

## Dynamics of leadership, issues, trends and options

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*"A business short of capital can borrow money, and one with a poor location can move. But a business short on leadership has little chance for survival." Bennis and Nanus (1985:20)*

### Keywords

Leadership Dynamics, Trends, Management

### Abstract

*The purpose of leadership boils down to one central reality: human organisations produce extraordinary success where they create teams capable of heroic behaviour. The study of leadership has been the preoccupation of business leaders, military leaders and political leaders. What does it mean to be a leader? This means different things to different people particularly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Leadership make a difference in many organisations, it can be a positive or negative difference. Leaders have to understand the cultural dynamics in their operational environment. There are different leadership styles and theories that can be applied to develop good leaders. The aim of this paper is to highlight leadership dynamics.*

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### 1. Introduction

Whenever an organisation experience difficulties, it can relate to leadership as a possible cause of the problem. If employees are asked about their jobs, the chances are that they will complain about leadership. If one studies large organisations, one will discover that the biggest barrier to change is often a lack of leadership. Whenever managers under-perform, the chance are that leadership is weak. The increasingly fast-changing and competitive business environment demand more, better, and more responsible leadership to make the organisation better.

What does it means to be a leader? It means loving the work you do and infusing others with energy and enthusiasm. Most importantly, it means building a community where people have the ability, the freedom, and the will to accomplish results. Leadership makes the difference on the schools, churches, sports, student's organisation, business, government and many other organisations. When one think of leaders in today's world, one often think first of the "big names" such as Nelson Mandela, Colin Powel, and Yasser Arafat in politics, Jack Welch and Bill Gates in business, Oprah Winfrey in entertainment. Yet there are leaders working in every organisation, large and small. In fact leadership is all around every day, in all facets of life. In order for these leaders to succeed, they must be effective.

An effective leader today is characterised by a high degree of flexibility, imitative, and ability to lead in complex and ambiguous circumstances. A broad range of capabilities is required. Not only are high standards of ethical and organisational proficiency demanded, but leaders also have to be effective in their dealing with different cultures.

In this paper leadership dynamics, trends and options will be discussed. What is leadership? Is there a difference between leadership and management? What kind of leadership training is needed today? What changes in society will have and continue to impact future leaders? What leadership theories are important? These are some of the questions that will be pursued in this paper. The purpose of this paper is to highlight leadership dynamics.

## 2. Research methodology

A literature study was undertaken to search especially for the definitions used by some authors in discussing the concept of leadership. Casson (1982) once said that to define leadership is by far the most difficult part of the study of leadership. One should immediately respond to this statement by asking: If you do not know exactly what you are studying, how on earth is it then possible for you to study this indefinable thing at all? A prerequisite for the identification of any field of scientific knowledge and understanding is the ability first to define it. The methodology followed in this research was aimed not to arrive at a singular, "perfect" definition for leadership. The intention was rather firstly to uncover the major and fundamental components linked directly to leadership (as defined and explained by different authors).

## 3. A Major restriction experienced in this paper

The most serious and major problem experienced in this research, is semantics: the meaning of words. A particular phenomenon in almost all of the literature researched is the indiscriminate use of different words and concepts as if they have exactly the same meaning. An author will at one point discuss the definition or functions of leadership only to immediately thereafter refer to leaders (as if leadership and a person's behaviour in a leadership position is the same, which is definitely not the case).

McClelland (1976) pointed out, that, a study of the 'behaviour of entrepreneurs' is conceptually distinct from the study of 'entrepreneurial behaviour'. Entrepreneurs, or those occupying entrepreneurial status, need not show entrepreneurial behaviour. The same can be said that people, who perceptually having the status of leaders, will not necessarily embody the functions of leadership. This paper focuses mainly on leadership in its conceptual and fundamental contexts. This paper does not attempt to analyse the research findings on the behaviours of leaders, but concentrates on leadership role behavioural elements.

## 4. Leadership defined: from the classical to the contemporary

Before one can examine what makes an efficient leader, one need to know what leadership means. Scholars and writers have offered many definitions of leadership. Defining leadership has been a complex and elusive problem largely because the nature of leadership itself is complex.

### 4.1 Classical Descriptions of Leadership

#### 4.1.1 Plato

About 2000 years ago, Plato (in ancient Athens) defended expertise as the basis for leadership, though strongly rejecting any form of democracy as a method for selecting leaders (Grint, 1997). Grint (1997) interprets him as having said: "...only the captain [of a ship] has the necessary knowledge. The crew, without the expertise to recognise a true expert, is easily corrupted and, inevitably, the ship will founder as impostor after impostor assumes the helm on the grounds of public popularity rather than navigational skill". Plato identified the primary virtues of a leader as prudence, justice, courage and self-restraint (Johnson, 2001).

#### 4.1.2 Sun Tzu

The Chinese philosopher, Sun Tzu, wrote on the art of war, including his views on leaders and leadership, somewhere between 500 and 300 BC. For Sun Tzu, the real art did not lie in the act of war itself, but in the avoidance of war. Grint (1997) accentuates Sun Tzu's antipathy for political leaders (as opposed to military leaders) who interfere with military strategy by quoting him: "There are occasions when the commands of the sovereign need not be obeyed. ... when it is expedient in operations, the general need not be restricted by the commands of the

sovereign. ...the general, ... is not responsible to the heavens above, to the earth beneath, to the enemy in his front, or to the sovereign in his rear. ...when you see the correct course, act; do not wait for orders." In the present day, the world continues to extract from Sun Tzu's wisdom as expressed by Krause, who adapted Sun Tzu's views on how leaders should operate (in Grint, 1997:22). He uses typical terminology of the classical approach such as "learn to fight, do it right, expect the worst, burn the bridges, keep them guessing, and seize the day", in his theory for successful leaders.

### 4.1.3 Machiavelli

Niccolò Machiavelli (Johnson, 2001) was a political adviser who lived during the renaissance in Italy (early 1500s). In his book *The Prince*, he advised princes that less commendable tactics and traits were acceptable if the result were the preservation of power. Machiavelli strategies included manipulation, physical intimidation, lies, hatred, fear and control. Machiavelli considered it necessary for princes, if they wanted to maintain power, to learn to not be good (Burns, 1979). A sardonic contrast, however, seems to exist between his first book, *The Discourses*, and *the Prince*. In *The Discourses* Machiavelli promotes the virtues of a republic (Stoner and Freeman, 1989), some of which are:

"An organisation is more stable if members have the right to express their differences and solve their conflicts within it."

"While one person can begin an organisation, it is lasting when it is left in the care of many and when many desire to maintain it."

This is quite paradoxical to Machiavelli's advice to ruling aristocrats as theorised in his second publication. These classical scholars in leadership made no real attempt to define leadership as such, or rather; they did not endeavour to condense the concept into one or two sentences. Their theories were more a complete package of heredity, actions, tactics, traits, expertise, circumstances, principles, physical environments, survival tactics and political preferences ordered in such a way as to offer the best possible combination to either gain and/or maintain power.

## 4.2 Contemporary Definitions of Leadership

For the purpose of this paper, contemporary views on leadership are those developed after World War II, as opposed to the classical views which were developed between five centuries and millenniums ago. The post-World War II approaches to leadership were, and are not, necessarily researched against the background of war and conflict as were the classical approaches; nevertheless, one can assume that authors on leadership have some or other background against which their thoughts are shaped. These background settings could be war, conflict, economic crises, business challenges, socioeconomic challenges, cultural tendencies, political aspirations, peace and/or prosperity.

Stogdill (1974) concluded that, there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept. Bennis (1959) stated that, of all the hazy and confusing areas in social psychology, leadership theory undoubtedly contends for the top nomination. And, ironically, probably more has been written and less known about leadership than about any other topic in the behavioural sciences. Leadership is difficult to measure or define, but it is easily recognised. Nahavandi (2000) indicates that "Although there is a great amount of diversity in even the definition of leadership, there is agreement that leadership is a group phenomenon - there are no leaders without followers - and that a leader influences and guides others to achieve goals." This definition emphasises that followers are a prerequisite for leadership and that these followers are being influenced to achieve a specific objective or

objectives. The true test of leadership is whether your constituent will vote for you in the next round.

Almost the same definition of leadership is proposed by Robbins and Coulter (1999) when they state that "Leadership is defined as an influence process in which individuals, by their actions, facilitate the movement of a group toward a common or shared goal". In this definition, the word "facilitate" is used compared to the words "influences and guides" mentioned above in the previous definition. In essence, the basic concept is the same. Nahavandi (2000) mention that there are 130 different definitions of leadership in management theory and is of the opinion that "... even within the wayward, word-spattering world of management theory, no subject has produced more waffle than leadership".

Apart from also emphasising that leadership is the process of influencing people, Naylor (1999) adds that this influence is directed towards the achievement of organisational goals. This author elaborates further that leadership provides inspiration to the followers and that leadership includes concepts like risk-taking, creativity and change. Andersen (2000) defines leadership as an "interpersonal influence exercised in a situation, and directed through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals". Once again the element of influencing others (the followers) toward the achievement of a specific objective is emphasised. Anderson then goes on and indicates that all the definitions include one or more elements of goal, goal attainment, group or organisation, structure and interpersonal relationship.

Looking at the above mentioned definitions, the researcher can therefore define leadership as the process of encouraging others to take action towards a common goal. This subsumes three elements:

Leadership is a relational concept. Leadership exists only in relation to others - namely, followers. If there are no followers, there is no leader. Implicit in this definition is the premise that effective leaders must know how to inspire and relate to their followers.

Leadership is a process. In order to lead the leader must do something/ As Gardner (1989) has observed leadership in more than simply holding a position of authority. Although a formalised position of authority may greatly facilitate the leadership process, simply occupying such a position is not sufficient to make someone a leader.

Leadership requires encouraging others to take action. Leaders induce their followers to act in numerous ways, such as using legitimate authority, modelling (setting an example), goal setting, rewarding and punishing, organisational restructuring, team building, and communicating a vision.

Having looked at the definition of leadership, one can also ask a question: is there a difference between leadership and management. Some authors go to great lengths attempting to indicate and to prove to their readers that leadership is different from management.

## 5. Management versus leadership

Another group of writers and even sometimes the same writers, however, have drastic, and many times quite opposing viewpoints on what is meant by management and what its major functions are.

It was stated earlier that it is not this paper's intention to discuss the variety in the behaviour of people in certain roles, but rather to study the ideal or analytical description of the concepts of leadership. Therefore studies and publications regarding the particular behaviours of persons occupying or persons being regarded by other people to be leaders in some sort of way are not primarily dealt with in this study. But when authors use statements like "Effective

managers are not by default effective leaders, and vice versa" (Smit and Cronje, 1992), it deserves attention.

By choosing the words "effective" in the sentence in which it is used, it points to effectiveness and efficiency, it infers that the occupant of that function or job is doing it well according to some defined principles and certain specific performance standards. Smit and Cronje (1992) refer to the function of leading to be one of management's major functions, but later also come to the conclusion that leadership and management are different: Leadership "is the ability to influence others to cooperate willfully. Management entails, inter alia, leadership, but also encompasses various other elements of management, such as planning, organising and control" (Smit and Cronje, 1992).

Do they attempt thereby to say that (sometimes?) leadership has to do with influencing other people when the occupant of the leadership status does not have "formal power" to do so, while in the management context occupants of managerial jobs will (always?) exercise their "formal" leadership functions? Another question also may be raised: does the abovementioned quote infer that leadership has nothing to do with planning, and/or organising, and/or controlling? Is it true and valid to infer that "excellent leader role models" do not need to plan, to schedule, to programme, to delegate, to communicate and to control?

A large number of authors will duplicate the abovementioned statements in one way or the other. Sometimes an author will define or discuss the functions of one concept (eg. management), and in attempting to contrast it with another concept (eg. leadership) will go on not referring to the other concept, but to explain the behaviours of certain occupiers of the other concept. Nahavandi (2000) typically illustrates this point. Nahavandi starts a part of a book with the heading "Leadership and Management" and the very first line thereafter says "What is the difference between leaders and managers"? Nahavandi then includes a table which presents the major distinctions between leadership and management. This table's heading is "management and leadership", but the sub-headings are "leaders" versus "managers". According to this author, managers (management?) focus on the present, while leaders (leadership?) focus on the future; managers maintain status quo and stability while leaders create change - are these indicated managerial activities indeed what management inter alia entails?

The researcher have never read or heard a definition or explanation of the concept of management that said management is NOT to change the status quo for the better. Are vision and mission statements and the long term and continuous optimilisation of scarce resources not the primary aim and objective of the management concept? When one teach students, is it these viewpoints of Nahavandi and their co-thinkers that one should teach?

An example in the extreme where authors attempt to prove the difference between management and leadership, is Kotter in his book: *A Force for Change: How leadership differs from management*. Kotter (1990) indicates that the most fundamental question in his research project was: "Is leadership really different from management and if so, exactly how" Kotter then describes how nearly 200 senior executives in a very diverse group of twelve different companies either were interviewed or had to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire used in the research immediately contrasts the concepts of management and leadership as if they are two different opposing concepts. In question II the respondents have to indicate how much each of their identified ten colleagues (bosses, subordinates and/or outside acquaintances) contributes to the management of the people and activities around him/her.

In question III the respondent then has to indicate how much each of the identified people contributes to the leadership of the people and activities around him/her. Questions IV and V are, once again, one hundred per cent identical but the only difference is the word

management in question IV and leadership in question V. In question VI the respondent is asked to indicate on a given matrix (where leadership and management represent the two axis) whether the respondent's company has just the right, too few or too many people in the strong or weak quadrants of leadership or management.

The methodology and especially the nature of questions used by Kotter are in themselves suggestive and subjective straight from the beginning and throughout. Many research findings show that the way questions are put (on paper and otherwise) will have a direct influence on the nature and content of an individual's response. Couger (1995) refers to the work done by Duncker on "functional fixedness" - the more one learn how things work, the more one tend to accept those patterns as the only valid ones. If the respondents in Kotter's research were previously exposed to any teachings and readings about the differences between management and leadership (as they surely must have been), they will "automatically" re-emphasise such differences.

But Kotter is not only guilty of suggestive and subjective research methodologies and of mixing management and managers, leadership and leaders in his approach and explanations, this author also attempts to explain the conceptual differences between management and leadership (p.3 and further). Kotter indicates that modern management was created "to help keep a complex organisation on time and on budget. That has been, and still is, its primary function" (p. 4). Although Kotter acknowledges that management also entails setting targets or goals for the future, the central theme he conveys is that (in his view) management is to produce consistency and order, to maintain the status quo. Kotter contrasts leadership with management: "Leadership is very different. It does not produce consistency and order .... It produces movement" (p.4). Throughout his book - quoted by other authors as the proof of the difference between management and leadership (eg. Timmons (1999) and Nahavandi, 2000) - Kotter emphasizes that "... even more fundamentally, leadership and management differ in terms of their primary function ... Leadership by itself never keeps an operation on time and on budget year after year. And management by itself never creates significant useful change" (Kotter, 1990). Surely, such statements do not (almost) deserve time for thought and comment from any serious student of management?

Andersen (2000) discuss this phenomenon and refer to authors Fayol (1923) Gulick (1937), Yukl (1989), Du Brin (1990), Mintzberg (1980) and Cherrington (1989). "If we study leadership in formal organisations .... the claim that it is possible to be a leader without being a manager is wrong. In these kinds of organisations it is impossible to separate leadership from management." Also from this viewpoint it seems evident that leadership is an integrated element and part of management. (However, it would be possible to separate people in two opposing groups: the one group consists of persons who formally occupy managerial positions in an organisation, compared to another group of persons who (formally or informally) occupy leadership positions. Examples of the latter group will be: a formally appointed leader of a cricket team or an informal leader who influences people on a beach to join him/her in playing touch rugby. One may then study the variety of behaviours of these two groups of people. One may also come to a conclusion that (maybe) the behaviour of these "managers" differ from those of the "leaders" - this is in order and there is nothing invalid in doing so. But to infer from such a study that the concept and/or the disciplines and/or the functions of management and leadership differ, will be totally unscientific, invalid and indeed "a lot of nonsense".

The space allowed for this paper is not enough to elaborate on the many authors and their viewpoints that leadership is different from management. The other debates other that management vs leadership is whether leaders are born or not. There is something in a leader's

makeup which makes him/her prefer to lead rather than be led. The following paragraphs examine this problematic issue of what makes leaders different from non-leaders.

## 6. The debate on whether leaders are born or made

Academics are forever debating whether leadership can be learned (developed) or not – are leaders born or made? McCauley, Moxley and Van Velsor, (1998) argue that leadership capacity shares its roots with genetics, but early childhood development and adult experience complete the concept. They are assured by their research and experience that “adults can develop the important capacities that facilitate their leadership effectiveness” (McCauley *et al.*, 1998). Kotter (1990) also speculates whether leadership is inherited or learned. Kotter eventually comes to the conclusion that management skills can be taught and learned, but that consensus has yet to be reached on whether leadership can be learned.

Terry (1993) states that “...leadership can neither be taught nor learned – it is *experienced*”. The anomaly of this statement is that Terry explains that reflection on practice is a well-tested teaching method, and that the contemplation of real-life leadership experiences is actually the teaching of leadership. Krass (1998) does not subscribe to the theory that there are natural, born leaders. However, Krass falls short of explaining how he perceives leadership to be learned. In consequence, Krass attributes the ability to lead and inspire others more to instinct than to premeditation. This author alleges the innate character and personality of the leader to be imperative determinants of the quality of leadership.

Kouzes and Posner (2003) consider the notion that leadership is reserved for only a few as an insidious myth. In their words, “leadership is not a place, it’s not a gene, and it’s not a secret code that can’t be deciphered by ordinary people”. They also denounce the idea that leadership is associated with position – a high position in an organisation does not automatically make one a leader, and a lower position does not necessarily disqualify anyone from becoming a leader.

The myths where leadership is put forward as a set of innate personality characteristics which can’t be learned, stand in the way of focussed efforts to develop leaders. Leadership is an “observable set of skills and abilities”, and the same assumption that underlies *management* as a learnable concept, is similarly applicable to leadership (Kouzes and Posner, 2003). Whether leaders are born or made is a crucial point, because if we believe leadership is a set of traits we are born with or without, then we do not have to take responsibility, we can just blame our ancestors (Hunter, 2004).

Considering that both conceptions – whether leaders are born, not made, or that leadership can be learned – are based on assumptions, and the fact that management is commonly believed to be learnable (even though the teaching of management is also based on the assumption that management can be learned), it seems sound to argue that leaders do possess certain innate characteristics, and that certain qualities and skills that distinguish effective leaders from the rest can be developed or learned.

Methods to develop management skills will differ from those used to develop leadership character. To further look into the possibility of developing leadership character, and to do away with the common mistake of equating leadership with management, the following section will address leadership styles.

## 7. Personality and leadership styles

There are a number of different approaches, or 'styles' to leadership that are based on different assumptions and theories. The style that individuals use will be based on a combination of their beliefs, values and preferences, as well as the organisational culture and

norms which will encourage some styles and discourage others. For the purpose of this paper the following leadership styles will be discussed: transformation, transactional, charismatic, and servant leadership.

Over centuries, the notion that leadership was all about the leader being the absolute ruler, has evolved to the present day's recognition of more and more equality between leaders and followers. The disparity between the power and role of the leader and that of the followers has gradually diminished over time (McCauley, *et al.*, 1998). The first of two approaches to study this phenomenon in the field of leadership studies – as result of the critique against the contingency approach, but in recognition of the importance of situational factors – is called transactional leadership; the second is transformational leadership (Kouzes and Posner, 2003).

### 7.1. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leaders are individuals who have exceptional impact on their organisations, and they inspire followers through their personal vision and energy (Stoner and Freeman, 1989). McCauley, *et al.*, (1998) are of the opinion that transformational leadership embraces the concept of creating in people the inner commitment to social goals, and transforming a person's self-interest into a larger social concern. According to Burns (1979), leadership becomes transforming when "one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality". This is what is meant by the different forms of leader-follower relations to be found in transactional and transformational leadership respectively – the transcending to higher levels of commitment by both leaders and followers (transformational leadership), as opposed to operating and interacting on a level that is adequate for effective performance (transactional leadership).

Transformational leadership is a well-documented phenomenon. It is characterised by the ability to bring about significant change. Transformational leaders have the ability to lead change in the organisation's vision, strategy, and culture as well as promote innovation in products and technology. Burns (1979) conceptualised transformational leadership as reciprocal process in which followers and leaders engage in relationships of mutual uplifting and personal transformation. This relational process between leader and follower shifts with the flow of leader follower relations (Burns, 1979). The essence of transformational leadership is the inspiration and moral uplifting of followers (McCloskey, 2009).

Transformational Leadership starts with the development of a vision (Burns, 1979), a view of the future that will excite and convert potential followers. The vision may be developed by the leader, by the senior team or may emerge from a broad series of discussions. What is important is how the leader sells the vision and making sure that it becomes a shared vision. The next step is to constantly sell the vision. This takes energy and commitment, as some people will try to buy into a radical vision, and others will join much more slowly than others. The transformational leader thus takes every chance and will use whatever works to encourage others to climb on board the bandwagon.

In order to create followers, the transformational leader has to be very careful in creating trust, and their personal integrity is a critical part of the package that they are selling (Bass, 1985). In effect, they are selling themselves as well as the vision. Some transformational leaders know the way, and want followers to follow them (Bass, 1985). Others do not have a tactic, but will lead the exploration of possible routes. The route forwards may not be that easy and it will be full of obstacles, but with a clear vision, the direction will always be known. Thus finding the way forward can be an ongoing process of course correction and the transformational leader will accept that there will be failures and blind canyons along the way (Burns, 1979). Transformational leaders are always visible and will stand up to be



counted rather than hide behind their troops, they will always account when things go wrong. They do not have to tell followers how they should behave but this is seen in leader's attitude and actions.

### **7.2. Transactional Leadership**

According to Bass (1998), "transactional leadership occurs when leaders reward or discipline followers depending on the adequacy of the followers' performances". Both transactional and transformational approaches to leadership emphasise the phenomenon of leader-follower relations, but according to Burns (1979) the interaction between leaders and followers takes a distinct form in each of the approaches. Transactional leadership "occurs when one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things". The exchange can be trades in goods, psychological benefits or political votes. Stoner and Freeman (1989) denote transactional leaders to "determine what subordinates need to do to achieve objectives, classify those requirements, and help subordinates become confident that they can reach their objectives". The transactional approach is thus adequate for acceptable success, but full effectiveness is reached by leaders who use their personal vision and energy to inspire their followers. Du Brin (1995) believes transactional leaders to be "managers who mostly carry on transactions with people, such as taking care of administrative work and offering rewards for good performance".

### **7.3. Charismatic Leader**

The charismatic leader and the transformational leader can have much resemblance, in that the transformational leader may well be charismatic. Their main difference is in their basic focus. Whereas the transformational leader has a basic focus of transforming the organisation and, quite possibly, their followers, the charismatic leaders may not be interested in changing anything.

Charismatic leadership has long been of great interest to researchers studying political leadership, social movements, and religious cults. In recent years, attention has been given to the impact of charismatic leadership in organisations. Charisma is difficult to define. It has been called 'a fire that ignites followers' energy and commitment, producing results above and beyond the call of duty (Klein and House, 1995). Charismatic leaders have the ability to inspire and motivate people to do more than they would normally do, despite obstacles and personal sacrifice. In describing charismatic leaders Klein and House (1995) mentioned that they have an emotional impact on people because they appeal to both the heart and the mind.

In today's environment, there is a growing interest in how charismatic leaders build emotional attachment and commitment among followers. A number of studies have identified unique qualities of charismatic leaders.

The values of the Charismatic Leader are highly significant. If they are well-intentioned towards others, they can elevate and transform an entire organisation. Their self-belief is so high, they can easily believe that they are infallible, and hence lead their followers into an abyss, even when they have received adequate warning from others. The challenge with these types of leaders is that, people become too attached to the leader and they end up serving a leader instead of the organisation. These leaders are seldom criticised by the followers and this is where the organisational performance is going to suffer.

### **7.4 Servant Leadership**

The servant leader serves others unconditionally. Serving others thus comes by helping them to achieve and improve. Servant leadership was first described by Greenleaf. According to Greenleaf, (1977) there are two criteria of servant leadership:

The people served grow as individuals, becoming 'healthier, wiser, more autonomous and more likely themselves to become servants'.

The extent to which the leadership benefits those who are least advantaged in society (or at least does not disadvantage them).

Principles of servant leadership defined by (Greenleaf, 1977) are:

An excellent example of a servant leader is Ernest Shackleton, the early 20th century explorer who, after his ship became frozen in the Antarctic life, brought every one of his 27 crew home alive, including an 800 mile journey in open boats across the winter Antarctic seas (Greenleaf, 1977). It took two years, but Shackleton's sense of responsibility towards his men never wavered.

Greenleaf (1977) says that true leadership "emerges from those whose primary motivation is a deep desire to help others." Servant leadership is a very moral position, putting the well-being of the followers before other goals. Some might dismiss servant leadership as soft and easy, though this is not necessarily the case, as individual followers may be expected to make sacrifices for the good of the whole, in the way of the servant leader. The focus on the less privileged in society shows the servant leader as serving not just their followers but also the whole of society. Different leaders have different trades' models.

## **8. Traits models**

Many early studies of leadership were directed at identifying the personal traits of leaders. Traits models are based on the assumptions that certain physical, social, and personal characteristics are inherent in leaders (Bass, 1990). According to this view, the presence or absence of these characteristics distinguishes leaders from non-leaders. These models will be discussed briefly underneath.

### **8.1 Behavioural Models**

After discovering that leaders don't have a uniform set of personal traits, researchers turned their attention to isolating behaviours that are characteristic of effective leaders. Behavioural models of leadership focus on differences in actions of effective and ineffective leaders (Bass, 1990). In other words, they are based on what effective and ineffective leaders actually do: how they delegate tasks to subordinates, where and when they communicate to others, and how they perform their roles. According to Bass, (1990), these behaviours can be observed and learned. If leadership behaviours can be learned, individuals can be trained to lead more effectively. There are different types of behavioural models.

#### **8.1.1 Theory X and Theory Y**

These are assumptions and beliefs about individuals and how to motivate them often influence a leader's behaviour. These sets of assumptions are called Theory X and Theory Y. Managers who believe that people are motivated mainly by money, are lazy, and have poor work habits will treat them accordingly. Such managers tend to use a directive leadership style (Nahavandi, 2000). They tell people what to do. This is labelled as theory X. In contrast, leaders who believe that their people work hard, cooperate, and have positive attitudes will treat them accordingly. Such leaders use participative leadership style, they act by consulting their subordinates, seeking their opinions, and encourage them to take part in planning and decision making (Nahavandi, 2000). This is labelled as theory Y.

#### **8.1.2 Ohio State University and University of Michigan Model**

Researchers at Ohio State University took another approach to studying leadership styles. They asked employees to describe the behaviours of their supervisors. Based on the

responses, the researchers identified two leadership styles, considerate and initiating structure. A considerate leadership style is characterised by concern for employees' wellbeing, status, and comfort and the initiating-structure leadership style is characterised by active planning, organising, controlling, and coordinating (Nahavandi, 2000).

The above model identifies five leadership styles that combine different proportions of concern for production. The behavioural models have added greatly to the understanding of leadership. The focus has shifted from who leaders are towards what leaders do. However, leadership behaviours that are appropriate in one situation are not necessarily appropriate in another. Other models of leadership were developed and it is the researchers' opinion that it was due to the fact that behavioural model fail to uncover leadership styles that were consistently appropriate to all situation. These models do not address any challenges; they assume that in leadership there are no challenges.

## 8.2 Contingency models

For the purpose of this paper, contingency models will be discussed very briefly. According to these models, situation determines the best style to use. The four contingency models offer different advice about choosing an effective leadership style most influential contingency models of leadership are:

Fielder's contingency model: This model suggests that successful leadership depends on matching a leader's style to a situation's demands. In other words, each leadership style is most effective when it is used in the right situation (Kotter, 1990).

Hersey and Blanchard's situational model: The model suggest that the levels of directive and supportive leader's behaviours be based on the level of readiness of the followers Kotter, (1990). In contrast to Fielder who believes that a leader's style is relatively rigid, Hersey and Blanchard emphasise a leader's flexibility to adapt to changing situation.

House's path-goal model: This model indicates that, effective leaders clearly specify the task, reduce barriers to task achievement, and increase opportunity for task related satisfaction, thereby identifying the paths, or means, by which employees can attain job satisfaction and improve performance (Oosthuizen, 2007).

The leader participation model: This model provides a set of rules to determine the amount and form of participative decision-making that should be encouraged in different situations.

## 9. The leadership challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Leadership is not without challenges. Today's leaders are operating in a changing environment. What is important thereof is how leaders respond to these challenges and manage them. Leaders are facing problems such as cultural barriers, women in leadership, and leadership difference across cultures.

### 9.1 Women in leadership

Women are moving into higher positions in organisations, and they bring different leadership styles to their organisations. Although women also possess assertiveness, initiative, and aggressiveness, they tend to engage in leadership behaviour that can be called "interactive" (Smith, 2007). An interactive leader is concerned with consensus building, is open and inclusive, encourages participation by others, and is more caring than the leadership style of many males (Smith, 2007). An interactive leadership is, however, not confined to women. Anyone can develop these qualities.

It will be inappropriate, not to mention the challenges faced by female leaders. In certain organisations, such as security sectors e.g., the South African National Defence Force (SANDF),

which is male, dominated, it is very difficult for females to take up leadership position. Their male counterparts are very reluctant to take orders from them. This is due to organisational culture of the military and also people's beliefs e.g. as in Xhosa culture a woman is submissive to the man. Therefore for a Xhosa male soldier to take order from female soldier must be very difficult. However the organisation is responsible to help people to go through those cultural barriers. The most important thing thereof is how these females manage this resistance.

In the security sector, leaders are developed throughout the years. It is not like other government departments where senior positions can be advertised and filled in a very short space of time. In any Defence Force, for example, it takes years to develop a General; therefore, one cannot just "fast-track" a female soldier to become a General, Generals are developed, not recruited. Leaders should have certain characteristics that set them apart from others. Good leaders develop through a never-ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience. However, the military leadership is defined as the process of influencing others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction, and motivation. The efficient military leadership traits are efficiency, stability, vitality, action, power, endurance and maturity. Many have argued that females do not have these characteristics of military leadership as they are inferior to men and therefore cannot lead men. The military is only one example, female leaders' faces many challenges in different organisations and this can be researched further.

## 9.2 African Leadership vs Western Leadership

Africans have a different way of leadership approach, such as *Ubuntu* leadership approach. Most writers believe that businesses reject *Ubuntu's* style of leadership. However, a few visionary business leaders are identifying its long-term benefits. Amongst Africa's many rich resources are its culture and values; its *Ubuntu* approach to leadership in every sphere of human activity which underpins its community structure. A fundamental difference between the *Ubuntu* style of leadership and that of Eurocentric corporate culture is where the leadership dynamics are centered.

Leaders in Western corporate environments are often seen as "demi-gods" who will turn things around in a struggling business (Rosa, 2005). They are headhunted for their perceived ability to take the organisations forward. Western leadership styles, which focus on the individual, are obviously contrasted to the African leadership philosophy of 'I am because you are.' *Ubuntu's* point of departure of leadership practice is centered on the leader as a cohesive force within the group.

The *Ubuntu* leader, in consideration of every aspect of being human, defines his or her role as one of a team. The sensitive business leader would focus on the people who make up the team. He or she understands that a leader is merely a facilitator of relationships and processes. *Ubuntu* in organisations entails long-term strategies to build and consolidate relationships. Inherent in the concept of *Ubuntu* is the philosophy that human beings are part of a community, that no-one can function alone. The *Ubuntu* style of organisational leadership focuses on the organisation's community rather than directing its attention on the leader.

Instead of occupying the essential role, the leader facilitates a debate and makes a just decision based on the consensus reached by the members of his or her community. Developing a sense of community and belonging, the *Ubuntu* leader understands the values of respect, dignity and compassion of the people he or she leads. *Ubuntu* leadership strives to create harmonious relationships through mutual understanding and workplace co-operation.

The *Ubuntu* leader's ear is finely tuned to the invaluable input which could be offered by subordinates and they, in turn, respond with trust in the leadership, a sense of security and increased self-esteem. South African businesses using the technical approach of the Western

styles of leadership often shy away from the emotional element found in the *Ubuntu* leadership dynamics.

It is perceived that the process of debate to attempt to reach consensus within a group before a final decision can be made, is time consuming and counter-productive to sensitive money markets. In a Western approach, the value of group experiences is often forgotten as total trust and high expectations are placed in a leader who will be the saviour of a struggling business or take it to new heights. A further threat to the implementation of *Ubuntu* in South African business practices is the centre of control of power. Reaching a decision based on group consensus removes control from the hands of Western leaders, which is in conflict with the power hungry nature of capitalism.

From a capitalist perspective, *Ubuntu* socialist stance is less than attractive. The idea of distributing wealth more widely to more beneficiaries is in direct conflict with capitalist acquisitiveness. Despite this, visionary business leaders in South Africa have identified the long-term benefits of adopting *Ubuntu* leadership practices and have successfully implemented it. Nussbaum (2003) cites several examples of the practice of *Ubuntu* in the African context including the story of a South African company, which used the *Ubuntu* principles of storytelling and participatory meetings to successfully facilitate the process of affirmative action in the company. *Ubuntu* has the potential to develop a symbiotic relationship between business and the communities in which it is embedded. The ripple effect of an *Ubuntu* leadership style creates exciting prospects.

It could be suggested that an *Ubuntu* transformed business community would result in an increased productivity and generated wealth, which would benefit the wider community. In turn, financial strength in the community completes the cycle. In an African society, which has developed a taste for the sense of closeness, building a just, compassionate business community is a time consuming, long-term process. It would require significant adjustment by Western leaders in business to adopt *Ubuntu* principles including relinquishing power and centralised wealth.

Even though the *Ubuntu* leadership approach differs with the Western approach, somewhere they overlap. The researcher is of the opinion that some of the *Ubuntu* approaches to leadership are derived from the Western perspective. Values such as *Ubuntu* should not only be seen as African values but also human values that are important in establishing both and enabling organisational culture and a set of skills and competencies valued in most organisational leadership contexts.

The researcher meant to show exactly why *Ubuntu* might be used to add a distinctly African flavour and momentum to leadership. However, the argument will only be strong if what has been described here as a distinctly African philosophy and way of life, does in fact exist as such. Do Africans in fact adhere to *Ubuntu* or, at least, aspire to do so? And if so, is *Ubuntu* uniquely or exclusively African?

These are controversial issues. For example, until recently, in Africa (where *Ubuntu* is claimed to be part of everyday life), violent ethnic and political clashes occurred frequently - and this is surely not the only example of such clashes on the continent of Africa. There are many examples like Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sudan, corruption in South Africa, rape, and killing of farmers that still take place even today. How can this be reconciled with *Ubuntu*? This thing does not prove that *Ubuntu* is uniquely/exclusively African. Based on these examples one can ask a question, does this principle of *Ubuntu* really originate in Africa? If the answer to this question is yes, then how come Africans do not exercise *Ubuntu*?

The apparent difference posed by the occurrence of such violent conflicts significantly fades once one concentrates on the many counter examples. African examples of caring and sharing and of forgiving and reconciliation abound (though one will probably not read about them in the papers or see them on the news). The relatively non-violent transition of the South African society from a totalitarian state to a multi-party democracy is not merely the result of the compromising negotiations of politicians. It is also - perhaps primarily - the result of the emergence of an ethos of solidarity, a commitment to peaceful co-existence amongst ordinary South Africans in spite of their differences. *Ubuntu*, argues Teffo (1994: 23) rightly, pervasively serves as a cohesive moral value in the face of adversity. Although the policy of apartheid greatly damaged the overwhelming majority of black South Africans.

These observations would probably not make much sense to the bereaved families of murdered white farmers, politicians or to the parents, people who are killed by farmers, abuse of women and children and killing of police officials to mention the few. The researcher does not mean to insult those who suffer the growing pains of a new South African society - victims of pointless violence. The researcher respects their pain and shares their anger and frustration. *Ubuntu* is a given, but clearly also a task. *Ubuntu* is part and parcel of Africa's cultural heritage. But it obviously needs to be revitalised in our hearts and minds (Teffo, 1994 and Koka, 1997). In fact, the researcher has been speaking of *Ubuntu* primarily as an ethical ideal, i.e. something that still needs to be realised, although encouraging examples thereof already exist (Shutte, 1993: 20).

In what sense, if any, is *Ubuntu* then uniquely African? Is *Ubuntu* only part of the African cultural heritage? Just how distinctly African is the flavour and momentum that *Ubuntu* could add to the decolonisation of the other? Is the ethos of *Ubuntu* in fact the one single gift that African philosophy can give on other philosophies of the world?

It would be indeed, ridiculous to suggest that the *Ubuntu* ethic of caring and sharing is uniquely African. After all, the values, which *Ubuntu* seeks to promote, can also be traced in various philosophies. This is not to deny the intensity with which these values are given expression by Africans. But, the mere fact that they are deeply expressed by Africans does not in itself make these values exclusively African.

## 10. Conclusion

Leadership is the most important principle of management. This principle is present in every management principles because it is used as a driver to achieve the objectives of every management principle. One has seen good and bad leadership in the world particularly in Africa. The researcher tried to define leadership from classical to the contemporary and the difference between leadership and management have been discussed. It is concluded that leadership is different from management, but not for the reasons most authors provide. Leadership isn't mystical and mysterious. It has nothing to do with having "charisma" or other exotic personality better than management or a replacement for it. Rather, leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary systems of actions. Each has its own function and characteristic activities. Both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile environment.

It is concluded therefore, that the two concepts i.e. leadership and management cannot be separated. A leader can't lead without (sometimes) managing and a manager can't manage without (sometimes) leading. In real life the transition of leading and managing requires the ability to balance the uneasy fit between leading and managing. Leaders should understand the cultural dynamics that might hinder leadership effectiveness such as *Ubuntu* leadership style.

*Ubuntu* serves as a distinctly African rationale for these ways of relating to others. The concept of *Ubuntu* gives a distinctly African meaning to, and a reason or motivation for, a

decolonising attitude towards the other. As such, it adds a crucial African appeal to the call for the decolonisation of the other - an appeal without which this call might well go unheeded by many Africans.

One other cultural aspect is women in leadership. Women can also be good leaders, however, there are certain positions of leadership that are meant for men and men alone. Women cannot expect to be like men, the two species are not the same and they will never be. They can be taken to the same schools and do same courses, they will still be different. In contrary there are good women in certain leadership positions who are doing better than their male counterparts.

Leadership theories were discussed and these theories should be made relevant to the organisation's need for effective leaders. A selection process should be undertaken to accurately select organisational leaders. This can be done through leadership training. Leadership training should be developed to help leaders or potential leaders identify the nature of the leadership situation appears to have potential in developing more effective leaders.

The debate on whether leaders are born or made was discussed in this paper. It is therefore concluded that leaders are made; they grow up through the ranks - they are mentored until they reach an acceptable standard. Leaders such as Nelson Mandela grew through the structures of the Party and ultimately become popular with the Party and the country.

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