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## The Emergence of Leadership from Management Theory: A Review of Key Concepts

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### **Abstract:**

*Leadership and management can be viewed as being the same or distinct constructs. This paper is an examination of past literature concerning the development of management and authority theory as well as how leadership has emerged from this as a separate construct in the modern era. The paper discusses the traditional views concerning management theory and important theoretical contributions by key scholars such as Max Weber, Mary Parker Follet, Henry Mintzberg and Peter Drucker. The development of leadership as a separate construct was also highlighted through the works of Abraham Zaleznik, being the first scholar to propose the separate of leadership from management. This past research clearly shows a distinction between what constitutes management and what constitutes leadership. Through this paper, researchers can understand the genesis and emergence of leadership from traditional management theory. This provides impetus to researchers to carry out future research in this area, in expanding our understanding of leadership theory towards the development of a unified theory of leadership can that be used in both managerial practice and in the academic field.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, management, authority, power

### **1. Introduction:**

The concept of management and leadership has been discussed in detail throughout management literature. However, to date, no unified consensus has been developed regarding where management ends and where leadership begins. Various authors have provided their own views as to what constitutes management, and that leadership is a distinct phenomenon that occurs outside of management practices within the organization. Some on the other hand have argued that leadership is

merely a subset of management, where a manager is required to perform the role of a leader in certain circumstances. This paper reviews the key concepts of what is considered management and what is considered leadership from the perspective of the organization. The key concepts are summarized in this paper and are aimed at providing a useful level of detail for researchers regarding the emergence of leadership as a separate construct from management.

## **2. Review of Literature:**

Leadership and management are often viewed as a single interrelated phenomenon. To some, management is seen to be synonymous with efficiency, planning and procedural tasks whilst leadership is associated with dynamism, creativity, change and vision (Hughes, et al., 2022). Management is perceived as a skill whilst leadership tends to be behavioral; however this is not always the case. Not all managers are able to be classified as leaders as some managers do not exercise leadership, whilst others in the organization are able to exhibit leadership behavior without being associated with managerial positions (Wajdi, 2017). Scholars have in the past viewed management as being more process driven in nature, where leaders were merely viewed as supervisors within the firm. The “leader” was someone who was empowered with status, authority and resources, who could go through a social exchange to get subordinates to perform their tasks (Riggio, 2017). However, there are distinct differences in leadership and management, where both are vital for executive performance (Liphadzi, et al., 2017). Given that there are these differences, it is important to evaluate the development of management structures and how this evolution has culminated in the emergence of leadership as a separate construct from management practice.

### **2.1. Traditional Views of Leadership and Management:**

Management structures in firms provide individuals with positions of authority that elevate managers to leadership roles. The manager therefore derives legitimacy from these positions within the organization, enabling them to influence followers to perform tasks. The first theory concerning legitimacy was that of Max Weber’s Three Types of Legitimacy Rule. Weber outlined that legitimacy originated from three sources i.e., traditional power, bureaucratic power and charismatic authority (Caillé, 2016). For the first two of these sources, authority is granted through a formalized position or based on tradition, handed down across generations or over a period of time. Bureaucratic or rational power is a form of legalized authority, where commands are issued based on a set of rules (Rigby, 1966). In contrast, traditional power is a much older concept, where authority often rests on older rules, traditional values as well as norms and practices (Johansen, 2017). Lastly, Weber’s charismatic authority alludes to the role of the individual leader, where authority is derived from personality and is focused on the rights accorded to that particular individual (Epley, 2015).

During Weber’s era, management was mainly concerned with the achievement of traditional goals. However, his views on charismatic authority were the first step in alluding to the fact that

through the personality of the leader, power could lie outside of formal management structures i.e., the bureaucracy. The main reason for this is because legitimacy rarely exists in its purest form and all three forms of authority are considered ideal types at best (Rigby, 1966). In reality, the leader has to derive authority from all three areas to obtain legitimacy in the organization. Those in positions of power must serve as a supervisor to some whilst also being a friend, director and innovator – essentially utilizing all of Weber’s typology in order to be obeyed by those under their stewardship (Caillé, 2016).

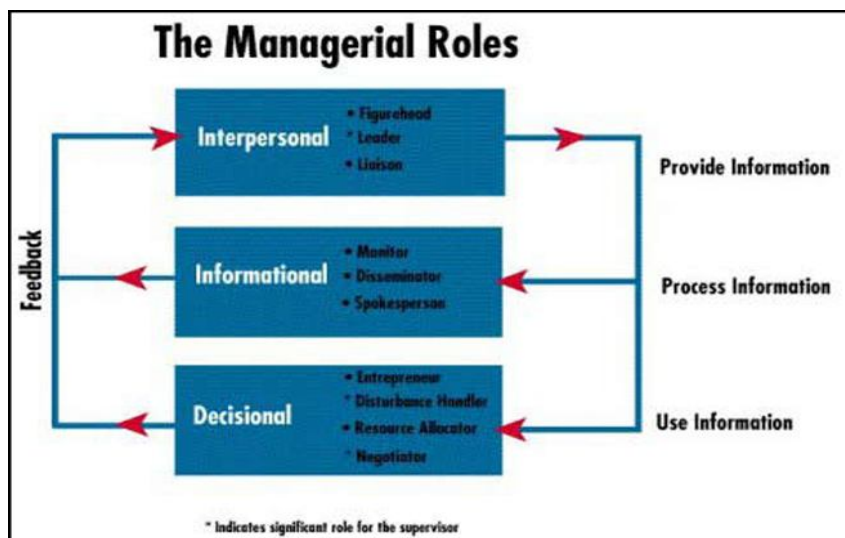
Weber’s work was the genesis of understanding the role of the leader in the managerial process. Despite this, management was still traditionally viewed as a means of productivity improvement, driven by early management experts such as Frederick Taylor (Riggio, 2017). Weber’s development of alternative notions concerning the role of the leader expanded the need to examine the leader-manager construct.

A key development in this area was the work of Mary Parker Follet (1949) and her proposal to consider the idea of manager-worker interactions. Follet’s theories were in contrast to the prevailing understanding of management that was rigidly focused on productivity. Instead, she advocated for a shared power structure among management and subordinates (Gaspar, 2004). The manager-worker interaction involved managers sharing power with followers, obtaining their input into the management process and adopted a shared purpose as a means of motivating employees (Riggio, 2017). This new focus on cooperation and competition resulted in a new belief that organizations could achieve higher effectiveness if individuals achieve greater satisfaction in their own individual lives (Schilling, 2000). In such a scenario, power would be derived through synergy between teams by adopting effective relations (Kennedy, et al., 2007) instead of through rigid productivity tools. This early work by Follet (1949) can be thought of as the genesis of the modern day notion of influence in leadership practice, which is essentially the fundamental principle of many modern day leadership theories such as transformational and transactional leadership.

Despite such a novel approach, Follet’s views were ahead of its time (Gaspar, 2004) and much of management research and theoretical developments continued to focus on productivity instead of the manager-worker interaction. The work of Peter Drucker and Henry Mintzberg in subsequent decades cemented the focus of leadership being a mere subset of a manager’s role for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Mintzberg, the leader was considered to be a team manager and every team needed such a manager to define relationships between management and staff (Zaraket, 2014; Kumar, 2015) This can be seen in Mintzberg’s typical managerial roles as outlined in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Mintzberg’s Managerial Roles



Source: Kumar (2015)

The role of the leader is viewed as being one part of the many roles managers play within the organization. The leader provides leadership to subordinates, motivates them, and directs them as well as manages their performance in the firm (Zaraket, 2014). This was viewed as being part of the manager’s job scope in the organization and a component of the management process, notwithstanding the management and leadership could be viewed as being distinct from one another (Ali, 2013). Empirically, managers in practice have been shown to perform all of Mintzberg’s roles, with leadership being one of the key roles according to previous research (Ramezani, et al., 2011; Rüzgar & Kurt, 2013; Zaraket, 2014; Diskienė, et al., 2018).

Peter Drucker further expanded on the concept of management and concurred with the views espoused by Mintzberg, as Drucker noted that there was no distinction between the leader and the manager. They were in fact one in the same. Drucker’s view was sufficiently broad that the term ‘leadership’ was not even necessary as good managers would effectively become good leaders as well (Riggio, 2017). The manager was viewed as a so-called leader who made decisions to influence the activities of the organization (Popovici, 2012). This effectively meant that whilst leader and manager functions can be researched independently, their roles are in fact one in the same (Azad, et al., 2017).

## 2.2. Emergence of Leadership as a Separate Construct from Management:

Over the years, leadership has become distinguishable from the role of the manager in part because of the amount of research undertaken with regard to this separate construct. Drucker himself, who previously held a contrary view to this, alluded to the emergence of leadership from management in his later writings (Teo-Dixon & Monin, 2007). In the modern era, viewing leadership and management as being interchangeable constructs would be erroneous (Ahmad, 2020). The

emergence of leadership as a separate construct from management was first attributable to Abraham Zaleznik. In 1977, through his publication entitled *Managers and Leaders: Are they Different?*, the Harvard Business School professor brought forward the idea that management and leadership could be separated into two functions. Management was concerned with rationality, where the focus was on problem solving and directing the affairs of the organization (Zaleznik, 1977). In Zaleznik's view, if management and leadership were similar, leadership would merely be a practical effort that requires no form of heroism on the part of the leader. Instead, leaders with certain character traits such as persistence, mental toughness and high intelligence could easily get the job done, when in reality this is not always the case. In describing the manager's approach to work, Zaleznik (1977) stated the following:

*“Managers tend to view work as an enabling process involving some combination of people and ideas interacting to establish strategies and make decisions. They help the process along by calculating the interests in opposition, planning when controversial issues should surface, and reducing tensions. In this enabling process, managers' tactics appear flexible: on one hand, they negotiate and bargain; on the other, they use rewards, punishments, and other forms of coercion.”*

Zaleznik concluded that managers were more concerned with processes whilst leaders worked in the opposite direction. Practically difficult for the roles of management and leadership to be combined into a single individual, as organizations tend to forgo leadership skills to better manage the workplace (Kotterman, 2006). Zaleznik (1977) was also the first to outline the true portrait of a leader and what the leader's role would be with regard to work:

*“Leaders work in the opposite direction. Where managers act to limit choices, leaders develop fresh approaches to long-standing problems and open issues to new options. To be effective, leaders must project their ideas onto images that excite people and only then develop choices that give those images substance.”*

The above makes the case for leadership being distinct from management. Zaleznik's view was that leaders tended to focus on developing new approaches that can change business. Management was more concerned with goal achievement instead of seeking dramatic change in the organization (Yang, 2016). As such, leadership cannot be viewed as being a “person” but rather refers to the influence relationship that exists between the leader and followers (Rosari, 2019). It is at this juncture that leadership begins to be separately distinguishable from the mere practice of management.

### **3. Findings:**

The review of literature outlines the differences that exist between leadership and management. It establishes the need to study leadership as a standalone construct. Without a proper

understanding of leadership styles, the management process could be viewed as being stagnant, lacking direction and may be misaligned with the overall vision of the organization.

Zaleznik's view has gained popularity over the years and scholars have attempted to prove empirically that leadership exists as a separate phenomenon. Whilst these attempts have been considered largely successful in the development of leadership as being separate from management theory, there still remains no unified definition or theory of leadership that can be used practically by management and academicians (Hughes, et al., 2022). What remains clear is that most scholars agree that leadership and management are distinct concepts with significant differences, where both are an important facet of the modern day organization (Bohoris & Vorria, 2008; Lunenburg, 2011; Yang, 2016; Wajdi, 2017; Ahmad, 2020) and are worth investigating separately.

### **Conclusion:**

Leadership and management cannot be thought of as being identical constructs. Literature has shown that whilst early management theory emphasizes that leadership is a subset of managerial practice, it has since emerged a distinct phenomenon especially in the modern era. However, despite years of academic research, there remains no consensus on the definition of leadership and a unified theory of leadership that can be utilized by managers in practice as well as in the academic field. The findings in this paper are aimed at serving as a guide to provide researchers with the understanding of how the study of leadership emerged out of the theory of management and traditional views of authority. It is hoped that such insights into literature would serve as an impetus to continue future research into the field, in working towards a unified theory of leadership that continues to allude researchers even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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