

The Impact of Thucydides' Grand Strategy on Contemporary Business Ethics in India

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Abstract

This paper has studied Thucydides ideas of power, strategy, human nature, conflict, and ethics. The association amid internal administrative changing aspects and external threats and how they affect countries, states, and businesses were examined, and the idea of 'Melian Dilemma' – the struggle to bring together power dynamics with ethical principles - was assessed. The study also looked at the scepticism toward of Thucydides theory due to belief that outcomes are divinely predetermined, as well as authority, selfishness, and possible failure to notice the significance of economic, social, and technological aspects affecting strategies in today's world. Despite these seeming flaws, the research evaluated the validity and applicability of Thucydides strategy for today's industries in relation to flexibility, power dynamics and business ethics with reference to the Indian market. Seven Indian firms were assessed for demonstrating a relevance to Thucydides' axioms. Based on the results of the analysis, the work proved that Thucydides grand strategy and how it deals with the dilemma between hard strategy and ethics is valid for the Indian market.

Keywords: Power Dynamics, Business Ethics, Flexibility, Strategy

1. Introduction

Thucydides, born around 460 BCE, is recognized for his thorough account of the Peloponnesian War, a prolonged struggle amid the Athenian Empire and the Spartan-led Peloponnesian League. In contrast to other historiographers and strategists of his time, Thucydides moved toward his theory with a laborious, investigative outlook, aspiring to disclose the fundamental reasons and results of the warfare. His examination of strategy and its relation to ethics for armed forces and administrative units has inspired succeeding generations of researchers, legislators, and strategic planners (Marincola, 2001). Thucydides' strategic viewpoint is intensely entrenched in his opinions on authority. He suggested that the fight for supremacy and rule was a key driver of social conduct and universal struggle (Payen, 2003). This standpoint is plainly expressed in the celebrated "Melian Dialogue," in which Thucydides highlights the cruel character of power politics: "The powerful do that which they can and the defenceless undergo that which they must." (Rusten 2009). Research on Thucydides strategy is done by Rahe who discusses the influence of Thucydides to strategic thinking by demonstrating that even though physical circumstances might change, the sense of clash amid orderly units rests unchanging during the centuries (Rahe, 2012).

In relation to Thucydides strategy, Platias writes that effective planning at the stage of grand strategy has to tackle four dimensions: a) appraisal of the global setting, b) putting policy goals, c) apportionment of assets (resources) to fulfil the goals (objectives), and d) acceptability of the grand strategy at home as well as away from home (Platias, 1998). This being said, the authors of this paper will argue, that these dimensions seem to also remain unchanged in the 21st century. The present article then aims to review the meaning of these dimensions on which Thucydides strategy is based and to show how Thucydides principles are applied in modern politics (as well as markets and industries). When this is done, the authors will go on to explain how Thucydides strategy has

influenced the contemporary Indian business landscape with reference to specific firms operating in India. The paper contributes to research in the area as it reveals the validity of Thucydides grand strategy in specific situations, in this case India, and marks the universality and continuity of Thucydides strategic theory at a global level.

2. Thucydides on authority, strategy, human nature, conflict, and ethics

Thucydides is frequently counted as a forerunner to the realist school of thought in international relations as well as in global business in extension, that stresses the role of authority and state attention in moulding state conduct (Morley, 2021). Realism stays a leading example in realizing international politics and business, and Thucydides' inquiry offers introductory values for this philosophy (Joho, 2023). In his writings, Thucydides shows the tough truths of power dynamics, laying emphasis on that the ethical and moral matters over and over again return to the necessities of supremacy and existence (Luttwak, 1987). To begin with, regarding realism and power politics, Thucydides' historical explanation mirrors a pragmatist perception of international relations (Koliopoulos, 1999). He held that the search for authority and supremacy is a central characteristic of human nature and that countries or entities work mainly to accomplish their own self-regard (Koutsoukis, 2023). A contemporary example could be the continuing strategic rivalry amid the USA and China. This situation echoes Thucydides' perceptions into power dynamics. In the same way as Thucydides marked the dread and spirit propelling the Peloponnesian War, the existing USA-China competition is typified by both countries' strategic computations concerning armed skills, financial impact, and geopolitical position (Betts, 2021). Thucydides' reflexion that the ascent of a new power frequently results to strain with a conventional one is obvious in this setting, underlining the lasting significance of his concepts (Edelstein, 2021).

Thucydides' exploration presumes that ethical points of view are habitually subordinate to strategic matters in the manner of conflict (Taxiarchi, 1998). To continue with, Thucydides' treatises bring to light a refined perception of strategy. He identified the significance of bringing into line soldierly and administrative goals and emphasised the necessity for meticulous strategizing and implementation (Heuser *et al*, 2012). His enquiry of Periclean stratagem – Pericles was the Athenian general -, for instance, stresses the Athenian general's endeavours to leverage Athens' marine dominance and financial resources to sustain a beneficial strategic stance (Platias and Trigkas, 2021).

Moreover, Thucydides' acumens spread further than simple strategic reflections to include wider considerations on human nature and conflict. Thucydides saw human nature as a critical element in apprehending conflict. He contended that dread, reputation, and egotism thrust people and countries, affecting their conduct and judgments (Rahman, 2021). This standpoint is obvious in his study of the roots of the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC fought between Athens and Sparta), in which he ascribes the conflict to an amalgamation of concern of Athenian power, drive for supremacy, and internal disagreement within countries (Goswami, 2022). In addition, Thucydides also studied the relationship amid internal governmental changing aspects and external struggles. He identified how internal disagreements and control fights within countries could worsen external struggles and influence fundamentally strategy (Žilinčík, 2022). The internal disorder in Athens throughout the war, for instance, impacted to strategic missteps and ultimate downfall (Marinatos, 2022).

What is important to emphasise here is that Thucydides' emphasis on the part of anxiety, reputation, and self-regard in running country actions goes on to be applicable in contemporary conflict inquiry. His awareness that those inspirations affect decision-making may be used to current global struggles and negotiation (Gaddis, 2010). For example, the Civil War in Syria demonstrates how dread, principle, and self-regard propel not merely state players but also non-state players and global actors. The inspirations of several parties and countries drawn in - stretching from regional aspirations to political loyalties - confirm Thucydides' study of human personality and conflict dynamics (Shah and Ahmad, 2016).

Up to now, this study shows that Thucydides' comprehensions into strategic planning and the significance of lining up military and governmental aims are vital for contemporary army and political policy. Below this paper discusses how this type of strategy nurtures confidence and name in international management (see: Marcao, Santos and Martinho, 2024) with examples from India. For the moment let us stay to military and governmental implications and provide some useful examples. Thucydides examination of Periclean policy, that contained employing Athens' maritime dominance and financial reserves, provides sound examples in attaining strategic

consistency and success The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) illustrates strategic estimates in contemporary defence measures. NATO's policy of joint precautions and its acclimatisation to new pressures such as cyber warfare and provincial wars, echoes Thucydides' weight on strategic planning and flexibility in the face of growing contests (Sending, 2021).

Other important issues which Thucydides grand strategy discusses are the strategic miscalculations in government policies, the rise and decline of powers, and ethical considerations. This concept is known as the Thucydides' 'trap' (Buckley and Hashai, 2020). To start with strategic miscalculations, Thucydides perceived that internal administrative dynamics may well affect external struggles and planned choices. This understanding is pertinent for comprehending in what way national policies and internal uncertainty upset global relationships. For example, the ascend and descent of eminent powers, like the Soviet Union and the contests confronted by USA and China, reveal in what way internal issues – like financial power, political steadiness, and civic judgement - influence a country's global policy and universal stance. Thucydides' study offers an agenda for recognising these underlying forces (Neal, 2021). Lastly, the Melian Dialogue, in which Thucydides features the bitter truths of authority politics, stays a strong prompt of the frequently brutal kind of global associations. The strain amid ethical deliberations and strategic necessities is a repeated matter in international policymaking and this paper elaborates on this point below and connects it to grand strategy and ethics in the business arena. Humanistic interferences and the dispute over the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) echo the continuing strain among ethical reflections and strategic concerns. Thucydides' perceptions into the confines of ethical disputes in the face of power politics present a standpoint on these current predicaments (Crowley, 2023).

3. Criticisms of Thucydides' treatises

Yet, Thucydides is accused by critics for using an abstract style in his writings. Thucydides often employs abstract expressions as an alternative to a roughly identical oral and individual constructions. As Joho marks, those technical selections in Thucydides writings incline to destress human activity as individuals discover themselves in an unresponsive position, subjected to events occurring to them instead of being unreservedly in charge of actions (Joho, 2022). Consequently, the evaluation of the abstract form puts forward the inquiry of the stipulation in Thucydides. On plentiful instances, Thucydides and his orators employ formal and reflexive language to emphasize the helplessness of individuals to transpersonal powers which express themselves in shared tempers and an intrinsic dynamic of actions (Mynott, 2023). These aspects are fundamental of the human situation and turn into an alternative for the idea of godly passivity predominant in ancient Greek religious beliefs (Greenwood, 2023). So far Thucydidean stipulation does not seem to be unconditional. As Ferrario writes, it hoists in the practice of a kind of fatalism which someone meets in the writings of Homer and Herodotus (Ferrario, 2023). In those writers, the divinities or destiny incline to decide the result of the furthestmost important results, but they allow flexibility for the exact manner in which those key happenings come to pass (Munson, 2023). Therefore, the Greeks seems to have advocated a flexible option of stipulation, so that significant room for individual selection endures within the context set by necessity. Pericles turns out to be Thucydides' major illustration of a person that employs the flexibility allowed by necessity for practical interferences into the sequence of actions (Low, 2023).

Criticism also has been raised in research regarding historical bias. Thucydides wrote from a particular historical and cultural stance, that might not be totally relevant to contemporary circumstances. James argues that Thucydides study is profoundly entrenched in the situations of ancient Greece and the Peloponnesian War, that restricts its through pertinence to modern strategic circumstances (James, 2021). Moreover, Thucydides' approach habitually highlights the role of authority and selfishness in relationships. This emphasis may surpass added imperative issues, like ideology, ethics, or diplomacy, that are capable in assuming central roles in policy in our times too (Lissner, 2021). Studies have also observed that Thucydides is recognized for his somewhat mocking opinion of human nature, advocating that struggle is unavoidable as a result of intrinsic wishes for authority and self-regard. MacDonald and Parent contend that this viewpoint may take us to a passive style to policy, in which the ability for collaboration and positive-sum results may be underrated (MacDonald and Parent, 2021). Equally serious criticism is raised by Balzacq and Krebs who marks that whereas Thucydides offers valued opinions on the nature of struggle and authority, his studies are to a greater extent explanatory than prescriptive. He offers past illustrations but less tangible direction on in what way to utilize his acumens to precise policy complications (Balzacq and Krebs, 2021). In addition, Thucydides' study frequently focuses on the interfaces amid great powers,

like Athens and Sparta. This emphasis may reduce the applicability of his policy for smaller states or non-state performers, that may have dissimilar policy deliberations and restrictions (Byman, 2021). Byman at this point contends that being as such Thucydides' strategy in several cases fails to notice the significance of economic, social, and technological aspects which may pointedly affect policy results nowadays (Byman, 2021). However, in spite of those shortcomings, Thucydides' studies are an important reference in strategic studies, providing imperative lessons on the kind of authority, struggle, leadership. Strategic flexibility, and ethical human behaviour, especially in the 'Melian Dialogue', and for this reason the authors of this paper will proceed below to show how these ideas relate to ethical management in our times.

4. Thucydides grand strategy and business ethics

In today's connected planet, businesses need to traverse complicated global situations in which moral concerns seem to have a key role in determining strategic results. The question here arises: how connected is this reality to Thucydides' 'Melian' dilemma? To understand this, the authors of this study first need to introduce the concept of ethical grand strategy. Ethical grand strategy stresses the significance of bringing into line state goals (as well as business goals) with the international ethical codes, endorsing activities which are both advantageous and ethically rigorous. This method seems to make sure that a company's strategy is not only operational in profitability and abundance but also deferential of universal employment standards and civic rights (Charap *et al*, 2021). By assuming an ethical grand strategy, organizations may develop trust and lawfulness in the international and national arenas, promoting mutual relations with stakeholders and others, which improve constancy and amity (Aydin, 2020).

Moreover, the application of an ethical grand strategy comprises connecting with an extensive variety of stakeholders, embracing transnational as national organizations, non-governmental establishments, and people. This all-encompassing attitude guarantees that various viewpoints are taken into consideration and that strategies are established with a profound appreciation of their likely results (Debellis *et al*, 2021). Involving stakeholders also assists to construct wide backing for strategic proposals, boosting their success and lawfulness (Sajjad, Eweje, and Raziq, 2024). Likewise, ethical grand strategy needs constant assessment and adjustment. This makes sense as the global setting is vigorous, with new contests and prospects rising habitually (Debellis *et al*, 2021). Therefore, effective grand strategy needs to be flexible and quick to apply, able of fine-tuning to changing conditions in the market while staying decked in fundamental ethical values, which beyond doubt reminds the reader of Thucydides concept of 'flexibility' and 'leadership' (Lim, 2024). The authors of this paper show below how this flexibility and leadership values seem to make certain that business policies stay pertinent and operative over time, able of tackling both contemporary and future hazards with reference to the contemporary Indian business landscape.

To proceed with ethical grand strategy, trust and repute are vital constituents in both national and global policymaking, working as significant support for the feat of enterprises similarly (Kaggwa *et al*, 2024). In the context of a corporation's grand strategy, trust lessens transaction expenses and is a precondition for collaboration and conflict resolution, while repute reduces unscrupulous conduct by announcing agreeable actions. Trust and repute are products of conduct associated with standards and a shared ethos, that is capable of advancing across symbolic policies and common practices of mutual strains that generate conditions for bond and trust (Michelson, 2023). Trust is an essential constituent of effective universal management. It enables easier transactions and communications among businesses by moderating the apparent risks and uncertainties characteristic in international transactions. Once trust is existing, companies can engross in transnational contracts with more buoyancy, recognizing that their business partners are expected to recognize their steadfastness (Budhwar *et al*, 2022). Such trust is not simply an individual feature but a systemic attribute that can be refined over reliable, steadfast management conduct over time (Budhwar *et al*, 2022). In a similar manner, repute works as an unceremonious watchdog of activities in international management (Choi *et al*, 2024). A robust repute for ethical practices and steadfastness are capable to open doors to fresh prospects and collaborations. On the other hand, a blemished name can reduce a firm's capability to function successfully on the international platform. Repute is constructed on a history of activities and choices that line up with social rules and anticipations. Companies with noble repute are frequently recognised as more reliable and are favoured associates in business deals (Choi *et al*, 2024).

For multinational companies, trust and repute are core competences that have to be nurtured and preserved over and done with purposeful activities and policies (Prahalad and Hamel (1990). As a result, businesses owe

to give precedence to ethical conduct, transparency, and constant interaction to create and uphold trust with their international partners. Interlocking corporate social responsibility schemes and observing the international canons of behaviour can augment a firm's name. By conceiving and focusing on the difficulties of trust and reputation, multinational businesses could be able to pilot the trials of the international marketplace and construct long-term, constructive partnerships with stakeholders round the globe (Mintzberg, 1987).

Ethical leadership is vital in dealing with important social matters which have the ability for both national and international effect. Successful ethical leadership not only brings into line with morals like decency and impartiality but also boosts stakeholder trust and backs maintainable international management practices. As globalization grows, ethical alarms, comprising social justice, human rights, and parity of chances, gain strength. Therefore, corporations, and governments are ever more needed to furnish collaborations to boost economic, political, and social progress (Dal Mas, 2020).

Ethical leadership works as a foundation for constructing and sustaining a vigorous ethical ethos inside an enterprise. Managers who exemplify ethical values set the tone for their companies, swaying workers' performance and decision-making practices. This top-down method guarantees that ethical deliberations are assimilated into every single part of the firm, from strategic planning to everyday operations (Lawrence, and Makridakis, 1989). Trust and reputation are irreplaceable core competences for any organization (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990). By steadily showing ethical conduct, managers can improve the business' reputation, catching the attention of buyers, shareholders, and staff who prize honesty. This trust, in return, nurtures lasting associations and loyalty, working to ensure continual organizational success (Dey *et al*, 2022).

5. Thucydides Grand Strategy and Ethics in the Indian business context

Apparently, Indian businesses are influenced in great extent by Thucydides grand strategy. The effect of Thucydides' strategic visions on Indian firms can be understood in several ways as they circumnavigate the multifaceted commercial setting of India. Already the reader has seen above how Thucydides' study underlines the impact of cultural and political aspects of strategy. Indian companies could not be exception to those rules. The reason for this is because Indian firms have also to operate in a compound cultural and political environment that comprises various provincial marketplaces, variable shopper likings, and complex regulatory settings. Therefore, the authors of this work consider that a deep comprehension of these aspects can help in constructing strategies that agree with local contexts in India. Moreover, the authors deem that applying by Thucydides principles, Indian businesses can develop strategies that are vigorous and adjustable to the complications of the Indian market.

Starting with competitive dynamics, the best example, characteristic of the complexity of the Indian market, is Reliance Jio's entrance into the Indian telecom market in 2016. Reliance Jio's entry definitely upset established companies such as Airtel and Vodafone. In fact, by December 2023, Reliance Jio had attained a leading market share of 39.69%, a testimony to its effective competitive dynamics' penetration strategy (GlobalGyan Leadership Academy, May 13, 2024). Jio used aggressive pricing and widespread network expansion to increase market share swiftly. The business's strategy further entangled not only upgrading current technologies but applying an all-inclusive, next-generation network infrastructure able of managing huge data traffic, related to India's mounting population and the subgroups that required access to high-speed Internet, and offering first-class voice and data services. This audacious strategy not only offered Jio a technological advantage but also positioned it as a astounding contestant in the telecommunications market, able of providing leading-edge services at minor costs owing to the scale and efficiency of its groundwork. The result of these policies were that even though technology modifications saw an upsurge of up to 40%, Reliance Jio's products stayed near to 25% cheaper than those of its rivals, thus withstanding its market-leading position even with higher prices. This policy not simply preserved customer loyalty but also safeguarded a competitive advantage in the India market (GlobalGyan Leadership Academy, May 13, 2024). The authors of this paper will argue at this point that this can be understood as a strategic move analogous to Thucydides' principle of leveraging opportunity in competitive dynamics, - in which a new entrant takes advantage of the weaknesses of existing rivals to obtain a competitive advantage. And this is done, by fully following Thucydides concept of ethics related to his Melian Dilemma. Ever since its entrance in the Indian Telecom market, Jio has made excessive strides in connecting Indians throughout India giving disadvantaged low-income customers or remote buyers the chance to be technologically advanced, and take advantage of the

opportunities that present digital revolution offers for business, education, health, etc, through competitive prices for all and a superb technology infrastructure. This is significant because, in spite of functioning in the most populous country, rivals have principally, in the past, prioritised gaining grounds on the international stage, so much so that they have considered their own client base for granted. Reliance Jio took nothing for granted and created strategic changes that have started to gain multifold returns. The authors will observe here that Reliance Jio's competitive dynamics strategy goes hand in hand with ethical consideration expressed in Thucydides work.

When it comes to Realpolitik and Strategic Alliances the best example in India is Tata Group's Diversification, Tata Group has, seemingly, adopted a strategy akin to Thucydides' realpolitik, balancing authority and building strategic alliances. For example, their joint ventures and collaborations with transnational businesses (for instance, Tata Steel's acquisition of Corus) are intended at increasing their market share and attaining universal opportunities.

Despite being a powerful geopolitical player as per its Thucydides grand strategy, TATA Group has also issued very strong ethical management guidelines. Each member of a TATA Company, including top management, must deal on behalf of the Company with professionalism, morality, honesty and high ethical principles. Such behaviour has to be just and clear and be understood to be as such by everyone in the world. In the TATA Group each member of staff is held accountable for the application of and fulfilment conformity with the Code in his or her work setting. Moreover, the corporation endeavours to offer a secure and nourishing working setting and conform, in the manner of its corporate codes (Tata Code of Conduct 2024). Likewise, TATA Company offers equal opportunities to all its personnel and all qualified candidates for employment without looking upon to their race, caste, religion, colour, ancestry, marital status, sex, age, nationality, disability and veteran position. Personnel of a TATA Company are handled with nobleness and in harmony with the company's rules to preserve a working place free of sexual harassment of any kind, either physical, verbal or psychological. Worker guidelines and customs are managed in a way which warrants that in all issues equal opportunity is offered to those qualified and the decisions are merit-based (see: Srivastava, 2012). Research by Govindharaj also suggested the practice of such social corporate responsibility strategies in TATA Group (Govindharaj, 2024). Kumar and Sinha (2023) have observed similar practices in TATA's line of electric vehicle production, whereas Kalyan and Kumar (2020) praise the company's education and training lifetime commitment for all its workers. Budiman and al-Bustomi (2024) the company has largely preserved these ethical practises during the COVID-19 period too making it one of the few Indian companies to maintain its corporate social responsivity reputation. In light of the above discussion, the authors of this paper will argue that the company is clearly influenced by Thucydides power and ethical management considerations as expressed in the 'Melian dilemma', and applies these principles in all its activities globally.

When it comes to adaptation and innovation Infosys transformation seems to be the best example in the Indian market. As a prominent information technology services business, Infosys has shown strategic adaptation by changing attention from old-style information technology services to new fields such as digital transformation, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence (AI) (Infosys.com). This seems to line up with Thucydides' concept of familiarizing strategies to changing conditions and high-tech developments introduced earlier in this paper. Johnson (2014) writes that adaptation and innovation as expressed by Thucydides has influence the entire marketplace globally and the best example of such adaptation and innovations currently takes place in China and India. AI first business strategy embraced by Infosys is working fine for the business in spite of unsettled ethical and IPR matters about the technology, Infosys Chairman Nandan Nilekani said at the firm's 42th Annual General Meeting (Economic Times, June 29, 2023). The Ethics and Compliance program at Infosys has two important aims - to sustain and safeguard the morals of Integrity and Transparency and to guarantee company-wide regulatory compliance. Integrity is vital to cherishing an accountable organization (Infosys.com). Infosys recognizes that beyond regulation and stakeholder consideration, there is a rising perception that ethical behaviour is good for business. The firm's dedication to a values-based moral is preserved in its Code of Conduct and Ethics. The company pays particular attention to avoid bribery and corruption, to preserve vigorous compliance about export controls and sanctions, to fight misuse of power and has an anti-competitive practice and merger control strategy in place. In addition, Whistleblowing is proscribed as unethical (Infosys.com). The above discussion strongly suggests that Infosys manages to bring a balance to Thucydides 'Melian Dilemma', that is between grand strategy and ethical management and practises.

To continue with, when it comes to long-Term planning and resource management, Mahindra & Mahindra

has strategically capitalized in several markets such as automotive, agribusiness, and renewable energy (Economic Times, Nov. 18, 2020). Apparently, this long-term planning and expanded source management exhibit Thucydides' code of planning for future contests and opportunities by leveraging existing resources successfully. Moreover, the company seems to manage well Thucydides' 'Melian Dilemma' between realism in business and ethical practises and it presents another important example in the Indian market. This is suggested by a study - based on telephone interviews with 2,089 respondents in commercial and professional markets in 10 metro cities in India with the purpose to appraise reactions and ideas of moral business from the viewpoint of investors, buyers and personnel (Chatterjee, Shah, and Swaroop, 2023). In addition, Naidu (2015) writes that Mahindra Samriddhi, a scheme of the Mahindra Group over which it powers its connections with rural India and agriculture made over six decades of supplying cars for rural and semi urban India. A result of Mahindra Farm Equipment Division, Mahindra Samriddhi provides a variety of goods, that involves crop care solutions, high yield seeds, soil testing, agri-counseling, agri-clinics, advisory services, mechanisation and irrigation solutions to increase the production and wealth of the farmer. The plan has also guided Mahindra to construct a market for providing fresh product to foremost domestic and international stores by means of a scheme in which the company works together with the farmers in guaranteeing top quality crop, therefore aiding its own fresh products operations and well as assisting farmers realize higher and improved returns. The plan by itself suggests Mahindra and Mahindra ideal management of Thucydides' 'Melian Dilemma'.

Next, when it comes to Thucydides ideas on strategic responses to external threats a good example in India is HDFC Bank's Risk Management. HDFC Bank's method to handling monetary recessions and regulatory changes reveals strategic foresight (Sainath and Narender, 2024). The bank achieves this success by diversification of its portfolio management. As Sainath and Narender (2024) write, HDFC managed to deal effectively with rapid external threats like competition and market instability by employing successful asset allocation, robust strategic risk management and new technologies to enhance its portfolio performance without sacrificing its corporate social responsibility program. As research also shows although that the banking sector in India is stronger than even before, HDFC has listened carefully to non-government institutions which in recent years exert enormous pressure on banks to behave more ethically towards its clients (Nidhi, 2016). By constructing a sturdy risk management structure and maintaining financial prudence without discarding ethical responsibility, HDFC Bank sides well with Thucydides' notion of strategic reactions to external threats and at the same time reconciles the conflict existing in the 'Melian Dilemma'.

Finally, power dynamics and market leadership inherent in Thucydides grand strategy are seemingly exemplified in the cases of Flipkart and Amazon in the Indian market. The rivalry amid Flipkart and Amazon in the Indian e-commerce market demonstrates strategic manoeuvring similar to Thucydides' interpretation on power dynamics. Both businesses constantly renovate and fine-tune their strategies to outmanoeuvre one another and catch market share without neglecting ethical practices toward employees and the public (Kumar, 2024). In a recent study Kumar (2024) shows that loyalty is more than simply business. Strong brand identity and ethical corporate practices are the policies of both Flipkart and Amazon in India and genuineness and open lines of communication coupled with high security have created a lasting customer loyalty for both firms.

6. Conclusion

This paper has reviewed Thucydides grand strategy comprised of the ideas of authority, strategy, human nature, conflict, and ethics. The relationship between internal governmental changing aspects and external struggles and how these issues affect countries, states, and businesses is examined, and the idea of 'Melian Dilemma' – the difficulty to reconcile power dynamics with corporate social responsibility - is evaluated. The work also looked at the criticisms of Thucydides theory such as an air of fatalism due to ancient Greeks belief in events being predetermined by the Gods, and authority, selfishness, and possible failure to notice the significance of economic, social, and technological aspects which may pointedly affect policy results in today's world. However, despite these weaknesses, the research stresses the relevance of Thucydides grand strategy for today's businesses especially when it comes to the ideas of flexibility, power dynamics and how they reconcile to business ethics with reference to the Indian market. Seven Indian firms are assessed for demonstrating a relevance to Thucydides' axioms, Reliance Jio for competitive dynamics, TATA Group for Real-politic and strategic alliances, Infosys for adaptation and innovation, Mahindra for strategic planning and superb resource management, HDFC for readiness to strategic response and efficient management of external threats, and Flipkart and Amazon for

exhibiting power dynamics and market leadership and how these firms preserve ethics by dealing successfully with the Thucydides 'Melian Dilemma' is evaluated. The work proves that Thucydides grand strategy and how it deals with ethics is valid in the Indian market.

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