government's response to the crisis (Huffington Post, 2020) that rendered France one of the worst affected countries. This was obvious from the drubbing his party received in the first round at the elections. It's after this that he postponed the second round of elections and declared a complete lockdown. It was too late and dead bodies piled up. Naturally, France under Macron earned the distinction of being the top-10 riskiest countries on Covid-19 pandemic that tallied with its classification in Table 6 of this paper under the 'Poor/Weak' category on both action diligence (TFC) and efficacy (RDR). May be to redeem a bit of his image, Macron was at some point trying to hoist himself as a global leader (CNN, 2020a) by advocating peace in global conflict areas. That might not be enough to salvage what the French lost in the Covid-19 war even though recent domestic rating gains were visible in Macron's popularity (Forbes, 2020e). Still, as Macron partly amended his pretentions a bit, as Pedro Sanchez and Guiseppe Conte, the other 'politicians' of Europe, did in the later weeks, by which the French crisis was peaking, there is some scope for a crisis-softening in the weeks following this study.

Dr Tedros Adhnom Ghabreyesus
A multilateral agency like WHO was not seen to act adequately in the Covid-19 crisis (CFR, 2020b). The WHO Director General was globally responsible for tracking major health issues originating anywhere in the world and alerting the nations. Thus, when corona virus erupted as a concern in China, Dr Tedros A Ghabreyesus, WHO Director General, was expected to investigate through his China channels and independently to ascertain the gravity of the problem. Of course he tapped his China channels; but kept believing whatever China told him without having credible independent confirmation, probably due to his tender relations with China (The Economist, 2020c; The Indian Express, 2020a). So, even after it was clear to China how serious the problem was, the WHO chief could not fathom the issue fully; similarly, even when China knew that there was definite human-to-human transmission, China kept hiding the information and Dr Tedros got boxed into whatever information China provided to him, assuming just a transactional role. As a result, precious weeks were lost and it took Dr Tedros to early-January to notify to the world what was going on and to end-January to declare a health emergency (The Strait Times, 2020). In the meantime, millions of Chinese had already embarked on their tourist visits to different countries carrying the deadly virus. There emerged the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Of course, he said he communicated to the world whatever he knew from China, thereby implying that if at all anything was misrepresented, it was not him; it could be China (CFR, 2020a). However, as the health safety of the world was largely contingent on the timely actions of WHO on possible pandemics, it was indeed his failure to identify the Covid-19 threat in time through independent channels – this was not WHO's first failure under him, though (The Economist, 2020c). The fact that China was stockpiling domestic and imported respirators and masks was also not reckoned by WHO. Even as news about China's attempt at cover up and about Chinese public anger was leaking out, Dr Tedros was eager to praise China (The Diplomat, 2020a) and criticise other countries for their failures (CFR, 2020a). WHO's criminal delay in declaring global health emergency till end-January deprived the nations of an early chance to act. He delayed declaring it a pandemic much more till the second week of March. There was an argument that Dr Tedros was acting at the behest of China as he owed his 'mildly-dirty' election (The Telegraph, 2020) as the WHO head to China and that on his election, as a gesture of gratitude, he had promised to work with China following a One-China policy (CFR, 2020a).

No matter what the truth was, Dr Tedros actions did not turn out to be the best for the world. Even when some countries attempted to stop flights from China, his advice was against doing that – he was rather critical. In one sense, there was no surprise in what Dr Tedros did because when he was health minister in Ethiopia, he was accused of covering up Cholera episodes (The Telegraph, 2020); based on this, some of his critics had said in 2017 at the time of his appointment as WHO Director General that he was unsuitable for the position (The Indian Express, 2020a). The US President, Donald Trump, was the first one to accuse him of a serious China bias (BBC News, 2020a) that was further manifested in the shoddy WHO deal meted out to Taiwan based on cues from China's persistent opposition to Taiwan (CFR, 2020a); later, most of the world leaders had found chinks in his Covid-19 actions, which they say led to several million infections, hundreds of thousands of lives lost, and the collapse of global and national economies. To put pressure on WHO, the US, the largest donor, threatened to stop its funding to WHO (The Strait Times, 2020) and withdraw its membership. There was a growing chorus for an investigation not just into the origin of the virus, but also into the WHO's handling of it. The latter is a clear indictment of Dr Tedros. In short, while as WHO head Dr Tedros was seen acting to mitigate the pandemic, his political constituency of China definitely swayed his actions and deepened the corona crisis; in doing this, he did turn myopic about the likely global opinion on him. Thus, his action style describes him as 'political' (The Telegraph, 2020) while WHO's mandate was to reform WHO's response system (The Indian Express, 2020a). In terms of future expectations on the world crisis, the global cases and deaths are not going to abate in the next few weeks as new countries could keep emerging as hotspots – unless, of course, several of current hotspots transformed fast.

Gamers

Donald Trump

In USA, Donald Trump's Covid-19 actions were at best ambivalent and at worst crisis-deepening and controversial. In his eagerness to control the narratives and deflect criticisms, Trump tended to downplay the crisis (CNN, 2020b; Forbes, 2020a; HKFP, 2020). USA was informed of Covid-19 onset in China in early January 2020 itself (The Washington Post, 2020b) and it began with some initial action in end-January. But, owing to systemic and individual idiosyncrasies (The New York Times, 2020b), it was not until mid-March (The Washington Post, 2020b) that Trump announced some serious civil control measures. Even then, what he enacted was not a national lockdown (Business Insider, 2020); it was more of an advisory despite near 5000 cases and 100 deaths already reported. It was left to different states to declare and enforce lockdowns at their own terms that in many cases were not stringent enough. Throughout late-January to early-March when the deadly impact of the virus was clearly visible in country after country, Trump kept describing it as a hoax (Al Jazeera, 2020b; The Irish Times, 2020), flu and his opponents' campaign, betraying his emotional and cognitive limitations to providing a reliable leadership (Kahn et al., 2013; Roux-Dufort, 2007) and showing glimpses of narcissism (see Rosenthal and Pittinsky, 2006). In between, many of his top officials tried to convince Trump of the seriousness of the crisis (The Washington Post, 2020b) and persuade him to take some stringent measures; but, he was still casual in his approach, often in denial mode, and consciously discounting the severity of the crisis. He disregarded the assessment of his senior officials on multiple occasions or questioned their assessment (CNN, 2020b), while often insisting that it was not very serious, it would go away (Al Jazeera, 2020b; FP, 2020a; The New York Times, 2020b) or that it was manageable – until he was finally forced to admit the gravity of the situation in mid-March (The Washington Post, 2020b). As a result, financial and medical resources were not made available in time to prepare for and face the crisis. As Trump believed in the greater priority of business and economy over

public health and life, for him, the deaths, even though in tens of thousands, were a price to be paid to keep the business and economy running.

Unsurprisingly, Trump frequently differed with state governors over the lockdown (CNN, 2020b) even when they were apparently right in pursuing tougher measures. Giving precedence to his political calculations rather than the national interests, he even encouraged his followers to come out in the street in droves to demand easing curbs in order to put pressure on the governors, even as thousands were dying and positive cases were spilling over to a second million. This created serious distractions in the governors' corona efforts when the country was falling into a deeper crisis. His serious verbal duels with China and his take on the WHO (BBC News, 2020a; The Economist, 2020c; The Telegraph, 2020; The Strait Times, 2020) on its role in the pandemic and on cutting its funding too did not help either USA or the world, even after conceding the complicity of the latter two in the whole crisis. In summary, Donald Trump clearly failed in providing leadership coherence (Daily Sabah, 2020a). Obviously, he was placed at lower ratings in assessments of Covid-19 performance (Forbes, 2020e). USA's position, thus, in Table 6 is under 'Poor/Weak' on action efficacy (RDR) and 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' on action diligence (TFC). Yet, luckily, there was a silver-lining in his muddy approach – towards end-April/early-May his own frustration at the US's corona management outcomes was visible on his face on a day to day basis; as a result, there were positive changes in his approach and efforts despite his political compulsions. It means that there is a possibility of the US realizing better progress on the corona front in the weeks subsequent to this study (i.e., after May 9th).

Boris Johnson
In UK, with a serious Covid-19 situation, Boris Johnson erased an initial spell of goodwill (The Irish Times, 2020) with an approach different from rest of Europe. As the crisis progressed, he was accused of taking a lenient approach to imposing much-needed urgent restrictions. For him, protecting civil liberties (Huffington Post, 2020; The Atlantic, 2020a) and just the highest-risk group (Daily Sabah, 2020a) were key aspects. Johnson's casual approach was laid bare in early March when he kept shaking hands with everyone, each time declaring it openly, even during hospital visits (Business Insider, 2020) and, then, implying that nothing was happening to him. Of course, his public image got boosted by a few points by what looked like his acts of 'heroism' (see Allison et al, 2017) when crisis required post-heroic (see Bradford and Cohen, 1998; Fletcher, 2004) acts (Scroll.in, 2020b). However, eventually, it caused a high personal risk to him when the virus caught up with him and pushed his health to a life-threatening stage. Still, his rhetoric continued, perhaps to appease his constituency that saw in him a big charisma, as if aspiring to match the tall stature of Winston Churchill (The Atlantic, 2020a). He tended to wear the halo of a hero, without realizing that Covid-19 was too formidable an opponent to be amenable to heroism. Indeed, Britain's approach saw refinements (The Irish Times, 2020); and Johnson eventually closed down the economy when dire projections about the virus calamity were emerging. But, his lockdown declaration, emphasizing more on government instruction and compliance, did not have the appeal of, say, Jacinda Ardern (Scroll.in, 2020a). Further, he was said to exude overconfidence; he made statements about how he would pack off the virus. Herd-immunity was his other cliché (Business Insider, 2020); hence, he did not find the need for early containment strategies. Even as other European countries were closing down, he hesitated. This coupled with testing deficits ensured the virus spread to a catastrophic level.

The government could not even explain some of its actions and inactions (The Economic Times, 2020b). An opportunity to collaborate with the European Union for supply of ventilators

was foregone for political reasons. Johnson was said to be deficient in consultations and empowerment in his corona decisions and actions despite his later cross-party engagements (The Indian Express, 2020b). He was questioned by his opponents not just for limited testing or inadequate medical supplies, but also for the wide inaccuracy of death data. Looking at his tenets some observers (e.g., see Scroll.in, 2020b) felt compelled to counsel him why he should move out of heroism, to, say, post-heroism (Bradford and Cohen, 1998). In the post-Covid period, he had the prospect of facing questions from parties (Huffington Post, 2020) on his Covid-19 responsiveness and lapses (The Economic Times, 2020b). Table 6 could not classify the UK on action efficacy (RDR) due to missing data on recovery, while it got a 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' tag for action diligence (TFC). However, the pressure of deepening crisis had gradually made him amend his initial unhelpful stance (The Economic Times, 2020b), consult the opposition (The Indian Express, 2020b) and introduce more control measures – people acknowledged this change by giving him better ratings (Forbes, 2020e). So, the later part of May might see some betterment in the public suffering in UK.

Jair Bolsonaro
In Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro was worse than Donald Trump on his Covid-19 approach. Following up on his indifferent attitude on the devastating Amazon fire and its environmental impact, he was frequently on a denial mode (HKFP, 2020) regarding the severity of the crisis. He equated the virus to ordinary cold (Al Jazeera, 2020b; Business Insider, 2020). Even when people were dying in large numbers, he could not appreciate the need for declaring lockdown measures, notwithstanding the experience all over the world on the corona-restraining effects of a lockdown. Defying medical advice, he even toured places (Al Jazeera, 2020b) and mingled with crowds as part of his political campaigns and even encouraged people to continue with their business. For him, some deaths were an essential part of life (Business Insider, 2020). As in the case of Trump, Bolsonaro frequently criticised state governors who enforced strict lockdown measures (Hindustan Times, 2020c) as he was more concerned about its impact on business and industries. He forced his health minister to resign in the midst of the pandemic as Bolsonaro was intolerant to the latter's conviction for strict social measures. He did not spare Brazil's Supreme Court – he went to the extent of inciting his followers to create pressure on the Court (Hindustan Times, 2020c). Early reports show that the new health minister was also likely to follow his predecessor's example.

Bolsonaro was even censured in some of the social media for his unpalatable comments on social distancing (Business Insider, 2020). He was so contemptuous of quarantine measures that he tried to sabotage it (The Guardian, 2020a). No doubt, his narcissistic traits were on display. Naturally, he was not a source of support for Brazil's Covid-19 crisis-management efforts (actually he was an impediment), and the leadership on this moved to the state governors. At times, state governors were forced to urge people to ignore the President's exhortations to violate the restrictions. It is no surprise that Bolsonaro faced protests (The Guardian, 2020a) and poor ratings in Brazil (Bloomberg Quint, 2020b; Forbes, 2020e; The Economist, 2020d). Also, there are clear signs that the leaderless Brazil (Hindustan Times, 2020c) was headed to become a global Covid-19 horror in the coming days. Brazil's classification in Table 6 is a 'Poor/Weak' on action diligence (TFC) and 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' on action efficacy (RDR). In view of the hardening hostility of Bolsonaro to Brazil's Covid-19 fight, Brazil is unlikely to get any reprieve from the virus in the coming weeks.

Recep T Erdogan

In Turkey, Recep T Erdogan was reckoned, by some measure, to be acting as the situation demanded – taking right decisions in right time, monitoring the developments throughout, granting the relevant ministers their role, and so on (Daily Sabah, 2020a). Turkey, in fact, started screening and other preventive measures as soon as the extent of Chinese crisis was visible and much before any case was reported in Turkey. However, while Turkey's health system worked early to pre-empt the incidence of the virus in Turkey, Erdogan's own initial actions were aimed at serving his political constituency and economic priorities (The Guardian, 2020c). He was not keen to institute quarantine measures even for returnees from haj visits to Saudi Arabia (Brookings, 2020), thereby causing corona spread to remote areas. His another inhibition was related to closing down public gatherings, particularly in mosques. Even after concerned officials acted on it, Erdogan created confusion by allowing VIP gatherings at his palace (Brookings, 2020). Erdogan caused further confusion by declaring unplanned restrictions, one of it even causing a resignation-drama of a minister. In a sense, he was unleashing his narcissistic lineage. As a result, despite the first case being reported in the first half of March, the number of cases zoomed past even China's by April-end.

So, how did the positive decisions come? It was his health minister who should be credited for this – he followed a science-based approach to the crisis (Brookings, 2020), although it had to constantly jostle for priority with Erdogan's political-oriented actions. The health minister's actions helped neutralize Erdogan's political compulsions to an extent. The health minister acted more responsibly by constituting expert panels (of course, subject to his own compulsions), declaring control measures including social distancing, and disseminating information in a transparent way. Perhaps due to this, deaths could be slowed down by end of April and the death rate could be restrained to less than 3%, much below the global average. Subsequently, no sooner such silver-linings became visible than Erdogan began relaxing lockdown restrictions. No doubt, the lower death rate could be a matter of luck because, by some accounts, his political worries were more than his focus on the Covid-19 fight – his care for the economy surpassed his care for lives or livelihood. Appeasing his political and religious constituencies was a key tool in consolidating his power (Brookings, 2020). Earlier, before the first case was reported in Turkey in mid-March, Erdogan believed not just that it will not affect Turkey, but that it will benefit Turkey. Even when WHO declared Covid-19 a pandemic (around reporting of first case in Turkey), Erdogan declared that the crisis will be resolved in a few weeks' time (Brookings, 2020).

According to some reports, Erdogan consciously constrained the crisis management efforts of authorities in opposition-ruled cities and regions who were trying to do a good job. He even blocked the crowd-funds of municipal bodies controlled by his opponents (The Guardian, 2020c) to prevent them from paying out cash to poor people affected by the lockout measures (BalkanInsight, 2020). This was definitely an act of ego and arrogance and a sign of abuse of his authoritarian power (Haaretz, 2020b; HRW, 2020). Further, even when he released tens of thousands of prisoners from jails, he was selective – leaving out those who were not convenient for him such as opponents, journalists, etc (Haaretz, 2020b; The Wire, 2020b). He tried to make up for his domestic gamer image through acts to influence global opinion about him – one such action was his contribution to a global fund created for the corona fight. In summary, Erdogan strongly dovetailed his actions to further his political objectives – even to the extent of displaying a lack of empathy, while certain essential actions were left to his health minister, who salvaged a few positive results. Overall, he appeared to be a gamer by his action style, despite not being explicitly a loudmouth like Donald Trump or Jair Bolsonaro, or a globally wretched one like Xi Jinping. The net effect of the positive and negative vibes (Brookings,

2020) of Turkey's corona actions under Erdogan is that in Table 6, it is branded 'Good' for action efficacy (RDR) and 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' for action diligence (TFC). As an aftermath, Turkey is likely to improve on its corona profile in the later weeks of May.

Hassan Rouhani

In Iran, Hassan Rouhani, being the President, should account for the country's achievements and lapses on Covid-19 management, despite a religious head casting his shadow over the President. Some called Iran's Covid-19 management shambolic (LiveMint, 2020a). Iran was too slow (Al Jazeera, 2020a) to convey to the public about the risk of this particular epidemic as its leadership believed that it will not affect Iran. Its religious ideology (FP, 2020b) that leans very little on science and its geopolitical predicaments punctuated by a crippling US embargo, too, probably, made Iran hesitant about a transparent fight back. Its good relations with China played out as well – so much that Iran failed to stop flights from China even after taking a decision by January-end to that effect. Chinese investments and support were highly crucial for Iran in the face of the US sanctions. Iran's complacency was visible in the fact that it was even considering sending face masks to China (Business Insider, 2020) without realizing how much its own population would need it. It's, then, ironical that the disease spread in Iran, reaching all regions by early-March itself (The Hindu, 2020), initially due to the Chinese visitors. But, later, when the outbreak became undeniable after two deaths were reported as the first cases, Iran scrambled to contain its fallout. It lost some of its top officials to the virus (The Economist, 2020a).

Differences among senior leadership about strict control measures, such as quarantine, blunted the edge of the corona fight. Religious heads were among those unconvinced about a lockdown. The conspiracy theory, subscribed by Rouhani himself (ORF Online, 2020), suspecting the virus to be a US handiwork, did not help the matter either. Even the recommendations of the Revolutionary Guard head for strong preventive measures were ignored due to fear of consequences. Some foreign doctors were denied permission to do recovery work on suspicion of their intentions. Iranese leadership was also accused of hiding information – even to the extent of threatening medical workers against disclosures (Business Insider, 2020) and suppressing other sources of information including newspapers. When the lockdown was finally enforced in mid-March, it was too late (The Economist, 2020a); there was also criticism of early relaxation in lockdown measures (The Guardian, 2020b). In short, Iran let the crisis deepen through its various omissions and commissions. Iran's efforts were also complicated by the US economic sanctions.

Iran under Rouhani was following an authoritarian approach to the crisis despite his occasional cheering up (Atalayar, 2020). World may not even have an accurate estimate of Iran's cases and deaths (The Economist, 2020a; The Guardian, 2020b) as it is true about China, notwithstanding WHO's assertion to the opposite (an instance of pro-Iran China factor of WHO?). Based on disclosed data itself, however, Iran became one of the worst affected (ORF Online, 2020) and a top-10 riskiest countries. Thus, the poor leadership of Rouhani, involving gaming for political priorities, was obvious despite the fact of the pandemic appearing in control by end of April (ORF Online, 2020). Still, the reported data necessitate Iran's classification in Table 6 under 'Good' in action efficacy (RDR) and 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' in action diligence (TFC). Iran is expected to further improve the situation in the later weeks.

Xi Jinping

As leader of China that originated the Covid-19 crisis (Forbes, 2020a) and as one who missed to call it in time, Xi Jinping was unlikely to have been sung a hero anyway. But, how did he

contribute to dealing with the aftermaths of the crisis? After a dangerous pneumonia virus was detected in Wuhan, Hubei province, and it was clear that some animal-to-human and later human-to-human transmission occurred, China showed great lethargy in taking drastic measures and alerting other countries about the risk (Business Insider, 2020; The New York Times, 2020a). China's cover up (Al Jazeera, 2020b; The Guardian, 2020a) and suppression efforts (Business Insider, 2020; Haaretz, 2020b; HRW, 2020) were clearly visible when it muzzled China's own doctors and health workers who warned about an impending disaster (Business Insider, 2020; Forbes, 2020a; HKFP, 2020). When he knew about the Chinese New Year and the possibility of large scale tourist travels out of Wuhan and China, he waited for precious several days to enforce a lockdown. By the time Wuhan was locked down, already millions of Wuhan Chinese had already crossed the borders (HRW, 2020; The New York Times, 2020a). International flows continued even after shutting down Wuhan, thereby accentuating a global Covid-19 crisis. Miraculously, major Chinese cities like Beijing and Shanghai were relatively immune! Xi Jinping himself was accused of being a source of the lapses and he faced a potential threat on his authority (The Guardian, 2020a). Analysing the Chinese neglect and lack of transparency in their Covid-19 efforts, it was even suspected that Covid-19 was a Wuhan laboratory product that was either accidentally released or deliberately unleashed to weaken the rival economies and foster Chinese dominance. Even WHO lost its credibility laundering China's guilt (CFR, 2020a).

The fact that China's own other main cities and its bosom friends like North Korea were not affected by the crisis did not help its case either. Despite this, China had the audacity to bully countries and governments critical of its role or approach in the crisis. In some cases, it went on to threaten them with consequences. It even tried to block a UN discussion on the crisis and any international enquiry into origin of the crisis, thereby giving further scope for suspicion on their role (HRW, 2020). Jinping's unhelpful conduct should be juxtaposed with past research findings related to crisis-frustrations of those facing performance failures (Lehman and Ramanujam, 2009; Greve et al, 2010). His authoritarian behaviour should be seen in this light. Of course, in Wuhan China imposed strong lockdown measures for nearly two months, at the end of which they said they successfully tackled the crisis and they were ready for restoring business activities. Jinping quickly took its credit by re-emerging from the background (The Guardian, 2020a). Later, when China recovered and was in a position to help other countries, there was indeed disappointment at their efforts to profiteer (The Diplomat, 2020a) from the crisis they had caused, with their willingness to export poor quality medical supplies, that too with great delays.

In the meantime, when other countries were busy fighting Covid-19, China sent out their fleet and forces to assert their claims on disputed sites, displaying their moral turpitude. Thus, Xi Jinping, as leader of China during the crisis, was able, leveraging China's command and control structure (Forbes, 2020a), to address the problem in China with a stringent lockdown in Wuhan (Maier and Brockmann, 2020), enforced with a drone-vigil (The Diplomat, 2020a), albeit at the cost of credibility of their whole story; but, for most other countries, he was clearly an example of an irresponsible global leader who was busy playing his usual games. Nonetheless, China's classification in Table 6 is, like its beneficiary Iran, under 'Good' in action efficacy (RDR) and 'Satisfactory/Encouraging' in action diligence (TFC) despite the authenticity problems with its published data. Chinese virus situation was expected to be stable; this positive outlook helped Xi Jinping to get favourable ratings (The Japan Times, 2020) despite a simmering domestic discontent.

Outlier

Antonio Guterres

As indicated before, the multilateral agencies did not earn much appreciation in the Covid-19 context (CFR, 2020b). At the United Nations, its Secretary General was expected to provide leadership to the world at times of crisis. But, this was not said to be seen in the current crisis (LiveMint, 2020b). Covid-19 was not a political crisis; there were also specialized UN agencies like WHO to deal with a health crisis or pandemic. But, as a pandemic, Covid-19 did not have a global consensus on its natural emergence and unanimity on why hundreds of nations were suffering. In fact, the virus created an acrimonious world where major nations blamed China for the tragedy on each of them and there was no scope for a unified action in sight. In such circumstances, the UN chief had a duty to reconcile among differing views and bring the world around a discussion table. When the Security Council wanted to discuss the Covid-19 crisis, it took more than a month for them to disagree and reach an impasse – those countries which mattered were at loggerheads (LiveMint, 2020b) on how to proceed. Even China, which should have been really polite in view of the Chinese origin of the virus, intentional or unintentional, was aggressive and abrasive – even threatening other nations for demanding more insights into the origin of the virus. Therefore, Antonio Guterres, as UN chief, had a task cut-out: get nations to talk to create a united front against the virus. But, none of these happened.

Of course, he was making many right kind of noises about the lack of leadership in the world (CBS News, 2020; CNA, 2020b) and about the fighting among leading nations when they should have worked together. However, nothing remarkable could be done by Guterres – except for his support to the efforts to mobilize funds for the Covid-19 fight where the European Union played a significant role (Daily Sabah, 2020c). Thus, while Guterres made in many clear words how sincerely he wanted the world to deal with the virus in cooperation and support the developing countries that starved for resources in their virus battle, he could not really convert his lament into meaningful cooperation. Public health and life were his concerns, but he had very little scope for direct steps at mobilizing and fighting, he had no need for actions of political constituency or legitimacy as his role was defined, and he only made passive efforts to encash an opportunity for global opinion about him beyond his defined role. May be he felt helpless; may be, he did not want to press the key nations beyond his usual call of duty – perhaps adhering to a transactional role. Either way, the world was beset with a weak leadership at the UN and at international levels during an unprecedented health crisis of the past 100 years. This confirms why Guterres cannot be classified in any of the four action styles and he needed to be characterized just as a 'supporter' who, ironically, did not support the world enough.

Discussion

It is clear from the country-leader analysis of the preceding section that there were wide variations in both crisis actions and leader effectiveness. Past research shows that stakeholders appreciate leaders who manage a crisis systematically to get desired results (Bundy et al, 2017). This is reason why leaders like Jacinda Ardern and Tai Ing-wen earned praise both in their respective countries and abroad. An unpopular pre-Covid-19 leader like Moon Jae-in could win an election in the middle of the crisis riding on his crisis performance. An uncharismatic leader like Angela Merkel, whose initial detachment and negative impact were overcome at an opportune time, got praise when she began playing her role effectively.

It is remarkable that the best results against Covid-19 crisis were obtained not by leaders who cared for their political or strategic interests too, but by leaders who acted like missionaries following a single objective – public health and life. Not that a leader whose results were below par will always be eschewed by stakeholders. Even when a leader is short on his/her crisis

management target, at least s/he should display humility and be seen striving hard to surmount the crisis. This is reason why leaders like Cyril Ramaphosa and Narendra Modi received respect despite their lockdown slip ups. However, leaders like Jair Bolsonaro were not just ineffective in their crisis role, but also obstructionists in the crisis fight – preventing even others from discharging their functions sincerely. Borrowing from Greve et al (2010) and Ashforth and Anand (2003), this can be understood as leadership misdemeanours in the tolerant political culture of countries.

There are also controversial leaders whose positive outcomes could be seen in negative light – Benjamin Netanyahu and Dr Tedros A Ghabreyesus can be seen in this light. Then there are others for who secrecy and subterfuge were key resources. Such leaders as Xi Jinping and Recep T Erdogan may fall in this category. Xi Jinping, who could have played a preventive role through timely action, in fact fostered concealment and misinformation, thereby throwing the world into chaos. Further, extending Bundy and Pfarrer (2015), Coombs (2007) and Dardis and Haigh (2009), the Chinese leader was expected to be more accommodative to the global expectations as China was the source of the crisis. Instead, China took a negative and confrontationist approach thereby confounding their international negative social image. On the other hand, there is support in the literature for the anger and frustration of the affected emanating from a crisis (Coombs and Holladay, 2005) that causes them to seek justice and do blaming instead of focusing fully on organizational resurgence (Bertels et al., 2014; Pfarrer et al., 2008). Hence, one cannot fully chide leaders like Donald Trump for their unpleasant utterances about China and the origin of virus, even as one laments their crisis incompetence. Trump's reactions can also be understood with the attribution theory (see Weiner, 1986).

7. Leadership Style & Personal Strategy

After characterizing the leadership actions of the 23 leaders based on three motives in the previous section, let me classify their leadership styles and personal strategy. Leadership styles considered here are those described in the leadership literature. Leadership styles and behaviours can be many. Fleishman et al (1991) identifies 65 distinct classifications of leadership behaviour. Bass (1990), Yukl (1989) and Yukl et al (2002) provide a review of leadership behaviours. However, broadly, they fall, with some overlaps, into the following categories: Stewardship (Hernandez, 2008), transactional (Hackman et al, 1992), transformational (Hackman et al, 1992; Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006), authoritarian (Kiazad et al, 2010), charismatic (Conger et al, 2000; De Hoogh and Den Hartog, 2009), narcissistic (Chatterjee and Hambrick, 2007; Rosenthal and Pittinsky, 2006), autocratic (De Hoogh and Den Hartog, 2009) and heroism (Allison et al, 2017). Personal strategy is the personal approach (or agenda) in the leader behaviour (Rameshan, 2017; 2019) under a leader's chosen leadership style. Personal strategy arises from the personal motive of a leader in pursuing a leadership role that will be adjusted according to his or her leadership style and the leadership circumstances. For instance, in the world Covid-19 crisis, one with a 'political constituency or legitimacy' motive following a heroism leadership style might have a personal strategy of 'nurturing self-image'; whereas, one with the same motive, but following a transactional leadership style might evolve a personal strategy of 'system-leveraging for success'. See Table 8A, 8B and 8C for a classification.

Table 8A classifies the Covid-19 leadership in the sample by leadership characteristics of different leadership styles. The classification is based only on their Covid-19 leadership; it does not consider their pre-crisis or Covid-unrelated actions. This is crucial because some of the leaders had a different track record in the pre-crisis period. For example, leaders like Moon

Table 8A: Covid-19 Leader Classification by Leadership Characteristics

Leadership Model	Characteristics	Leaders
Stewardship	Long-term group interests above self-interest	Lee Hsien Loong, Cyril Ramaphosa, Jacinda Ardern, Tsai Ing-wen
	Personal responsibility for desirable organizational actions	Lee Hsien Loong, Cyril Ramaphosa, Jacinda Ardern, Tsai Ing-wen
	Balancing internal/external stakeholder needs	Lee Hsien Loong, Cyril Ramaphosa, Tsai Ing-wen
	Commitment to social moral norms	Jacinda Ardern, Tsai Ing-wen
	Courage of conviction	Lee Hsien Loong, Cyril Ramaphosa
Transactional	Rewards/recognition for performance	Benjamin Netanyahu, Dr Tedros A Ghabreyesus
	Monitoring rules & standards	Vladimir Putin, Narendra Modi, Shinzo Abe, Miguel Diaz-Canel, Dr Tedros A Ghabreyesus
	Intervention when required	Angela Merkel, Narendra Modi, Shinzo Abe, Miguel Diaz-Canel,
	Mentoring on deviation	Dr Tedros A Ghabreyesus, Antonio Guterres
Transformational	Charismatic behaviour	Narendra Modi, Moon Jae-in, Jacinda Ardern
	Motivating articulation of vision	Angela Merkel, Narendra Modi, Tsai Ing-wen
	Intellectual stimulation (Questioning/risk-taking/ideating)	Angela Merkel, Lee Hsien Loong
	Individualized consideration (Followers' needs/concerns /mentoring)	Angela Merkel, Narendra Modi, Lee Hsien Loong, Moon Jae-in, Scott Morrison, Tsai Ing-wen
Authoritarian	Absolute authority & control	Xi Jinping, Recep T Erdogan
	Demanding obedience	Recep T Erdogan, Hassan Rouhani, Xi Jinping, Narendra Modi
	Rules & rewards	Lee Hsien Loong
	Threat & intimidation	Recep T Erdogan, Hassan Rouhani, Xi Jinping
Charismatic	Inspirational vision	Narendra Modi, Jacinda Ardern
	Extraordinary mission	Jacinda Ardern
	Extraordinary character	Jacinda Ardern
	Change agent	Moon Jae-in, Cyril Ramaphosa, Scott Morrison, Jacinda Ardern
	High sensitivity to environment/follower needs	Narendra Modi, Cyril Ramaphosa, Scott Morrison
Narcissistic	Arrogance & Self-absorption	Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro, Recep T Erdogan, Benjamin Netanyahu
	Grandiose belief systems	Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro, Recep T Erdogan
	Envy & lack of empathy	Jair Bolsonaro, Recep T Erdogan
	High sense of entitlement	Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro, Recep T Erdogan
	Sense of unlimited power/ success	Jair Bolsonaro, Recep T Erdogan
	Sense of high status/high-status affiliation	Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro, Recep T Erdogan
	Fragile self-esteem/ excessive self-admiration	Donald Trump, Boris Johnson, Vladimir Putin, Jair Bolsonaro, Recep T Erdogan, Benjamin Netanyahu
	Evolutionary immature behaviour	Pedro Sanchez, Guiseppe Conte, Boris Johnson, Emmanuel Macron
Autocratic	Self-driven actions	Jair Bolsonaro
	Undemocratic	Xi Jinping
	Oppressive	Xi Jinping
Heroism	Acting for greater good	
	Exceptional action	
	Making sacrifice for others	
	Taking risk for others	Pedro Sanchez, Guiseppe Conte, Boris Johnson, Emmanuel Macron
	Creating admiration	Pedro Sanchez, Guiseppe Conte, Boris Johnson, Emmanuel Macron, Shinzo Abe

Source: Compiled from various sources

Jae-in, Cyril Ramaphosa and Scott Morrison were under severe internal criticism for their omissions and commissions; but, their crisis performance has been rated stellar. In the same way, Vladimir Putin might have exhibited authoritarian tendencies in the pre-crisis Russia; but, he was seen a subdued man during the crisis.

In Table 8A, a leader's name may be listed under different characteristics of a leadership style and under multiple leadership styles. To name a few examples, Narendra Modi shows up with characteristics of four different leadership styles; Jacinda Ardern is classified under three different styles – in fact, most of the leaders displayed more than one leadership orientations.

A leader with a certain leadership orientation may not appear under all of its characteristics as s/he may not exhibit all characteristics of that style. For instance, Lee Hsien Loong gets classified under all the four characteristics of stewardship style, but Tsai Ing-wen comes only under three of them.

Table 8B: Multiple Styles of Covid-19 Leadership

Leader	Action Style	Primary Leadership Style*	Subordinate Leadership Style*
Donald Trump	Gamer	Narcissistic (5/8)	NA
Pedro Sanchez	Politician	Heroism (2/5)	Narcissistic (1/8)
Giuseppe Conte	Politician	Heroism (2/5)	Narcissistic (1/8)
Boris Johnson	Gamer	Heroism (2/5)	Narcissistic (2/8)
Vladimir Putin	Strategist	Transactional (1/4)	Narcissistic (1/8)
Emmanuel Macron	Politician	Heroism (2/5)	Narcissistic (1/8)
Angela Merkel	Missionary	Transformational (3/4)	Transactional (1/4)
Jair Bolsonaro	Gamer	Narcissistic (7/8)	Autocratic (1/3)
Recep T Erdogan	Gamer	Narcissistic (7/8)	Authoritarian (3/4)
Hassan Rouhani	Gamer	Authoritarian (2/4)	NA
Xi Jinping	Gamer	Authoritarian (3/4)	Autocratic (2/3)
Narendra Modi	Strategist	Transformational (3/4)	Mixed (Transactional (2/4), Charismatic (2/5), Authoritarian (1/4))
Lee Hsien Loong	Missionary	Stewardship (4/5)	Transformational (2/4), Authoritarian (1/4)
Benjamin Netanyahu	Strategist	Narcissistic (2/8)	Transactional (1/4)
Shinzo Abe	Strategist	Transactional (2/4)	Heroism (1/4)
Moon Jae-in	Missionary	Transformational (2/4)	Charismatic (1/5)
Cyril Ramaphosa	Missionary	Stewardship (4/5)	Charismatic (2/5)
Scott Morrison	Missionary	Charismatic (2/5)	Transformational (1/4)
Miguel Diaz-Canel	Strategist	Transactional (2/4)	NA
Jacinda Ardern	Missionary	Charismatic (4/5)	Stewardship (3/5), Transformational (1/4)
Tsai Ing-wen	Missionary	Stewardship (4/5)	Transformational (2/4)
Tedros A Ghabreyesus	Politician	Transactional (3/4)	NA
Antonio Guterres	Supporter	Transactional (1/4)	NA

* Number of applicable attributes as in Table 8A is given in bracket

Table 8B summarizes the results of Table 8A to classify the Covid-19 leadership in this study into primary and secondary styles. Except in the case of three leaders, Donald Trump, Hassan Rouhani and Miguel Diaz-Canel, a secondary leadership style could be traced in all cases. In some cases, there are also signs of other leadership styles. Lee Hsien Loong, Narendra Modi and Jacinda Ardern are in this category. Table 8B mentions the number of characteristics a leader satisfied under each of his/her orientation style. As per the table, there are signs of different (non-exclusive) leadership styles among the sample leaders: four of stewardship, eight of transactional, seven of transformational, five of authoritarianism, five of charismatic, nine of narcissism, two of autocratic and five of heroism.

As per Table 8B, all those leaders whose action style is of a 'gamer', the leadership style (primary and secondary) is of authoritarian, narcissism, autocratic or heroism – all of which have a negative connotation because of their higher emotional content and lower cognitive linkage. On the other hand, none of the leaders with a 'missionary' action style has a primary or secondary leadership style of any of the above four – instead, they all have primary styles that are positively change-oriented: stewardship, transformational or charismatic. Another interesting point is that the three national leaders who had a 'politician' action style fall in the heroism (primary) or narcissistic (secondary) leadership style – both of which are consistent with their limited political objectives. The 'strategists' do not reveal a clear pattern, although transactional style (primary or secondary) is more frequent.

In Table 8B, one particular observation about Xi Jinping, under whose leadership the global Covid-19 crisis originated, is that his leadership-style orientations do not include narcissism – narcissism-type of styles have an inherent potential to increase risk-taking and cause crises (Chatterjee and Hambrick, 2007; Hiller and Hambrick, 2005).

Table 8C reiterates that the dominant leadership style of 'missionary' leaders is stewardship, transformational or charismatic; of 'strategist' leaders is transactional, transformational or narcissistic; of 'politician' leaders is transactional (for WHO leader) or heroism (for national leaders); of 'gamer' leaders is narcissism, authoritarian or heroism; and of 'supporter' leader is transactional (UN leader).

One related question is what personal strategy (i.e., individual strategic mental scheme) was driving each leader's leadership style? Last column of Table 8C throws light on this. The personal strategies have been intuitively identified following Rameshan (2017; 2019). One can see that not all leaders of a particular action style or following a particular leadership style had the same personal strategy; rather it differed from leader to leader based on one's circumstances. Nonetheless, certain personal strategic patterns are discernible.

'Problem-solving' and 'System-leveraging for success' are two most frequently occurring personal strategies in the table; the former is largely associated with 'missionary' action style, but with different leadership styles, while the latter's association is with different action and leadership styles although 'strategist'/'gamer' and 'transactional' are more frequently occurring styles. 'Problem-solving' is often accompanied by an additional personal strategy of 'Repositioning' that signifies a past baggage of a leader that could be cleared riding on the Covid-19 opportunity. 'Nurturing self-image' is a theme seen mostly with 'politician' action style, but invariably with 'heroism' leadership style. 'Play victim/villainize' and 'control' are two personal strategies paired often with 'gamer' action style and 'narcissistic' leadership style. In multiple cases, 'Control' appears together with 'System-leveraging', probably implying how a leader wanted to drive the system to fit into one's own preferences.

Table 8C: Covid-19 Crisis: Dominant Leadership Styles & Personal Strategies

Leader	Action Style	Dominant Leadership Style	Personal Strategy
Donald Trump	Gamer	Narcissistic	Play victim/Villainize
Pedro Sanchez	Politician	Heroism	Nurturing self-image
Giuseppe Conte	Politician	Heroism	Nurturing self-image
Boris Johnson	Gamer	Heroism	Nurturing self-image
Vladimir Putin	Strategist	Transactional	System-leveraging for success
Emmanuel Macron	Politician	Heroism	Nurturing self-image
Angela Merkel	Missionary	Transformational	Detachment/System-leveraging
Jair Bolsonaro	Gamer	Narcissistic	Play victim/Villainize
Recep T Erdogan	Gamer	Narcissistic	System-leveraging & Control
Hassan Rouhani	Gamer	Authoritarian	System-leveraging & Control
Xi Jinping	Gamer	Authoritarian	Control & Play victim/Villainize
Narendra Modi	Strategist	Transformational	System-leveraging & Control
Lee Hsien Loong	Missionary	Stewardship	Problem solving
Benjamin Netanyahu	Strategist	Narcissistic	Problem solving & Repositioning
Shinzo Abe	Strategist	Transactional	System-leveraging for success
Moon Jae-in	Missionary	Transformational	Problem solving & Repositioning
Cyril Ramaphosa	Missionary	Stewardship	Problem solving & Repositioning
Scott Morrison	Missionary	Charismatic	Problem solving & Repositioning
Miguel Diaz-Canel	Strategist	Transactional	Problem solving & Repositioning
Jacinda Ardern	Missionary	Charismatic	Problem solving & Goodwill
Tsai Ing-wen	Missionary	Stewardship	Problem solving
Tedros A Ghabreyesus	Politician	Transactional	System-leveraging for success
Antonio Guterres	Supporter	Transactional	System-leveraging for success

Angela Merkel's early phase was marked by a 'Detachment', but later she adapted her Covid-19 goal to 'leveraging' Germany's health administrative 'system'. Jacinda Ardern was determined not just to root out the virus, but also to create 'Goodwill' through an empathetic approach. For Benjamin Netanyahu, Moon Jae-in, Cyril Ramaphosa and Scott Morrison corona virus offered a chance to redeem their political future on a platter. While all four were moving towards their goal, the last three seemed to be successful in their redemption. Miguel Diaz-Canel could use the opportunity for 'Repositioning' Cuba for greater international acceptance in view of the US embargo; he seems to be doing well on his plans. Personal strategies of others in the table are in expected pattern and can be interpreted straight. The most obvious inferences from Table 8C in this respect are that: (a) Leaders with 'Problem-solving' as personal strategy are the most successful in corona fight perhaps due to their mission zeal; (b) leaders using 'System-leveraging' as personal strategy were not straightforward in their corona actions; they had other accompanying objectives; (c) leaders having 'Play villain/Villainize' personal strategy were the least successful or the most unpopular in their Covid-19 efforts; (d) leaders who tried 'Nurturing self-image' could not really create a good leader image in their corona fight and had to compromise their initial position over time; and (e) leaders with a 'Repositioning' part in their 'Problem-solving' strategy worked very hard to erase their past political image through effective corona management actions.

8. Conclusions

I evaluated the leadership behaviour of 23 world leaders in their Covid-19 actions and intuitively identified their action and leadership styles and their personal strategies. As per the analysis in the paper, different leaders dealt with the Covid-19 crisis in different ways commensurate with their action and leadership styles and personal strategies.

Section 5 had evaluated the country performance and sections 6 and 7 analyzed the leader role and effect. The discussion in sections 6 and 7 reveals that the leader behaviour and its impact on the Covid-19 fight and results were evolutionary during the study period. These are destined to keep evolving beyond the study period too, as the corona fight was still raging – with daily jumps in corona cases and deaths. The paper made its evaluation taking May 9, 2020 as the threshold date. Hence, to validate the evolutionary outcomes, it is important to examine how this paper's inferences on the leaders form part of a continuum – i.e., how subsequent outcomes of corona fight were consistent with the past analysis: good or not-so-good in accordance with the type of leadership behaviour, style and actions. I do this with Table 9.

Table 9: Three-week Progress of Covid-19 Crisis under Different Leadership Styles

Leader	Action Style	Dominant Leadership Style	Personal Strategy	3-Week* Covid-19 Growth (%)			
				Total		Per Million	
				Cases	Death	Cases	Death
Donald Trump	Gamer	Narcissistic	Play victim/Villainize	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4
Pedro Sanchez	Politician	Heroism	Nurturing self-image	0.5	0.1	0.5	0.2
Giuseppe Conte	Politician	Heroism	Nurturing self-image	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5
Boris Johnson	Gamer	Heroism	Nurturing self-image	1.2	1	1.2	1
Vladimir Putin	Strategist	Transactional	System-leveraging for success	3.3	4.4	3.3	4.2
Emmanuel Macron	Politician	Heroism	Nurturing self-image	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
Angela Merkel	Missionary	Transformational	Detachment/System-leveraging	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.6
Jair Bolsonaro	Gamer	Narcissistic	Play victim/Villainize	6	5.2	6	5.2
Recep T Erdogan	Gamer	Narcissistic	System-leveraging & Control	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9
Hassan Rouhani	Gamer	Authoritarian	System-leveraging & Control	1.7	0.8	1.7	0.8
Xi Jinping	Gamer	Authoritarian	Control & Play victim/Villainize	0	0	0	0
Narendra Modi	Strategist	Transformational	System-leveraging & Control	5.4	4.7	5.5	6.8
Lee Hsien Loong	Missionary	Stewardship	Problem solving	2	0.7	2	1.4
Benjamin Netanyahu	Strategist	Narcissistic	Problem solving & Repositioning	0.2	0.7	-0.1	0.5
Shinzo Abe	Strategist	Transactional	System-leveraging for success	0.4	2	0.4	1.6
Moon Jae-in	Missionary	Transformational	Problem solving & Repositioning	0.3	0.2	0.3	0
Cyril Ramaphosa	Missionary	Stewardship	Problem solving & Repositioning	6.1	6.3	6.1	6.4
Scott Morrison	Missionary	Charismatic	Problem solving & Repositioning	0.2	0.3	0.2	0
Miguel Diaz-Canel	Strategist	Transactional	Problem solving & Repositioning	0.7	0.5	0.7	0
Jacinda Ardern	Missionary	Charismatic	Problem solving & Goodwill	0	0.2	-0.1	0
Tsai Ing-wen	Missionary	Stewardship	Problem solving	0	0.7	0.3	0
Tedros A Ghabreyesus	Politician	Transactional	System-leveraging for success	2	1.4	2	1.4
Antonio Guterres	Supporter	Transactional	System-leveraging for success				

* Between May 9 & May 30, 2020

In Table 9, the average compounded daily growth rate of Covid-19 cases and death, total and per-million, for each sample country and the world for a three-week period beyond May 9th is presented. The following inferences can be drawn from the table.

The 3-week average daily growth of cases and deaths ranged from (-)0.1% to 6.8%, with ranges of 0.0-6.1 in total cases, (-)0.1-6.3 in total deaths, 0.0-6.1 in cases per million and (-)0.1-6.8 in deaths per million. Thus, the sample countries are differently effective in fighting Covid-19 in the post-analysis validation period.

Do the performance differences match with the leadership differences – differences in the leadership actions, styles or personal strategies? Unfortunately, there is no distinct, undisputable pattern. However, a few points are obvious. First, countries that are led by 'missionary' and 'politician' actions, with the exception of Singapore and South Africa, had average daily compounded growth of cases and deaths during 3 weeks post-May 9th below 1%. In the case of Singapore it is below 2%, which is true about the world as a whole too, that is monitored and guided by the 'politician' Dr Tedros's WHO. Second, of the 12 OECD countries appearing in the study, nine (seven of which had 'missionary' or 'political' action styles) had their average daily case and death growth rates within 1% despite the late Covid-19 actions of many of them; of the other 3, UK and USA had the rates below 2% and Japan's is below 3% - these are countries with, respectively, 'gamer' and 'strategic' action styles. Intriguingly, all the emerging BRI[-]S countries (i.e., excluding China, the source of the crisis) have high rates, 3.0-6.8%, of average daily growth of the indicators. The biggest surprise is the fall from grace of the early star South Africa that had a 'missionary' action style, stewardship leadership style and a 'problem-solving' personal strategy approach. The BRI[-]S clustering also implies that a transactional Vladimir Putin, a narcissistic Jair Bolsonaro, a transformational Narendra Modi and a stewardship Cyril Ramaphosa will all fall in a single category of weak performance. While Brazil's results under Jair Bolsonaro was nothing unexpected, for the other three, who had showed early-acting traits and better early-results, there might have been an action-fatigue or an adverse impact of lowering of guard/early relaxation of restrictions for political or strategic reasons. This course of events was suspected when this paper discussed the action-style classification of leaders.

Without surprise, the performance as per Table 9 is the most stellar in the case of Jacinda Ardern, Tsai Ing-wen, Moon Jae-in and Scott Morrison among the victim countries, implying their action-persistence. And, the lucky cases are that of Pedro Sanchez, Guiseppe Conte and Emmanuel Macron – all cases of late-acting where actions had improved as time passed and the worst phase was traversed during this time. All of them moved their countries to a better state of the disease as was anticipated in section 6. While Boris Johnson is not as lucky as the above three European neighbours, UK, along with USA, had the growth rates within 2%. Two surprises are Lee Hsien Loong on the negative side, with average growth rate exceeding 2% despite the initial big success, and Donald Trump on the positive side, with growth rates below 2% despite the prolonged neglect and indulgences – both of which might signal the fatigue and persistence factors on the one side and the late-phase timing on the other.

Overall, a role of culture and society cannot be ignored in the above follow up analysis – this arises from the distinctive behaviour of OECD and the large emerging countries in the sample. After all, a key stakeholder in the Covid-19 crisis is the public; stakeholder emotions, indeed, influence the outcomes of crisis strategies (Jin, 2010; Jin et al, 2012). Thus, in the ultimate analysis of the crisis, the former countries, with their superior systemic factors, can be seen recovering faster in the later stage due to better realization of leadership over time as the

leadership moved from a defensive posture to be accommodative (Bundy and Pfarrer, 2015), while the latter's position is found deteriorating with passage of time due to faster leadership withdrawal, either due to fatigue or due to political pressure, and leaving more actions of compliance to the society that had its own emotions and systemic limitations.

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