

# Analysing Leadership Qualities of Lord Rama from Valmiki Ramayana by Using Nyaya System of Indian Philosophy

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## Abstract

Leadership is a collection of essential attributes required to effectively guide individuals and is the practice of motivating, directing, and inspiring individuals to cooperate towards a shared objective. Leadership qualities are the defining factors that determine the effectiveness of a leader, here in this research article we use Nyaya system, an ancient school of thought in Indian philosophy to analyse the leadership qualities (Moral virtue, Empathy, Unity, Collective decision making and protection) of Lord Rama from Valmiki's Ramayana. This is achieved by interpreting various parts of Valmiki's Ramayana using Nyaya systems Syllogisms: 1. Pratijñā (Assertion). 2. Hetu (reason). 3. Udāharana (example). 4. Upanaya (application) and 5. Nigamana (conclusion) step by step as a method of analysis. This analysis helps us explore leadership qualities of lord Rama associating with the new age leadership concepts like ethical leadership, emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, participative leadership, and servant leadership.

**Keywords:** Leadership, Nyaya system, Indian philosophy, Leadership Qualities, Valmiki Ramayana, Lord Rama.

## Introduction

Leadership research has attracted significant attention and is experiencing extensive growth across various global contexts (Northouse, 2021). Recently, researchers conducted experiments to better understand the impact of leadership on followers' attitudes and performance (Podsakoff & Podsakoff, 2019), with the goal of strengthening the practical applicability of leadership research. Leadership qualities are the key characteristics that distinguish successful leaders from others. These characteristics include several types of leadership qualities, such as moral virtue, empathy, unity, collective decision-making, and the protection of a leader.

Here, the purpose of this analysis is to explore Lord Rama's leadership qualities using the Nyaya System of Indian Philosophy, an ancient school of thought which have five syllogisms. They are: 1. Pratijñā (Assertion). 2. Hetu (reason). 3.

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Udāharaṇa (Example). 4. Upanaya (Application) and 5. Nigamana (Conclusion) ((C). Avayavas of Anumna (Indian Syllogism), 2022) and to provide a deep understanding of Lord Rama's leadership qualities and how important they are to modern leadership studies and exploring key leadership concepts like ethical leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006), emotional intelligence (Boyatzis et al., 2000), transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006), participative leadership (Yukl, 2013), and servant leadership (Greenleaf, 2002) from Valmiki's Ramayana. This helps us understand leadership by connecting ancient texts with new age leadership concepts.

## Supporting Literature

### *Ethical Leadership:*

This topic has been extensively researched in current leadership literature (Saha et al., 2019). Ethical leaders are acknowledged for setting moral standard and upholding a high level of honesty, integrity, and responsibility by meeting obligations and recognizing personal duties.

Ethical leadership is a crucial element of modern leadership that emphasizes moral ideals, honesty, integrity, and responsibility to society (Jackson & Lasthuizen, 2023). Ethical leaders serve as role models by fostering trust and accountability and promoting a culture of fairness and ethical behaviour within their organizations (Jackson & Lasthuizen, 2023). They prioritize the execution of morally upright deeds over pursuing profit, ensuring that their actions have a beneficial effect on both the organization and the wider community. This leadership style promotes organizational performance while simultaneously cultivating positive social impact.

### *Emotional Intelligence:*

Emotional intelligence is an essential element of effective leadership (Görgens-Ekermans & Roux, 2021). Leaders who are really good at Emotional Intelligence can understand how their team members feel. They care a lot about their team members.

The efficacy of leadership is strongly dependent on emotional intelligence, which refers to the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions (Holt & Wood, 2016). Leaders with strong emotional intelligence comprehend and empathize with the emotions of their team members, fostering trust and cultivating a favourable work environment (Saha et al., 2023). They employ emotional intelligence to guide decision-making

and maintain a psychologically healthy work environment, leading to improved collaboration and organizational success.

### *Transformational Leadership:*

Transformational leadership involves inspiring and motivating teams toward a common goal and fostering a sense of unity and collaboration (Tran & Vu, 2021). Transformational leadership approaches prioritize encouraging and motivating team members to go beyond their individual interests in order to benefit the group, organization, or society. This involves creating an engaging and attractive vision of the future, and inspiring, and energizing others to actively engage in that vision.

A transformative leader strives to understand the skills and limitations of his/her team members and assists them in improving and progressing within their respective roles. (Sun et al., 2012) They foster creativity and uniqueness, foster a sense of unity and collaboration, and build an environment in which team members feel valued and connected to a larger mission. This leadership style is sometimes contrasted with transactional leadership, which prioritizes supervision, organization, and group performance, but it lacks the capacity to motivate or persuade individuals to choose collective well-being over their own self-interest.

### *Participative Leadership:*

Participative leadership prioritizes the value of team members inputs and encourages transparent communication and active participation in decision-making (Wang et al., 2022). Leaders who adopt this strategy encourage transparent and sincere communication, actively involve themselves in the process, and cultivate collaborative decision-making.

Participative leaders promote agreement and dedication to organizational objectives by actively

including team members in decision making. This style of leadership has the ability to develop employee satisfaction, high innovation, and problem-solving abilities due to the inclusion of different techniques. Moreover, it develops a feeling of ownership among team members, as their perspectives are acknowledged and valued.

#### *Servant Leadership:*

Servant leadership places the needs of team members as a top priority, supporting their development and empowering them to achieve their maximum capabilities (Langhof & Guldenberg, 2019). Servant leadership is a selfless approach that prioritizes the well-being and development of team members, emphasizing values such as empathy, active listening, and cultivating a sense of community (Ribando, 2022). Servant leaders empower their subordinates, fostering an environment of trust and collaboration that enhances team performance and a strengthens organizational culture. This leadership style has a wide-ranging influence that extends beyond the workplace, promoting social responsibility and inspiring individuals to adopt a worldview centred on serving others.

#### *Ramayana:*

The Ramayana, a narrative about King Rama, is one of the two epics of classical Sanskrit literature in ancient India. Ramayana is an important Hindu religious book that provides an account of Lord Rama; a prince of the kingdom Ayodhya. This story illustrates the life progression of Rama from his birth to the time that he becomes the king of Ayodhya, where he was born, passing through the stage of exile, the kidnap of his wife Sita by Ravana, and the war to rescue her and coronation as king of Ayodhya. The epic will focus on dharma (duty or righteousness), denoting the actions, loyalty, and love of the main characters. Ramayana is one of the largest works of literature in the world,

consisting of 24,000 verses that are primarily written in the Shloka form and are divided into seven kāṇḍa (chapters). This also highlights the attributes of an ideal king or leader. The Ramayana has a rich impact on art, literature, and culture in most South and Southeast Asian regions.

#### *Nyaya System of Indian Philosophy:*

Gautama, a distinguished philosopher, is acknowledged as the founder of the Nyāya system. He is also known as Gotama or Akṣapāda. Nyāya is based on the principles of logical reasoning and is primarily distinguished by its intellectual aspect. It exhibits analytical, logical, epistemological characteristics. The Nyāya serves as a comprehensive primer on various branches of systematic philosophy. This system is also known as Tarkaśāstra or Tarkavidyā, and it specifically refers to the study and practical application of logical reasoning. The term Nyāya typically denotes the notion of moral integrity or impartiality. The Nyāyaśāstra is popularly known as a discipline that focuses on precise judgment and authentic reasoning (Vedic Schools (1): The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, 2022)

The term Nyāya, in its literal sense, denotes a method through which the mind is directed toward a conclusive outcome. Epistemology is a discipline concerned with employing logic and reasoning to precisely express intended meanings. It is also referred to as Tarkaśāstra or Tarkavidyā, Hetuvidyā or Hetuśāstra, and Pramāṇaśāstra. These concepts pertain to the examination of causes, the discipline of logical thinking, and accurate understanding. The Chāndogya Upaniṣad defines Nyāya as Vākovākya or Vādavidyā, or the field of discourse. The Nyāya is often referred to as ānvīkṣikī, denoting the discipline of rigorous analysis and systematic investigation. Kautilya argues that ānvīkṣikī has consistently been held in great esteem as the enlightening influence underlying all fields of knowledge, the basis for all pursuits, and the

sanctuary for all ethical virtues. It provides a complete overview of all fields of systematic philosophy (Vedic Schools (1): The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, 2022).

### Method of Analysis

Here we framed a step-by-step method of analysis using Nyaya Systems five Syllogisms to analyse the Valmiki Ramayana. Below are the steps and process diagram of analysis.

*Step 1:* The first element of a syllogism is called *pratijñā* or *Assertion*, which acts as a logical declaration of the objective to be proved.

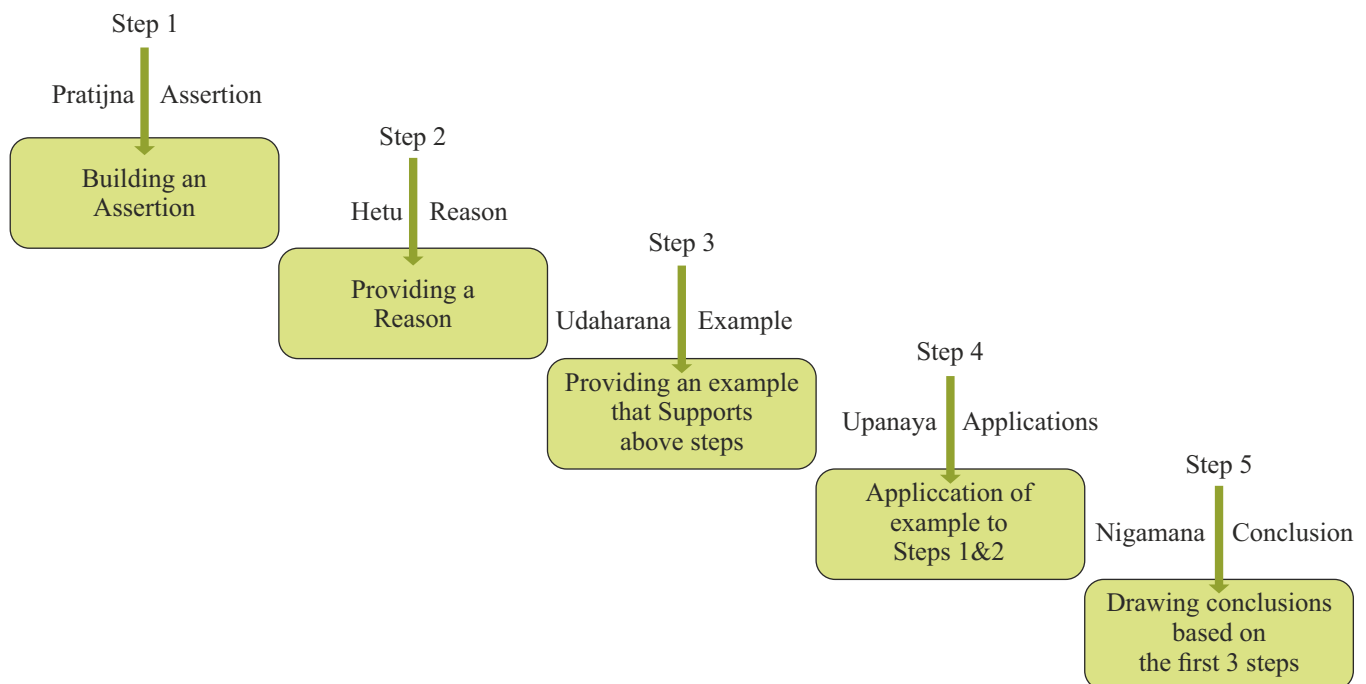
*Step 2:* The second element of a syllogism is known

as the *hetu* or *the reason*, which offers an explanation for the declaration being stated.

*Step 3:* The third element of a syllogism is known as *udāharāṇa* or *example*. The concept involves a universal statement that establishes the consistent relationship between the above elements.

*Step 4:* The fourth element of a syllogism is the *upanaya* or *the application*. This affirms that the subject is capable of reasoning.

*Step 5:* The fifth and last element of a syllogism is referred to as the *nigamana* or *conclusion*. The proposal will be confirmed after the justification has been presented.



Source: Author's own contribution.

Figure 1. Five step method of analysis of Nyaya Systems syllogisms.

### Analysis and Results

By using the above-mentioned method of analysis and applying it to specific instances in Valmiki's Ramayana where Lord Rama's leadership qualities are displayed. Below steps explain the

procedural format how to apply the method of analysis for leadership qualities of Lord Rama from Valmiki Ramayana.

*Step 1: Pratijñā (Assertion):* The first step involves building an assertion about the leadership

qualities of Lord Rama. This assertion accounts for each leadership quality.

Step 2: *Hetu (Reason)*: The second step involves providing a reason or explanation for the assertion. This helps justify the assertion made in the first step.

Step 3: *Udāharana (Example)*: The third step provides an example (selected slokas) from the *Ramayana* that supports the assertion and reason. This step helps to illustrate leadership qualities in a practical context.

Step 4: *Upanaya (Application)*: The fourth step applies the example to the assertion and reason. This helps demonstrate how the example supports the assertion and reason.

Step 5: *Nigamana (Conclusion)*: The fifth and final step entails drawing conclusions based on the assertion, reason, and example. This step help summarize the analysis. Applying the above format and the method of analysis we analysed the below mentioned Leadership Qualities (LQ's) step by step:

#### *Leadership Qualities (LQ's):*

LQ1 (Moral Virtue):

Step 1: *Pratijñā (Assertion)*: Lord Rama exemplifies moral virtue and possesses exceptional leadership qualities.

Step 2: *Hetu (Reason)*: He continuously exhibits moral integrity and a strict devotion to moral and ethical principles.

Step 3: *Udāharana (Example)*: Rama, in fulfilling his father's promise, willingly accepts his exile.

- Sanskrit slokas From Valmiki Ramyana for supporting the statements:

1. सत्यमेवानृशंसं च राजवृत्तं सनातनम्।

तस्मात्सत्यात्मकं राज्यं सत्ये लोकः प्रतिष्ठितः

2.109.10

satyamevānṛśamsaṃ ca rājavṛttaṃ sanātanam  
tasmātsatyātmakaṃ rājyaṃ satye lokaḥ  
pratiṣṭhitaḥ

Meaning: The eternal ideals of rulers are truth and nonviolence. Thus, a kingdom is founded on truth. The truth of this universe has been thoroughly proven.

2. सोऽहं पितुर्नियोगं तु किमर्थं नानुपालये।

सत्यप्रतिश्रवस्सत्यं सत्येन समयीकृतः

2.109.16

so'haṃ piturniyogaṃ tu kimarthaṃ nānupālaye|  
satyapraśravaḥ sadyaṃ satyena samayīkṛtaḥ

Meaning: I consistently uphold whatever promise I make. I am obliged by the concept of truth. What are the reasons for me to defy my father's directive (to honour his commitment) at this moment?

Step 4: *Upanaya (Application)*: This action demonstrates his unwavering dedication to honesty and responsibility, essential qualities of effective leadership.

Step 5: *Nigamana (Conclusion)*: Consequently, Rama's leadership is characterized by his unyielding dedication to the principles of dharma and following moral virtues.

LQ2 (Empathy):

Step 1: *Pratijñā (Assertion)*: Rama possesses a strong capacity for empathy and displays a genuine concern for others.

Step 2: *Hetu (Reason)*: He displays deep empathy and genuine concern for others.

Step 3: *Udāharana (Example)*: Empathizing the Jatayu's death and conducting final rituals in his

honor.

- Sanskrit slokas From Valmiki Ramyana for supporting the statements:

1. सौमित्रे हर काष्ठानि निर्मथिष्यामि पावकम्  
गृध्रराजं दिधक्षामि मत्कृते निधनं गतम्।

3.68.27

saumitre hara kāṣṭhāni nirmathīṣyāmi pāvakam  
gṛdhrarājaṃ didhakṣāmi matkṛte nidhanaṃ  
gatam|

Meaning: Saumitri, please gather firewood. I will produce fire through friction and cremate the bird king (Jatayu) who sacrificed his life for my benefit.

2. एवमुक्त्वा चितां दीप्तमारोप्य पतगेश्वरम्  
ददाहरामो धर्मात्मा स्वबन्धुमिव दुःखितः।

3.68.31

evamuktva citāṃ dīptāmāropya patageśvaram  
dadāha rāmo dharmātmā svabandhumiva  
duḥkhitah|

Meaning: Therefore, holy Rama placed him on the funeral pyre and sorrowfully burned the king of the birds, giving him the same respect as one would give to a close family member.

Step 4: *Upanaya* (Application): Empathy is an indicator of emotional intelligence in the context of leadership.

Step 5: *Nigamana* (Conclusion): Therefore, Rama's leadership is characterized by empathy.

LQ3 (Unity):

Step 1: *Pratijñā* (Assertion): Rama is a person who brings people together.

Step 2: *Hetu* (Reason): He brings together diverse groups for a common cause.

Step 3: *Udāharaṇa* (Example): Organizing the vanaras (a group of monkeys and bears) to fight against Ravana (the demon).

- Sanskrit slokas From Valmiki Ramyana for supporting the statements:

1. यच्च फल्गु बलं किञ्चित्त दत्रैवोपपद्यताम्।  
एतद्धि कृत्यं घोरं नो विक्रमेण प्रयुज्यताम्

6.4.13

yacca phalgu balaṃ kiñcitta  
datraivopapadyatām |  
etaddhi kṛtyaṃ ghoraṃ no vikrameṇa  
prayujyatām

Meaning: "If there are any individuals with lower physical capabilities within the army, they can be employed in this specific context to search for fruits and other such things." The task ahead us is powerful, and you must be prepared to go beyond your own abilities.

2. यास्यामि बलमध्येऽहं बलौघमभिर्हषयन्।  
अधिरुह्य हनूमन्त मौरावत मिवेश्वरः

6.4.18

yāsyāmi balamadhye'haṃ  
balaughamabhiharṣayan |  
adhiruhya hanūmanta mairāvata miveśvaraḥ

Meaning: "Similar to a divine god riding the celestial elephant Iravatam, I would mount upon Hanuman and quickly pass toward the centre of the army, infusing motivation and inspiration among the warriors."

Step 4: *Upanaya* (Application): Unity is an effective leadership tool.

Step 5: *Nigamana* (Conclusion): Thus, Rama's leadership is both unified and powerful.

## LQ4 (Collective Decision-Making):

Step 1: *Pratijñā* (Assertion): Rama highly valued the process of gathering opinions and making decisions as a group.

Step 2: *Hetu* (Reason): He seeks out the opinions of his companions.

Step 3: *Udāharaṇa* (Example): Seeking advice from vanaras to make well-thought-out strategic decisions.

· Sanskrit slokas From Valmiki Ramayana for supporting the statements:

1. इत्येवंपरिपृष्टास्तेस्वस्वमतमत्तन्द्रिताः।  
सोपचारंतदाराममूचुर्हितचिकीर्षवः

6.17.34

ityevamparipṛṣṭāstesvasvamatamatan  
dritāḥ |  
sopacāraṃtadārāmamūcurhitacikīrṣavaḥ

Meaning: Upon hearing Rama's statements, the Vanaras offered valuable advice and politely expressed their views, stressing the need for surveillance.

2. अज्ञातंनास्तितेकिंचित्त्रिषुलोकेषुराघवः।  
आत्मानंसूचयन्नामः पृच्छस्यस्मान् सुहृत्तया

6.17.35

ajñātaṃnāstitekicīcitrīṣulokeṣurāghavaः |  
ātmānaṃsūcayanāmaः pṛcchasyasmān  
suhṛttayā

Meaning: O Rama, there is no element of novelty that escapes your knowledge across the three worlds even also you are asking for our opinion by granting us this privilege because of our relationship.

Step 4: *Upanaya* (Application): In the form of consultation, Lord Rama does practice collective decision making regarding his decisions with his

companions.

Step 5: *Nigamana* (Conclusion): Lord Rama can be characterized as cooperative, tolerant of the opinions of subordinates, and aware of the importance of their input.

## LQ5 (Protection):

Step 1: *Pratijñā* (Assertion): Rama served as the protector of his community.

Step 2: *Hetu* (Reason): He ensures the safety and well-being of his people.

Step 3: *Udāharaṇa* (Example): Protecting his people(sages) from demons in the forest

· Sanskrit slokas From Valmiki Ramayana for supporting the statements:

1. ते चार्ता दण्डकारण्ये मुनयस्संशितव्रताः।  
मां सीते स्वयमागम्य शरण्याशरणं गताः

3.10.4

te cārtā daṇḍakāraṇye munayassamśitavratāḥ |  
mām sīte svayamāgamy śaraṇyāśśaraṇam  
gatāḥ

Meaning: O Sita, the sages who perform in very difficult penance in the Dandaka Forest, approached me directly, seeking security, although they can take care of their own safety.

2. तदवश्यं मया कार्यमृषीणां परिपालनम्।  
अनुक्तेनापि वैदेहि प्रतिज्ञाय तु किं पुनः

3.10.20

tadavaśyaṃ mayā kāryamṛṣīṇāṃ paripālanam |  
anuktenāpi vaidehi pratijñāya tu kiṃ punaḥ

Meaning: Before being requested by the sages, it

was my duty to ensure their protection. Furthermore, I have already made a commitment to myself.

Step 4: *Upanaya* (Application): Protecting is a primary responsibility of a leader.

Step 5: *Nigamana* (Conclusion): Thus, Rama's leadership is characterized by a strong sense of protection.

## Findings and Suggestions

### *Moral Virtue:*

In this leadership context, this moral virtue is widely recognized as *Ethical Leadership*. Leaders must set a moral standard and uphold the highest standards of integrity. These attributes include integrity, completing agreements, and being accountable for behaviour, similar to the actions of Rama.

### *Empathy:*

This aligns with the current understanding of *Emotional Intelligence* in leadership. Contemporary leaders must understand and empathize with the emotions of their team members, showing genuine concern for their well-

being, similar to Rama's empathy toward Jatayu.

### *Unity:*

This bears resemblance to *Transformational Leadership* in the present-day context. Leaders must motivate and mentor their people/employees toward a common goal, cherishing a sense of unity and collaboration, as Rama brought together the vanaras to confront Ravana.

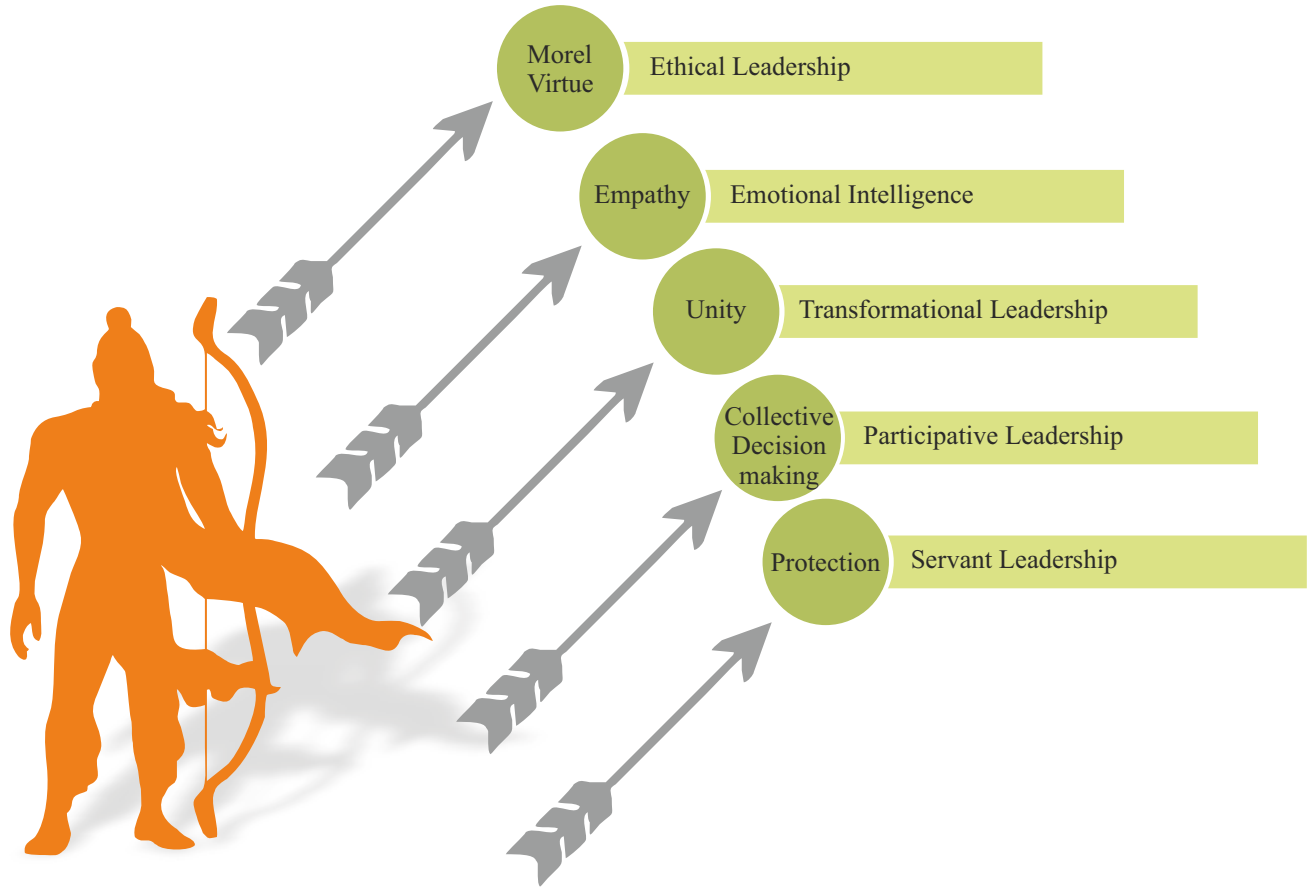
### *Collective Decision-Making:*

This alignment aligns with the current leadership paradigm of *Participative Leadership*. Modern leaders greatly value the contributions of their team members and actively encourage open communication and participation in the decision-making process, much like Rama sought assistance from wise vanaras.

### *Protection:*

This can be linked to the modern concept of *Servant Leadership*. Modern leaders must prioritize the welfare of their team members, supporting their development, and empowering them to achieve their utmost capabilities, much like Rama did as a protector for his people (in context of protecting sages).





Source: Author's own contribution.

**Figure 2. Leadership Qualities (LQ's) of Lord Rama from Valmiki's Ramayana.**

## Discussion and Conclusion

By using the hermeneutic approach and interpretation of philosophical texts, some researchers like Kumar et al. (2019), Rastogi et al. (2023), and Tenneti et al. (2022) have done research on leadership perspectives from the Ramayana and Bhagavad Gita. However, our research stands out by using Nyaya systems syllogisms as a step-by-step logical method to interpret and analyse Lord Rama's leadership qualities from Valmiki's Ramayana.

In conclusion, by understanding Lord Rama's remarkable leadership qualities from Ramayana and by using the five-step Nyaya systems syllogisms to analyse these qualities, we can see that Lord Rama is always committed to moral virtue, empathy, unity, making collective

decisions, and protection. From the works of ancient literature combined with the modern concepts of leadership, we get a new angle of vision that helps to better understand not only leadership but also demonstrates how necessary the leadership qualities described in Valmiki's Ramayana are for future's leader.

This analysis findings allow us to further understand what leadership qualities Indian literature from the past presents and why those principles are critical within the contemporary environment. Not only does this analysis bring out how Lord Rama's leadership qualities are relevant even in the contemporary world, but it also marks a new precedent for the analysis of the link between sacred texts and present-day managerial theories. Even the character of Lord Rama is inspirational, even in today's world and this approach opens a new

way to create a paradigm among the scholars how they might analyse the future scope of interaction between mythology and leadership studies.

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## Note:

1. The Authors referred Valmiki Ramayana from the IIT Kanpur's Valmiki Ramayana website: <https://www.valmiki.iitk.ac.in/>
2. The numbering provided above at the end of the Sanskrit verse refers to three parts: the first number refers to the kanda, the second number indicates the sarga, and the final number denotes the sloka from the Valmiki Ramayana. This referencing system is applicable to all Sanskrit slokas in the article.
3. The International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration (IAST) is used for transliterating Sanskrit verses.