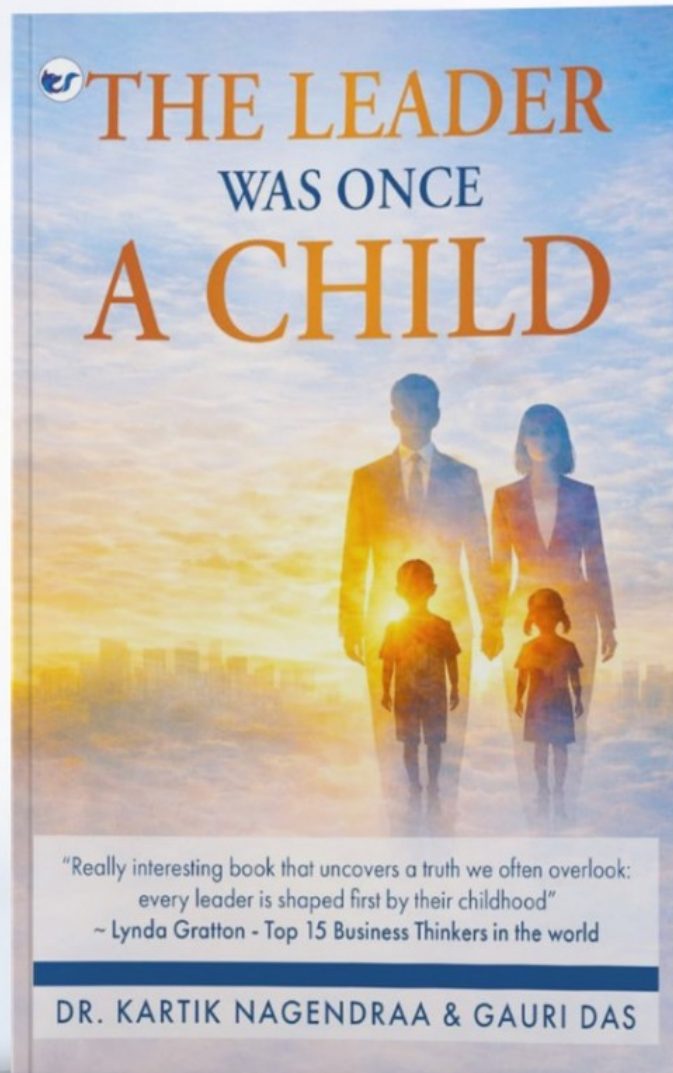


New Study Reveals: Leadership Begins in Childhood, Not the Boardroom

A new global study released alongside the book *The Leader Was Once a Child* challenges conventional leadership thinking

THE LEADER WAS ONCE A CHILD



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book *The Leader Was Once a Child* challenges conventional leadership thinking, revealing that leadership is deeply shaped by childhood experiences—not just professional journeys.

Spanning 600+ leaders across the US, Europe, APAC, and India, the research finds that:

57% of global leaders strongly believe childhood experiences shape leadership development

The conviction is even stronger in India (69%) and APAC (61%)

Family dynamics emerge as the single most influential factor across all regions

Empathy and emotional intelligence (71%) are the most impacted leadership traits.

58% of leaders acknowledge that limiting beliefs from childhood still affect their leadership effectiveness

54% have reflected on childhood, but largely in an unstructured manner.

Dr. Kartik Nagendraa, Marketing leader, Executive Coach & co-author, said: “The idea for this book began with a pattern I kept noticing while working with my coaching clients—many of their leadership behaviours, decisions, and even blind spots could be traced back to early life experiences. Yet, this connection was rarely explored consciously. That insight led Gauri Das and me to dive deeper and build this work—to help leaders decode their own stories, not just to reflect, but to lead with greater awareness and authenticity.”

The study highlights how early experiences—family environment, responsibility, social dynamics, and academic pressure—create lasting behavioural patterns, from resilience to perfectionism and people-pleasing

Lynda Gratton, Professor at London Business School, notes:

“When we imagine what it is to be a leader, it’s easy to ignore—or even bury—the past that shaped us. Yet, as *The Leader Was Once a Child* reveals, we do this at our peril. Our past matters. The more we acknowledge it, understand it, and honour the experiences that formed us, the deeper and more authentic our leadership becomes. This book invites every reader to look back with curiosity, because within those early stories lies the true foundation of who we are when we lead.”

Leadership is not just built—it is inherited from early experiences.

Understanding that origin may be the key to leading better.

Availability

The Leader Was Once a Child is now available on Amazon. Grab your copy today

For more information, please visit www.leaderwasachild.com

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