The "Empowering Leadership" of Jesus. Useful Wisdom for HRD Professionals and Practitioners.

William K. Ng'ang'a Fr.
St. John Fisher College

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Abstract
Many organizations yearn for an "empowering leadership" capable of transforming organizations to high performance, quality and productivity, but few achieve this goal. This review investigated Jesus' "empowering leadership" and what made it so transformative that, even after some 2000 years, his organization is more or less the longest and best-run especially in comparison with many other famous organizations that have come and gone. This study will show that personal example, empowerment, servant leadership, and compassion are the main ingredients in an effective and transforming leadership strategy for organizations. This review will shed some light on what inhibits or enables empowerment in organizations and what leaders need to "shake off" in order for them to become truly empowering leaders. Some light has also been shed on the role of HRD Professionals and Practitioners in an attempt to attain empowering leadership in organizations.

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First Supervisor
Seth Silver

Second Supervisor
Tim Franz

Third Supervisor
Leo Hetzler

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The “Empowering Leadership” of Jesus. Useful Wisdom for HRD Professionals and Practitioners
A Final Project Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Human Resource Development of St. John Fisher College in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the degree of Master of Science
GHRD: 590 Applied Research

By
Fr. William K. Ng’ang’a
St. John Fisher College
April 2006
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Many organizations yearn for an "empowering leadership" capable of transforming organizations to high performance, quality and productivity, but few achieve this goal. This review investigated Jesus' "empowering leadership" and what made it so transformative that, even after some 2000 years, his organization is more or less the longest and best-run especially in comparison with many other famous organizations that have come and gone. This study will show that personal example, empowerment, servant leadership, and compassion are the main ingredients in an effective and transforming leadership strategy for organizations.

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We approve this paper of *Fr. William Kamau*

Seth Silver, Ed. D.
Assistant Professor of
Human Resource Development
St. John Fisher College

Tim Franz, Ph. D.
Director,
Graduate School, Human Resource Development
St. John Fisher College

Rev. Leo Hetzler, C. S. B., Ph. D.
Basilian Fathers
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The "Empowering Leadership" of Jesus. Useful Wisdom for HRD Professionals and Practitioners

Chapter One

Introduction

Research Issue Overview

Much research (Spreitzer, 1995; Randolph, 1995) has been done on empowerment since the word itself came into play. Indeed, for over 75 years, many theorists, movements and philanthropists have endeavored to make workplaces more humane and self-renewing. All along, they have encouraged employees to utilize their gifts and talents, to stand up for their rights, and to claim their rightful dues in the area where they spend tireless hours. Among the pioneers of this notion were Taylor, McGregor, Lewin (Weisbord, 1987). Moreover, the Catholic Church in its social teachings has also demonstrated some aspects of empowerment in its insistent zeal to ameliorate the conditions and rightful place of the workers. The Popes of our modern age, beginning with the social encyclical of Pope Leo XIII (Rerum Novarum, 1893) have written continually on this issue.

Empowerment has received intense study by research theorists (Conger & Kanungo 1988; Bennis 1989; Block 1987, and Byham 1987) who popularized the term. They have defined in specific detail what is meant by empowerment. In the last ten years, this study has gone from theory to empirical study. Proponents such as Spreitzer (1997),
Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph (1995) and Silver (2000) have shown that there is a relationship between empowerment and job satisfaction, empowerment and work performance, and empowerment and productivity, quality and competitiveness in organizations.

While empowerment seems to mean different things to different theorists who focus on different types of organizations, there has been some consistency in its basic definition. For instance, Byham (1988) defined empowerment as “a feeling of job ownership and commitment brought about through the ability to make decisions….” (p. 10) Voght & Murrell, (1990) defined it as: “an act of building, developing and increasing power through cooperation and sharing work together” (p. 8); and Block (1987) referred to it as a “state of mind as well as a result of position, polices and practices” (p. 68). One unifying idea that researchers share is that empowerment begins with leadership.

James McGregor Burns (1978) originated a conceptual contrast between Transformative and Transactional leadership. Transactional leadership involves the manager, whose role it is to supervise, influence and help subordinates to understand what they must do to achieve the expected results. The transactions on this level are based mainly on economic rewards (Silver, 1999).

Transformational leadership, however, is not founded on economic benefits. It assumes leaders who “operate out of deeply held value systems such as justice and integrity, and through the expressions of these values, they change followers beliefs’ and
goals” (Silver, 1999, p. 32). This brand of leader is known for its effective way of transforming individuals, groups and societies.

Transactional leadership is not the opposite of Transformational leadership, nor is one good while the other is bad. Silver (1999) notes that “…they represent different sets of leader philosophies and behaviors and most importantly, different approaches to influencing followers” (p. 33). However, as Bass (1990) points out, “experience has shown that transactional leadership tends to limit employee effort and satisfaction, while transformational leadership stimulates workers’ intelligence” (p. 19). Kark (2003) further states that transformational leadership “substantially influences employees’ motivation and performance” (p. 246).

In truth, effective leadership requires both types of leadership behavior in light of the organizational complexities like planning, budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling and problem solving (Kotter, 1990). As Follet (1949) rightly notes of leadership, “…of the greatest importance is the ability to grasp a total situation” (p.53). It has always been a real challenge, however, to combine transactional and transformational leadership and use each to balance the other (Kotter, 1990).

Problem Statement

“As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men’” (Mt. 4:19). “The best
leaders try to train their followers themselves to become Leaders” (Follet, M. 1868-1933).

It is commonly thought that Jesus demonstrated empowering leadership, and the very longevity of the Catholic Church suggests that the founder clearly did things right in his practice of leadership. Hence, a study that scrutinizes the leadership philosophy of Jesus, whose success seems to be heavily influenced by his readiness to serve and empower his followers, promises to be a fruitful one.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this literature review is to examine Jesus’ leadership philosophy and what made it so influential that, even after 2000 years, his organization is more or less the most stable and the best-run, especially when contrasted many famous organizations and regimes that have come and gone. This paper is thus neither a theological treatise nor a spiritual investigation. Rather, this study will show that personal example, empowerment, servant leadership and compassion are the main ingredients of an effective, transforming leadership strategy for organizations. It is a study intended to investigate the underlying leadership philosophy that has seen the Church, the oldest and the largest organization, stay for some 2000 years more or less focused successfully on the precepts and example of its founder, Jesus.
Significance of the study

This research will help human resource development professionals and practitioners to understand and appreciate better some distinctive ingredients of empowering leadership, namely, personal example, compassion and servant leadership -- traits that are not often featured in the popular leadership literature. This paper may also help Church leaders to re-examine their leadership styles and ask themselves whether they still follow the model of their master and founder, Jesus.

Research Questions

The topic will explore three fundamental research questions:

➢ Q1: What is “empowering leadership” based on the recent literature?

➢ Q2: How was Jesus’ leadership the same and yet different from this “modern” ideal?

➢ Q3: How could Jesus’ leadership model fit in my present workplace in the Catholic Diocese of Murang’a?

Methodology

This research is exclusively a literature review. Books and articles from scholarly journals, magazines, and websites are the main sources of data from 1970 to 2004. This period is significant because it has been recognized as the great era of technology and global change, during which many organizations and governments made significant leaps, adapted to change, survived, succeeded or even vanished. These changes have
affected the whole global mentality on leadership and kept individuals and organizations on their toes in search for a more appropriate and fitting model of leadership.

*Organization of the Paper*

This paper is organized into three chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction and a synthesis of the whole paper. The second chapter, divided into three sections, endeavors to present the conception development of empowerment, its definition and its limits. Section two discusses transformational leadership, conceptual development, and the definition of leadership. Section three discusses Jesus and empowerment, and Jesus and transformational leadership, and then reaches some conclusions. The last chapter shows the relevance and implication for HRD Professionals and how it can be applied in Murang’a diocese, my current workplace.

*Definition of Terms*

*Empowerment*

*Psychological Empowerment*

Psychological empowerment is defined as an interaction of four different cognitions; namely, *meaning*, which takes place when people feel that their work is important; *impact*, which occurs when people believe that they can have an influence on their work; *competence* which happens when people feel they are good at their work; and *self-determination* when people feel they can make a difference in an organization (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, De Janasz & Quinn, 1999; Seibert, Silver & Randolph, 2004).
Organizational Empowerment

For Managerial and Organizational Empowerment to happen, scholars (Randolph, 1995, Blanchard et. al, 1996; Silver, 2000) have discussed three necessary strategies; namely, information sharing, setting boundaries, and self-managing teams.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a broadly defined concept about constructing a new cultural context that empowers people in groups and teams throughout an organization. It is not just about quality and higher levels of production, but changing followers and the organization for the better. Its aim is not just motivating but also instilling self-motivation (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003). According to research, the main characteristics of transformational leaders are Vision, self-confidence and empowerment.
Chapter Two

Section One

Empowerment: Overview

Empowerment: Conceptual Development

The notion of empowerment is built upon a well-grounded body of research (Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Randolph 1995; Spreitzer, 1999; Silver 1999). At the outset, the word “empowerment” can be traced back to the Civil Rights Movement where leaders talked about empowering their members who had long been denied any meaningful say over their lives (Silver, 1999). Later, the notion filtered into business literature as a way of helping people claim increased control over their daily work (Bennis, 1989; Block, 1987; Byham, 1987). The argument was that if leaders shared responsibility, employees would rise to the occasion, work harder, and consequently increase productivity (Byham, 1988).

As the notion of empowerment evolved, its features became more diversified. Earlier works (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Bennis, 1989; Block, 1987; Byham, 1988) stressed the manager’s role as that of empowering their followers by delegating decision making authority. Kanter (1977), for example, defined empowerment as giving power to “more people through generating more autonomy, more participation in decisions, and more access to resources increasing the total capacity for effective action…” (p. 166). Other literature on empowerment underscored the importance of organizational structures, policies and practices (Blau & Alba, 1982; Mainiero, 1986; Conger &
Kanungo, 1988; Randolph, 1995; Spreitzer, 1996). As the notion evolved still further, some research also emphasized the aspect of psychological cognition (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Seibert, Silver, & Randolph, 2004).

Needless to note, there are many contributors to the conceptual development of empowerment. The idea arguably goes as far back as the Founding Fathers of Organization Development. In the early 1900s, Fredrick Taylor talked of developing workers to their greatest efficiency and prosperity. Kurt Lewin fought for democratic values that gave birth to participative management. In 1960s Douglas McGregor championed empowering those who were at the heart of production and yet were regarded as mere tools by their employers. And later Eric Trist and Fred Emery argued for “elbow room” for decision making, feedback and learning, and mutual support as well as respect and ample room for workers’ growth (Weisbord, 1987).

Other notable contributors to the notion of empowerment include motivation theorists (Maslow, 1943; McClelland, 1976); self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977); employee participation (Lawler, 1986); and self-determination (Deci, 1975). In addition are the leadership theorists (Follet, 1933; Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Block, 1987; Kantor, 1988; Kouzes & Posner, 1993; Bass, 1985).

From a different perspective and context, it is also to be posited that the Popes of our modern age have contributed to the topic of empowerment. For example, Pope Leo X111 (1893) reflected on the inviolable rights of workers; Pope Pius X1 (1931)
addressed the equitable distribution of the fruits of production; and Pope John Paul II (1981) stressed the socialization of work (on the basis of one’s work, each person is fully entitled to consider himself a part owner of the great workbench at which he is working with everybody else).

**Empowerment: Definitions**

Given its multi-faceted development, empowerment cannot easily be given an all encompassing definition. According to Webster’s Dictionary, empowerment is defined as “to authorize, commission or license”. Early literature defines empowerment from a viewpoint of the manager’s role in empowering employees (Block, 1987; Bennis, 1989). In the managerial field, empowerment is defined as “a feeling of job ownership and commitment brought about through the ability to make decisions...” (Byham, 1992, p. 10). Vogt and Murell, (1990) defined it as “an act of building, developing and increasing power through cooperation, sharing work together” (p. 8); and Block (1987) referred to it as “a state of mind as well as a result of position, polices and practices” (p. 68).

The varied definitions of Empowerment seem to depend on the perception of the definers, and thus definitions differ as the context and perspective differ. Even people in the same organization and at the same organizational level can perceive empowerment differently. Some see empowerment as a top-down approach while others see it as a bottom-up approach (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997).
Indeed, the current use of the term “empowerment” has acquired a far broader meaning than merely “to delegate.” In today’s terms, empowerment commences by asking employees to assume responsibility and to identify and solve problems that get in the way (Ettore, 1998). As Blanchard, Carlos & Randolph (1999) state, “the real essence of empowerment comes from releasing the knowledge, experience, and motivational power that is already in people but it is being severely underutilized” (p. 6). The job of the leader therefore is to coach or mentor, thereby helping the workers release the power that already exists within themselves (Randolph, 2000).

A great deal of conceptual literature on empowerment has been written (Block, 1987; Byham, 1988; Bennis, 1989). The research that has been done to validate this vast conceptual literature on empowerment has been primarily quantitative (Keefe, 2003) with results achieved through surveys and quantitative analysis (Spreitzer, 1995, 1996; Kirkman and Rosen 1999; Silver, 1999). The following sections will discus the concepts and quantitative analysis of both psychological and organizational empowerment.

Psychological Empowerment

Thomas and Velthouse (1990), expanding on Conger and Kanungo’s (1988a) definition of empowerment as self-efficacy, defined psychological empowerment as “intrinsic motivation manifested in four cognitions reflecting an individual’s orientation to his or her work role” (Spreitzer, De Janasz & Quinn, 1997, p. 512). The four cognitions comprising psychological empowerment are, first, meaning, which takes place when people feel that their work is important. This is the value of a work goal, judged in
relation to an individual's own ideals and standards or the fit of the work to the beliefs and values of the individual. The second cognition, competence or self-efficacy, happens when people feel they are good at the work they do. This is the individual's strength of belief in his/her capability to perform work-related activities with skill or work-related self-efficacy. Self-determination, the third cognition, takes place when people are free to choose how to do their work; that is, the extent to which an individual has a choice in initiating and regulating outcomes or the extent of work related autonomy and even making decisions about work, methods, pace and effort. Finally, the fourth cognition is impact, which occurs when people believe that they can have an influence on their work. This is the degree to which the person can influence strategic, administrative, or operative outcomes at work (Ashworth, 1989).

To validate and develop Thomas and Velthouse's (1990) four cognitions, Spreitzer (1995) developed a multi-dimensional construct of psychological development by surveying a group of mid-level managers. One of the outcomes of her research was the discovery that there is a strong relationship between empowerment and innovative behavior as well as between empowerment and managerial effectiveness. Other research (Spreitzer, Kizilos & Mason, 1997) shows that the four cognitions relate to organizational effectiveness, satisfaction, and lack of strain.

Further research (Spreitzer, 1996) has demonstrated that there are work design characteristics that can enhance people's psychological state of empowerment. For instance, the boundaries of decision authority must be clear so that individuals can feel
confident. Again, decentralized control helps subordinates feel able to make decisions under their domains of responsibility, promoting self-determination. Sociopolitical support and a participative work climate also facilitate cognitions of empowerment.

In order to integrate these work design characteristics, research (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997) has suggested four key “levers”: a clear vision that will challenge the employees stretching their capacity to improve themselves and the organization; openness and teamwork that will help employees feel they are a part of a corporate culture that emphasizes the value of the organization’s human assets; discipline and control that make the employee aware of boundaries of their decision making discretion, thus reducing the disabling uncertainty and ambiguity that so often accompany empowerment efforts; and support and a sense of security to help employees believe that the company will support them as they learn and grow. Spreitzer’s research (1995; 1996), however, has the limitation of utilizing only mid-level managers rather than the followers. Again, in her research nothing could be observed. As Keefe (2003) notes, the results seem to be based strictly on psychological perceptions of the managers as obtained through self-report surveys.

It is worthwhile to note that psychological empowerment is based on perception. “It is not something that management does to employees, but rather a mind-set that employees have about their role in the organization” (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997, p. 40). This explains why different people will perceive their state of empowerment differently.
Organizational Empowerment

For Managerial and Organizational Empowerment to happen, companies must change the way they are conducting business, argues Randolph (1995; 2000). Instead of making piecemeal and superficial changes, they must embark on an ongoing process comprising differentiated values, attitudes and behaviors different from those that guided the organizations in the past (Randolph, 1995). Randolph has identified three strategies for leading an organization to empowerment. These are: information sharing with all the employees, setting boundaries to create autonomy, and development of self-managing teams to replace hierarchy (Randolph, 1995; Blanchard et. al, 1996; Silver, 2001).

Information sharing: As a key strategy for empowering workers, information sharing has a triple raison d'être. First, by sharing information, workers will feel more like partners and less like employees. When workers feel like partners, they will volunteer ideas and do everything else possible to help expand the business. Secondly, information sharing will help followers feel trusted. “Employees will take risks only in a culture of trust”, states Randolph (1995, p. 21). In companies where employees are not trusted, people will use much energy trying to protect themselves instead of directing their energies to better the business. Thirdly, in order for employees to make informed decisions, they need detailed information. Without adequate information, workers have no basis on which to make judgments.

Conversely, “people with information are almost compelled to take the risk of making business decisions to the best of their abilities” (Blanchard, et. al. 2001, p.48).
Again, "people without information cannot act responsibly. People with information are compelled to act responsibly" (Blanchard, et al. 1996, p. 34). Information is the currency for responsibility and trust in the land of empowerment. For managerial and organizational empowerment to occur, therefore, sharing with employees all types of information -- financial, plans, competitive data, results, goals, customer feedback, trends and direction-- is crucial. It communicates trust and says 'we're all in this together' (Silver, 2001). For example, people who have information about current performance levels will set challenging achievable goals, and when they achieve them, they will reset the goals at a higher level.

Blanchard et al. (2001) discusses issues that would hinder a meaningful flow of information sharing. If people fear the consequences of making bad decisions (even in good faith, for instance), they will not be willing to make them; hence, no empowerment occurs. The employees must count on the understanding of leadership even when decisions would not measure the expectations of the organizations. Making a mistake in an empowered organization should be viewed positively and as an opportunity for learning based on trying new ideas and not as an opportunity for punishing failure (Blanchard, et al. 2001). If something went wrong, the question should not be 'who did it, but rather what went wrong and how do we fix it. According to Randolph (1995), this is the only sure way to "know that people are using information to empower others to take risks, to learn and to grow" (p. 21). Again, while sharing information in the journey to empowerment, employees will need a leadership style that has high direction. If none is
provided, they should feel safe enough to ask in order to start moving down the road to empowerment (Blanchard, et al. 2001).

It must be understood, however, that information sharing alone will not bring empowerment to people and organizations. Though a first critical step in the process, once information begins to flow and trust begins to grow, it would be an opportune time to set clear boundaries.

*Setting clear boundaries.* This is the second strategy toward empowerment. Setting clear boundaries in a culture of empowerment essentially means being clear about the policies and processes people need to follow, the limits of individual and group authority, and the priority of respective goals. This might sound incongruous but it is through initial boundaries that employees become autonomous (Randolph, 1995). As people begin to receive important company information, the most immediate need is to begin clarifying boundaries.

"In order to avoid chaos...in the newly empowered organization, people need guidelines for direction" (Blanchard, et al. 2001, p. 87). Since the goal of empowerment is to minimize structure and chaos for harmonious operation, initially employees will need boundaries to help provide precision on responsibilities and goals (Blanchard et al. 1996). If these are well understood, people can actually become more self-directing and less reliant on management.
To help provide structures that will facilitate empowerment, Randolph (1995) offers four suggestions. First, he encourages organizations to espouse a vision statement. This will function as a collaborative effort of the entire organization, allowing members to see where they all fit in. Second, he recommends the setting of goals. This will help establish a collaborative partnership between informed employees and the manager, and eventually among peers in teams. Goals should not be seen as ends but as milestones of progress. Third, rules for decision-making must be put in place. This will remove the wrong impression that employees get to make all decisions. “Letting people do what they want, whenever they want, isn’t empowerment, it is anarchy” (Keefe, 2003, p. 24).

Initially, managers will continue making strategic decisions, leaving employees only operational decisions. Again, because employees may back off from making operational decisions for fear of being held responsible for the outcomes, clear rules of the game should be put in place so that the decisions they can make and the consequences thereof are clearly known. Interchangeably over time, they will gradually start making strategic decisions for business (Randolph, 1995). “We have to learn to crawl in an empowered culture before we can walk, and certainly before we can run” (Blanchard et al. 2001, p.98).

Randolph’s fourth suggestion is found in the performance appraisal process. The issue at hand here is not the typical appraisal where the manager rates the employee; that is more a disempowering event. A meaningful appraisal process, argues Randolph (1995), should be reorganized into a performance management process that is focused
towards collaboration and continuous improvement. An effective performance appraisal process assumes ongoing coaching, and involvement of both employees and managers. Performance management will then be the responsibility of all, which is the core connotation of empowerment.

_Self-managed teams._ To truly set the journey of empowerment rolling, a third strategy is needed: the development of self-managed or self-directed teams (Blanchard et al. 2001). The role of the self-managed team is to reduce dependence on hierarchy (Randolph, 1995). According to Randolph (1995), empowered self-managed teams are different from participative teams or quality circles, in that empowered teams are directly involved in decision making and implementation. Self-directed teams make decisions, implement them, and are held accountable -- they are not there only to recommend ideas (Randolph, 1995).

Where possible, argues Silver (2001), teams should be delegated whole projects and tasks, including some of the manager’s work. Also, they should be made responsible for defining goals, key processes, resources, and measures of success, provided they are clear on their boundaries. What self-managing teams need most is enough support from the management. Leaders or managers should be there to provide information, facilitate decision-making, partner with employees, and share responsibility (Randolph et al. 1999). As Silver (2001) puts it, the manager’s role should not be to control but to coach. He does this by helping followers to understand the ‘big picture’ and show how what they do (small pictures) fits into it. In addition, a manager should allow people to exercise
their ‘decision muscles’ because the more people exercise their capacity to make decisions, the more competent, confident, and empowered they will become, argues Silver.

As Silver (2001) notes, it is Goethe, the 18th century German thinker, who sums up the essence of empowerment when he stated: ‘Treat a man as he is, and he will remain as he is. Treat him as he can and should be, and he will become as he can and should be’ (p. 88).

Empowerment: Limits

As Randolph (1995) rightly puts it, “at its most practical level, empowerment is recognizing and releasing into the organization the power that people already have in their wealth of useful knowledge and internal motivation” (p. 19). Intellectually, this might not be difficult to conceptualize. The real challenge, however, is to understand the complexities inherent in the process as one travels the difficult journey to empowerment. One such complexity is to understand that empowerment has to be a gradual process with boundaries and limits.

For instance, a responsible parent cannot empower his or her young teenager to go out for a game on a Saturday with whomever and come back whenever and whatever time he or she wishes. It is to some extent the responsibility of the parent to see that his or her teenager is going out with the right people to the right places and that a time limit is set when the teenager has to be back at home. As the teenager grows, he or she must
gradually be introduced into a responsible young adulthood. He or she must be helped to integrate other equally important responsibilities into his social life; for instance homework, and respect of other people’s freedoms.

Empowerment is to delegate the appropriate level of responsibility and authority to a follower based on his or her competencies and capabilities (Bass, 1988). This is what the important step of setting boundaries on the journey to empowerment is all about -- being clear who has the right to change things. Boundaries are meant to help clarify roles and goals (Blanchard, et al., 1996). “Letting people do whatever they want, whenever they want isn’t empowerment, it is anarchy” (Keefe, 2003). It is necessary, therefore, that one possesses the appropriate power that should be released for an appropriate task. As Argyris (1988) points out, “a sense of empowerment is not innate. It is something that must be learned, developed, and honed” (p. 103).

As the Bible (Ecclesiastes, 3: 1-9) says, “For everything there is a season.” The same is true for empowerment. There is a season to consolidate and nurture power, and there is a season for releasing it into the organization. Employees will need adequate time and opportunities to experience and practice empowerment before releasing it into the organizations. Finally, they must know the limit to which each must exercise their powers because different powers must be exercised differently for an enhanced and harmonious growth of an organization.
As Vogt and Murell (1988) point out, to move along the empowerment path is to commit individuals and organizations to a process of learning. The journey is a challenging one and has a potential for excitement and frustration. Like all journeys, it starts with the first step.

Section Two

Transformational Leadership: Overview

The “great man” theory or the “great man” approach to leadership is what dominated the first five decades of the leadership study. The assumption of this theory was that ‘great leaders are born that way’ (Galton, 1894, Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003). Its focus was on identifying and measuring a “great” leader’s main characteristics and traits in order to understand the secrets of leadership. The trend came to an end after Stogdill’s (1948) elaborative review and synthesis of leadership came to the conclusion that there were no universal themes or definite characteristics that stood out as strong pointers toward leadership (Sashkin, 1995; Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003).

Over the next twenty five years, three key waves of studies are usually associated with the leadership research. In the late 1940’s, the University of Michigan research studies pointed to two kinds of leader behavior as opposite anchors of a single continuum: “employee-centered” behaviors and “production-centered” behaviors (Silver, 1999). “The results of these studies, published in the 1950’s, appeared to show that the employee- centered supervisors got better performance than the task centered bosses”
(Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003, p. 20). Bales (1958) and his associates came up with two similar categories of leader behavior that they termed “social-emotional” and “task-centered” leadership. Likewise, the Ohio State University researchers (1996) also came up with two main categories of leader behavior that they branded “initiating structure”, because they were initiating a more structured way to do the work, and “consideration” because they were considerate of employees. They came to the conclusion that effective managers have high levels of both sets of behaviors. But research attempts to authenticate these findings were not forthcoming.

With the riddle of effective leadership still unresolved, leadership studies then took various courses. Fiedler (1967), combining several “situational” or “contingency” leadership theories, created the “Contingency Model” of leadership (Silver, 1999). In yet another situational approach, Hersey and Blanchard (1969; 1972) focused on the association between the leader’s “task-focused” and “relationship focused” behaviors with the “maturity” level – later revised to “readiness” to do the job – of the subordinate. This theory, which was originally termed “Life Cycle theory of Leadership,” appeared in the late 1970’s, formally known as “Situational Leadership”, and was one of the most widely used leadership models in the 1980s (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003). House’s “Path-Goal” theory of leadership, integrating aspects of expectancy theory, contends that subordinates would find leader behavior motivating to the extent that it increased goal attainment and clarified the paths to these goals (House, 1971; Silver, 1999). While some research findings support and others contradict the claims of situational leadership theories, suffice it to say that conceptually, they have contributed well to the
understanding of leadership. In summary, leadership must be contextually applied to serve both the needs of the organization and those of the subordinates (Rosenbach et al., 1996; Silver, 1999).

*Transformational Leadership: Conceptual Development*

After seventy five years of research without any commonly accepted conceptualization of leadership, James McGregor Burns (1978), a political historian, developed a new leadership paradigm of transactional and transformational (Sashkin & Sashkin 2003; Silver 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006). These two concepts are considered to be the backbone for theoretical research since the 1980s. According to Burns, in the instance of transactional leadership, supervision and management processes hinge around a transaction or exchange between leader and follower. In exchange for a given undertaking or job done, the follower may receive economic indemnity; for instance, pay raises, special bonuses, or non-economic rewards such as approval, respect, or praise from the leader or the organization. The manager must recognize what the followers look forward to achieving in their work, must provide guidance to achieve good results, and also must deliver psychological or material compensation desired by the followers (Rosenbach, et al., 1996). This traditional approach to leadership is what Burns termed transactional leadership (Sashkin, 2003 p. 35).

According to Burns, there is another form of leadership that goes beyond economic remuneration, and even beyond exchanging enticement for accomplishment (Rosenbach, et al., 1996). Burns (1978) had in mind such leaders as Gandhi, Abraham
Lincoln, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King Jr. Such leaders, according to him, look for potential motives in followers, seek to satisfy higher needs, and engage the full person of the follower. The result is a “relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents” (p. 4). According to Howell and Avolio (1993), this cadre of leaders rally followers in a shared vision of the future, inspire them to transcend their own interests for a higher collective purpose or mission, and motivate them to perform at levels well above expectations. Transformational leaders, notes Silver (1999), “operate out of deeply held value systems such as justice and integrity and through the expression of these values, they change followers’ beliefs and goals” (p. 32). This is what Burns refers to as transformational leadership, a leadership that brings a designated change in people, organizations, and even societies. According to him, transactional and transformational leaderships did not represent opposite ends on the same continuum, nor is one ‘bad’ while the other is ‘good’. For Burns, they represented different sets of leader philosophies and behaviors, and more importantly, different approaches to influencing subordinates (Silver, 1999).

After the distinction that was projected by Burns (1978), transformational leadership has continued to acquire varying labels. Bass (1985), who developed a questionnaire assessment to identify and study the underlying dimension of this new leadership paradigm, labeled it transformational. Bennis and Nanus (1985) called it transformative; Conger and Kanungo (1988), charismatic; Kotter and Heskett (1992) inspirational; and Sashkin (1988) visionary. In spite of conceptual differences, all these
authors bring to our attention a new paradigm of leadership whose main emphasis is empowering followers, pro-social use of power, creation and communication of vision, and high levels of leader self-efficacy (Sashkin 1995).

This new paradigm is in contrast to “transactional” leadership that had dominated leadership research preceding 1980 (Bass, 1990). Burke (1986), Bennis (1990), and Kotter (1992) are among several theorists who are of the opinion that transactional leadership traits are more managerial in orientation, while transformational traits are applicable more to leaders.

Bass (1985) is of the opinion that transformational leadership focuses on long term goals, thereupon developing a viable vision and motivating followers in pursuing it. Transformational leaders change and align systems to accommodate their vision, coach followers to perform beyond expectations, and enable followers to assume increased responsibility for their own development. On the other hand, transactional leaders focus on reaching amicable agreements with the followers on what will be compensated in return for agreed upon performance levels. Transactional leaders thus lay their emphasis on mutual exchange where both parties stand to benefit. Bass did not view transformational and transactional leadership as opposite ends of a continuum, but as two different dimensions required for effective leadership (Silver 1999). Certain managerial activities such as acquiring resources and assigning responsibilities are complimentary to transformational behaviors (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Bass & Avolio 1992; Howell & Avolio, 1993).
Convinced that specific characteristics of both transactional and transformational could be measured, Bass (1985) developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. Using a quantitative research approach, he found fault with Burn’s (1978) idea that transactional and transformational leadership were the end points of a continuum. He discovered that they were separate and independent leadership styles. He further found that leaders described as transformational by their followers reflected three main dimensions: Charismatic leadership describes subordinates’ faith in the leader; inspiration and encouragement experienced by the subordinates; and respect held for the leader. Intellectual Stimulation refers to how leaders increase follower’s awareness of problems and influence them to view the problems from alternative perspectives. Transformational leaders have the ability to both conceive and activate goals that lead people out of their petty preoccupations. The third dimension is individualized considerations, which is exemplified by provision of individuated support, encouragement, and development opportunities to followers. Transformational leaders have insight into the needs, values, and hopes of their followers. After decades dedicated to research on leadership, Bass (1990) re-conceptualized the aforementioned categories into four dimensions of transformational leadership, as charisma - later renamed to “idealized influence”, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation (Sashkin & Rosenbach, 1993; Sashkin 1995; Silver 1999).

Bennis & Nanus (1985) described good transactional leaders as effective managers who ‘do things right’. Transactional leaders make sure that the organization
operates smoothly. In contrast, transformational leaders ‘do the right thing’ (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003). Transformational leadership guides organizations from current to future states, creating visions of potential opportunities, instilling employees with commitment to change, and mobilizing new cultures and strategies (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Silver, 1999). Using quantitative information, Bennis and Nanus conducted long interviews with ninety excelling leaders in both private and public sectors and found some common threads connecting these outstanding leaders. They specified five key behavior patterns variously called ‘strategies’, ‘competencies’, or skills. According to them, “by their actions, leaders manage five issues central to the leader-follower relationship (Sashkin & Sashkin 2003, p. 40). The five issues include Management attention which refers to the use of vision to create focus and inspire people’s interest in the leader’s agenda; Management of communication describes the leader’s ability to clearly communicate the desired state of affairs so as to engender enthusiasm and commitment in others; Management of trust which is the ability to generate the trust of others based on predictability, constancy of position or direction, and personal integrity; Management of positive self-regard or management of respect refers to the leader’s deep awareness of his or her strengths and limitations, and the development of confidence and high self-expectations in others. Lastly is the “Wallenda Factor” or management of risk which refers to the leader’s ability to concentrate on the achievement of success, instead of making mistakes or the possibility of failure (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Sashkin, 1995; Silver, 1999).
Addressing the same concern which Bennis & Nanus (1985) did, Kouzes and Posner (1987; 1995) adopted an inductive approach in identifying crucial transformational leadership behaviors. To accomplish this goal, they asked many managers to describe in detail experiences in which they believed they had exhibited “their own best, most positive leadership experiences” (Sashkin, 2003, p. 40). Using a quantitative instrument called the Leadership Practices Inventory, Kouzes & Posner (1993) analyzed the manager’s ‘personal best’ characteristics, thereby developing a model of transformational leadership. According to their research, five fundamental factors constitute transformational leadership. These are: “challenging the process”, which involves a leader’s willingness to search for opportunities to do things better and to take reasonable risks and experiment; “Inspiring a shared vision” referring to the leader’s vision and the capability of rallying follower support and commitment for that vision; “Enabling others to act” and thereby fostering Harambee (teamwork), providing followers with responsibility, authority, and supporting followers in their personal development; Modeling the way, referring to the leader’s personal example and also focusing on “small wins” will serve to build confidence and commitment of followers as they pursue the larger goals. The last factor is “encouraging the heart” by acknowledging followers’ contributions, encouraging persistence, and connecting emotionally with followers.

Using leadership strategies identified by Bennis & Nanus as a primary guide, and other behavior and leadership theories, Sashkin (1995; 1996; 1998; 2003) originated the visionary leadership theory that also embraces the concept of organizational culture. His
contention is that there are three main competency areas for visionary leaders (1996). First, leaders must believe that they can take an action that can make a difference. Sashkin asserts that leaders must have high self-confidence and a strong belief in their ability to control their destiny. Indeed, self-confidence or self-efficacy is a prerequisite to leadership. Secondly, “emotion”, referring to the leader’s need for power and its expression, must be considered. Basing this on the work of psychologist McClelland (1975), Sashkin contends that visionary leaders use their high need for power, not for self-aggrandizement, which is narcissistic, but “pro-socially” in order to share it with the followers. By sharing power, they empower others to take an active role in carrying out the value-based mission of the organization (Sashkin & Rosenbach, 1993). The third competency area is cognition which refers to the leader’s capability to think in complex patterns and plan strategically over long spans. Basing this on the social psychologist Jaques’ landmark work (1986), Sashkin concludes that for any organization to work well, it must have leaders who possess the ability to think in complex ways – “cognitive capability” – in order to deal with complex problems common to their job levels. Such leaders must also be able to construct, which means thinking, and thinking hard (Sashkin & Rosenbach, 1993; Silver 1999).

Sashkin (1996a, 2003) draws a parallel between the three competencies of the transformational leader and Senge’s (1990) ideas of the three new roles -- teacher, steward, architect. Linking the teacher role to the “action” behavior of the leader, Sashkin suggests that the transformational or visionary leader’s role is to teach followers to be confident so that they can -- acting with impact-- get the job done, be successful,
and be leaders themselves (Silver, 1999). The role of the steward is linked to power -- emotion -- behavior of the leader. This is because stewardship evokes a pro-social and empowering use of power (Silver, 1999). “The term steward refers to the concept of power directed toward the service of others, not simply used to satisfy personal desires” (Sashkin & Rosenbach, 2003, p. 134). The architect’s role -- “designer of organizational future” -- relates to the “cognition” behavior and cognitive capability of the leader. Like architects, visionary leaders must have a high level of cognitive capability, the ability to understand complex chains of cause and effect that happen over relatively long spans of time. At the same time they must encourage followers to think and plan over increasingly longer time spans and provide them with the coaching to learn these skills (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003; Silver 1999).

“A distinguishing facet of visionary leadership is the recognition that building organizational culture is a key function of the leader” (Silver, 1999, p. 37). Based on the analytical approach defined by Parsons (1960), Sashkin deems it necessary that “leaders construct cultures that foster effective management of change ... by defining and inculcating in organization members the belief that they can affect, if not control, their environment” (p. 127). In order for organizations to survive, they must have four organizational functions or key sets of activities they must manage: managing change, managing results, managing coordination and managing culture (Parson, 1960; Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003). According to Sashkin (2003), the cultural values defined and reinforced by the leader are instrumental in the successful achievement of these organizational functions. The way leaders carry themselves, what they pay attention to, what they ask
about, what they reward, what they do in crisis, whom they promote, and what they look for in promotional candidates, etc., all serve to build an organizational culture (Schein, 1985; Silver 1999).

Sashkin (1984), building on the work of Bennis (1985), published the first version of the Leader Behavior Questionnaire (LBQ) (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003; Sashkin & Rosenbach, 1993). More recently, after twenty years of research and refinement, LBQ was revised to become “The Leadership Profile.” This incorporates both transactional and transformational leadership dimensions. The TLP, which Sashkin (2003) argues is “a reliable assessment instrument with evidence” (p. 147), measures the personal capabilities, behavior skills, and culture building activities associated with visionary leadership. Like the 360 degree assessment instrument, TLP incorporates data from multiple observers (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003; Silver, 1999). Using the TLP instrument, Sashkin (1993; 1996; Silver 1999) reduced the five behavior categories from the original LBQ and renamed them: clarity, that is, managing attention and focus – coming up with metaphors and analogies that make clear and vivid what might otherwise be abstract ideas; communication, that is, managing communication, active listening, and giving and receiving feedback effectively; consistency, referring to a leader establishing trust by acting consistently and reliably -- walking the talk; caring, which is showing respect and concern for people through everyday actions. Caring also refers to valuing individuals’ special skills and abilities and showing respect for individuals’ differences; and finally, creating opportunities, referring to the willingness to empower others in ways that some people might refer to as dangerous to the leader.
The TLP includes two transactional behavior scales, capable management and reward equity, which were conceptually derived from the work of Bass & Associates and which have been linked to managerial effectiveness. It also has eight scales that measure transformational behaviors and characteristics (Silver, 1999).

These pages have presented research that has resulted in identifying transformational leader behaviors and that has also been responsible for building the conceptual foundation of transformational leadership. The above research has also demonstrated how various theories have evolved over centuries to what we now categorize as transactional and transformational leaderships. Early research might have demonstrated transformational leadership as a particularly powerful source in a military context. More recent research has, however, revealed that transformational leadership is important in every sector and in every setting (Avolio & Yammarino, 2002; Bass & Riggio, 2006). It is also clear from this research that visionary leadership theory is the one that best incorporates both transactional and transformational leadership. A visionary leader must combine transactional with transformational leadership.

Section Three

*Jesus and empowerment*

There are many Biblical accounts that relate to empowerment. Given these accounts, the following selections of Jesus’ teachings to his disciples, as recorded in the
Gospels of Mark (Chapters 1-3) and Mathew (Chapter 28), are perhaps the most powerful and instructive. It is also useful to understand the context in which Jesus’ teaching took place.

On one occasion at the beginning of his Galilean ministry, Jesus happened to pass along the Sea of Galilee. There he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea. Jesus called them to follow him with the promise that he would make them fishers of men. They immediately left their nets and followed him. As he went a little further, he saw James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John who were in their boat mending a net. He called them, too, and they immediately followed him, leaving their father in the boat. Henceforth, the two pairs of brothers became Jesus’ companions. It must have been difficult for them, though, to figure out their role in the life of this man of Nazareth.

After teaching with authority and driving out the unclean spirit from a man in the synagogue, Jesus’ fame spread out into the surrounding region of Galilee. At Simon’s house, he healed Simon’s mother-in-law who was in bed with a fever. Meanwhile, people started bringing to the house all who were sick and possessed with demons so that Jesus could heal them. He cured many and cast out demons. Early the following morning, Jesus went to a deserted place to pray. Simon and his companions hunted for him and when they caught up with him, they told him how everyone in the town was looking for him. In his reply, Jesus for the first time revealed to the brothers his mission: “to proclaim the message throughout all the lands.” From here he went throughout Galilee proclaiming his
message in their synagogues and casting out demons. All those who were healed proclaimed him to all they met, so that Jesus could no longer go into towns openly. But still people came to him from every quarter. Jesus was becoming more and more popular. The crowds were daily becoming bigger and more difficult to manage. Indeed His “business” was expanding daily and this business was doing exceedingly well!

On another day, Jesus departed with his disciples to the sea, and a great multitude followed him. This time they came all the way from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea beyond the Jordan and the region around Tyre and Sidon (Mark, 3:7-8 NRSV). Realizing how vast the crowd was, Jesus requested his disciples to have a boat for him so that He might not be crushed. Jesus realized that he could no longer handle his preaching on his own. From then on, he began the process of recruiting and ‘empowering’ his disciples.

*Jesus’ empowerment process*

*Orientation to empowerment*

The first significant step in the empowering process that Jesus employed with his disciples was an invitation to come and stay with him. Through this, Jesus intended that they learn through observation how he was going about his mission. He intended them to learn the “skills of the trade” by seeing how he himself did things. Jesus was giving them an “orientation course” of what later would be their profession. This kind of learning style must have had a tremendous impact on the disciples, for most of it was more hands-on and not merely theoretical.
Appointment and Internship

After a general orientation, Jesus then called to him those whom he wanted, those whom he thought fit for the mission. He chose those whom he thought had acquired some competencies and appointed them and named them apostles. Hence he created a “team”!

Aware of the fact that one will never be an effective leader until one includes those one leads in what he or she is doing, Jesus created a team (Wilkes, 1998). He also gave the members of his team the tools of trade; for example, the authority to cast out demons (Mark Chapter 3). Further, Jesus called them into a more intimate encounter where he could share with them more information and instruction. From then on, they must have started to feel more like partners and less like followers. The information Jesus shared with them must have helped them feel trusted - that they were all in this mission together (Randolph, 1995; Silver, 2001). For their part, the apostles had an opportunity to ask questions and seek clarifications. In this stage of the empowerment process, Jesus placed his disciples into an “internship” which helped them to learn through success and failure (Sanders, 1994). During this period they realized that there were things they could do as their master had done (Luke, 10: 17-23), and that there were other things they could not do and hence that they needed more expertise and instruction (Mark, 9: 14-29). Coming back from the field, they brought stories of success but also stories about how they sometimes could not quite cope (Laurie, 1995). This helped them to know and appreciate the joys and the difficulties which would later be the hallmarks of their profession. Again, as Jesus shared with them, he helped them realize that there were clear boundaries and limits to their authority in the mission he was giving them. As Blanchard et. al (2001)
would suggest, Jesus gave them guidelines to help provide “precision on responsibilities and goals.”

Sending and giving authority

After orientation and internship, Jesus then entrusted to the apostles the full mission. At this point, Jesus invested in them the authority not only to cast out devils but also to proclaim the good news to the whole world. “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you’” (Mathew, 28: 18-20).

Jesus acquired authority from his Father and shared it with those around him. He delegated the devising of strategies to competent followers, people he had instructed, trained, and with whom he was satisfied that they could manage on their own (Brinner & Pritchard, 1997). First, He gave them the power to cast out devils. When they became experienced, he sent them forth on the more general mission of proclaiming the good news of salvation to the whole world. By giving them authority to act, Jesus was sharing his power; he was empowering his disciples to advance the cause independently (Sofield & Kuhn, 1995).

As Laurie (1995) states, Jesus not only empowered his staffers but also gave them clear instructions on what to do with this authority. He set for them boundaries, not to
curtail them, but to help them become autonomous (Randolph, 1995). He trusted them completely to accomplish the mission. As Wilkes (1998) puts it, Jesus shared a “BHAG – a big, hairy, audacious goal with his disciples. He was not afraid to share a vision that seemed impossible for his disciples to accomplish on their own. Yet Jesus empowered without fear. He was secure! This goes well with “the law of empowerment that says that only secure leaders give power to others” (Maxwell, 1999, p. 137). Leaders who operate out of fear cannot delegate (Laurie, 1995).

Finally, in his empowering process, Jesus showed a lot of love for his mission. He passionately loved his job even when it led him to the cross (Mark, 8: 31-34). Then too, his actions demonstrated to his disciples the seriousness of the mission he was sharing with them. He “walked the talk” in his process of empowerment. It is also clear from his style and process of empowering that Jesus was a leader who was out to train his followers to become leaders themselves. In the following section, we shall endeavor to explore in more details his leadership style.

*Jesus and leadership*

“Leadership is largely about authority – acquiring it, using it, and investing it in others” (Brinner & Pritchard, p. 76).

Of all the Biblical accounts of Jesus’ style of leadership, the Gospel of Mark, chapter 10, is perhaps the most potent and instructive. Again it is helpful to understand the context in which this teaching took place.
On one occasion during his early ministry, Jesus was teaching his disciples about the betrayal and death he was about to undergo. The disciples, however, did not understand the connotation of his words. Instead, they argued among themselves about their advantaged positions over the other disciples and over one another. Each of them claimed to be the greatest leader. Their arguments must have been significant since they are reported in all the Gospels (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

Two disciples, James and John, who were blinded by their enthrallment with power, requested Jesus to install them in the highest leadership positions in God’s kingdom, one to be on Jesus’ left and the other on his right. This request caused friction among the disciples. It made the others furious with James and John. The outcome of this constant squabbling and wrestling for position dearly undermined the harmony of the disciples. From then on, they would be suspicious of each others’ motives. Interestingly, Jesus did not take any offence; neither did he reprimand his disciples for their ambitions of superficial greatness. Rather, he seized this opportunity to teach them the principles of leadership different from those taught by the world. The world defines greatness in terms of power, strength, might, force, possessions, prestige and position (Webster’s Dictionary; Ford, 1991). James and John, who did not know any other definition of power, were thinking along these lines. It was following these incidents that Jesus introduced to his disciples the principles of servant leadership.
Calling them together Jesus said, “You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (NRSV Bible, Mark, 10:42-45). In this leadership paradigm, Jesus used the idiom “servant” interchangeably for greatness, thereby measuring greatness in terms of total commitment to serve fellow human beings (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002; Briner, 1996).

Contrary to the trendy opinion of the day, (and perhaps still in our day in many circles), Jesus taught that a leader’s greatness is measured by an unreserved willingness to serve others. Those who are great must be like the least and the servant of all (Maxwell, 1999). Jesus did not only teach servant leadership, he demonstrated it by engaging in a humble act of washing the feet of his disciples (Chapter 13). The unusual twist of Jesus’ leadership through the feet washing, – an activity performed by relatively low and unskilled servants – has redefined the meaning and function of leadership power to its most pro-social status from “power over” to “power to”; that is, power as an enabling factor to choose to serve others (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). With the new paradigm, Jesus demanded a turnaround of existing standards and practices of leadership that are incompatible with the spirit of humility and service. He himself declared that he came to serve and not to be served and also to give his life as a ransom for many (NRSV Bible, Mat. 20: 28). He passed the greatest test of servant leader by even washing Judas’ feet (Wilkes, 1998). To demonstrate his ultimate servanthood, Jesus laid down his life on
the cross for others. That should be the hallmark of true greatness of a servant leader (Gitau, 2005).

Jesus was also a compassionate leader, another great sign of a servant leader. On one occasion, the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery to Jesus to test him. To their greatest surprise, Jesus did not condemn her as they had expected he would do. Instead, he said to those about to stone her, “let him who is without sin cast the first stone.” One by one they all departed. Then Jesus told the woman to go her way and not to sin again (John, 8:3-10 NRSV). From this narrative, it is clear that there was no question that the charge did happen. So, the offense is not in doubt. Again, the Law of Moses commanded stoning such a woman. So, the punishment was clear, but Jesus went deeper. Instead, Jesus challenged the people to examine themselves and make their own decision. He empowered them to lead themselves – to examine their judgment - and pass the verdict (Manz, 2005). In this passage and in many other passages in the Bible (Mathew, 9: 35-38; 15:32-39; Luke, 19:41ff, NRSV), Jesus demonstrates how a servant leader must be compassionate with others and honest with themselves. By modeling an act of assertive compassion, Jesus demonstrates how a servant leader must take a stand to help others get back on their feet, so that they can correct their mistakes, make amends, or at least keep stumbling along until they get it right. “...effective leadership requires compassion. When flawed human beings begin to lead other flawed human beings, compassion is the only dependable leadership ingredient that flows from real wisdom (Manz, 2005, p. 53).
Based on the Gospel of John (Chapter 13), servant leaders will see the need, seize the opportunity, and serve without expecting anything in return. They will serve people’s interests and in doing so will not always be popular and may not always impress. But because true leaders are motivated by loving concern rather than a desire for personal glory, they are willing to pay the price (Habecker, 1990). Servant leaders must also trust in God and believe that God is working with at least five raw materials to form a person into a unique servant leader. Those five raw materials, which make up the acronym SERVE (Gitau, 2005), are:

- Spiritual gifts
- Experience
- Relational style
- Vocational skills
- Enthusiasm

**Servant leadership**

As we have seen, servant leadership is an old idea but was given a modern rebirth through the influence of Robert Greenleaf (Spears, 1996, 2003). He is credited for bringing the servant leadership theory into modern day usage. Indeed, although the Greenleaf’s servant leadership theory was not framed in a Biblical context, it resembles greatly the teaching of Jesus when he says that “whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant...” (Mark, 10: 42, NRSV). Although the notion of servant leadership originated in the Bible, both Jesus and Greenleaf lay their emphasis on act of service to others.
Greenleaf (1970) published an essay entitled "The Servant as Leader," the first of many works on Servant Leadership. This essay was prompted by Greenleaf’s concern for students’ apathetic societal attitudes. Hence he wrote on the idea of servant leadership and inspired leaders and researchers to start rethinking the whole notion of leadership. Also, among those who triggered Greenleaf’s writing on servant leadership was a college professor who made an observation to him that, America was becoming a nation of large institutions that were not serving society well (Greenleaf, 1970).

Another pivotal point in Greenleaf's life was when he was consulting for Ohio State University. Here he happened to have been in close contact with radical students and began to wonder about the source of their dissatisfaction and anger. During his search to find the source of the students’ unrest, he read the novel by German author, Herman Hesse, entitled Journey to the East. This book is an account of a mythical journey by a group of men on a search to the east. The central figure of the story is the humble servant Leo who accompanies the party. He sustains them through spirit and song, and is a character of extraordinary presence. All goes well until one day Leo disappears. The group then falls into disarray and the journey is aborted. The group cannot continue without the servant Leo.

After years of searching, one of the men in the party finds Leo and is given shelter by a religious order that had sponsored the search. It is there that the man discovers that Leo, whom he had known only as a servant, was in fact the head of the religious order, a
great and noble leader in his own right. According to Greenleaf (1970; 1977), the moral
teaching of the story is that the great leader is first seen as a servant, and that simple fact
is the key to his greatness.

According to Spears (1998), Greenleaf’s writings appeal for a new kind of
leadership paradigm that includes serving others as the top priority. This new model is
none other than servant leadership. Although the words “servant” and “leader” are
usually thought to be opposites, by bringing them together, Greenleaf (1970; 1996) gave
birth to the paradoxical term “servant leadership.” The idiom indicates a servant leader as
a servant first: It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious
choice brings one to aspire to lead. The leader-first and servant-first are two extreme
ideas. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant first to make sure
that other peoples’ highest priority needs are being served. The best test, though difficult
to administer, is the question, ‘Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being
served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to
become servants? And what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they
benefit, or at least not be further deprived? (Greenleaf, 1977; 1996).

To summarize, servant leadership is service to others. Servant leadership takes
place when leaders assume the position of servant in their relationships with their
followers. Servant leadership is action, not position. It is service, not status. Servant
leadership is the ability to know what needs to be done and the ability to influence co-
workers through empowerment and effective communication. A servant leader does not use force or power but rather persuasion and flexibility (Maxwell, 1999; Gitau, 2005). A good example of a flexible servant leader of our age is Pope John XXIII. He did not see himself as an authority but as a pastor and a father. He is a person who cared, one concerned with the well being of others. He was flexible, able to bend without breaking, willing to adjust to the suggestions of others without loosing sight of his own original purpose and identity. This quality of leadership made it possible for him to get most of his projects accepted (Bonnot, 2003).

*Transformational leadership and servant leadership*

Servant leadership has been compared and contrasted to transformational leadership (Gitau, 2005). Transformational leaders think first about the organization and second about the followers. Conversely, servant leaders think first about the followers and second about the organization. This distinction implies, then, that while organizational performance is important, it is nevertheless secondary to the servant leader-follower interaction (Winston, 2003). For example, the leadership quality that the famous U. S Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf displayed on May 28, 1970 to save the life of a wounded soldier could only be described as servanthood. “On that day in May, the only way he could be effective as a leader was to serve the soldier who was in trouble” (Maxwell, 1999, P. 135). Consider also Aaron Feuerstein whose textile company was destroyed by a huge fire in Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1995. He refused to follow the advice of many to close down his mills. Instead, he kept all of his 2,400 employees on the
payroll, risking his entire life savings in the process. He simply put the welfare of others ahead of himself, a true mark of a servant leader (Manz, 2005).

Servant leadership transcends the transformational leadership model at least in two ways: first, recognition of the social responsibilities to serve and in particular those people who are marginalized by a system; and second, dedication to the followers’ needs and interests as opposed to those of their own or of their organization. As taught and lived by Jesus and as has been given a modern rebirth through the influence of Robert Greenleaf, servant leadership offers an effective model. Leading an organization well means serving followers well. Servant leaders are good stewards, putting themselves in the servant role (Block, 1996).

“Super Leadership,” is a new approach to leadership developed by Manz and Sims (1987; 1989) and which also falls in the category of transformational leadership, and has close affinity to servant leadership. According to Manz and Sims, (1989), a super leader is one who leads others to lead themselves. His/her main function is to design and implement a system in the organization that allows and teaches employees to be self-leaders.

The question a super leader asks himself/herself is: what can I do to lead others to lead themselves? Through verbal and non-verbal behaviors, they successfully unleash the self-leadership potential within each follower (Manz & Sims; Sims Jr. & Lorenzi). They stimulate and facilitate self-leadership capability and practice by providing self-managed
teams with autonomy and responsibility – to let them be more in charge of themselves and their work, develop their own solutions to problems, and make their own decisions (Schnake, et. al). Where this is possible, commitment to excellence flows from the powerful leadership potential within, with the reward of the natural enjoyment of the job. (Manz & Sims, 1989).

Super leadership shifts control from supervisors to employees by encouraging employees to assume greater control of their jobs. In essence, super leadership seeks to empower the followers to be more in charge of themselves and their work, develop their own solutions to problems, and make their own decisions. This helps followers to become leaders, too. Super leadership thus shares the same tenets with transformational leadership.

Again, servant leadership transcends super leadership for the same reasons it transcends transformational leadership in general. First, by recognition of the social responsibilities to serve with compassion and in particular those people who are marginalized by a system, and second, dedication to the followers’ needs and interests as opposed to those of their own or of their organization. Still, as taught and lived by Jesus, servant leadership still claims a higher stake as an effective model for leadership. Servant leadership is as servant leader does. It is not a “no-business” or “touchy feely” and there is nothing soft about it. Servant leadership is a leadership in service of others and requires a great deal of courage (Autry, 2001).
Chapter Three

Research Relevance

This chapter will consider the following questions: how is this research applicable to Human Resource Development (HRD) professionals, practitioners and consultants? How is it relevant in my workplace now and in the future?

HRD Professionals, Consultants and Practitioners

It is the responsibility of Human Resource Development Professionals Consultants and Practitioners to ensure that viable knowledge, abilities, skills and the expertise needed in the workplace are in place so that organizations and individuals meet their current and future needs. In order to meet these needs adequately, organizations and industries need to have an empowering leadership, capable of sustaining a motivated and empowered workforce, in light of the current pace of change and high competition in the market place.

Organizations thus will need leaders with the ability to dream big and adapt to new paradigms of leadership. However, dreams and paradigms of today cannot guarantee tomorrow's success. For something great to happen, there must be a great dream. Behind every great achievement is a dreamer of great dreams (Greenleaf, 1977). Albert Einstein once said: "The significant problems we face today cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them" (Kaye, 1997). We must evolve new
paradigms to meet the challenges of a fast changing environment. This is particularly so when “we do not know where we are going, and we are moving there at an ever increasing speed” (Kaye, 1997).

As Victor Hilgo also once said, “There is nothing as powerful as an idea whose time has come.” The time is now ripe for organizations to embrace empowering leadership for improvement of organizations and employees. Empowering employees is much broader than the traditional concepts of delegation, decentralization, or participatory management. The new paradigm of empowerment demands sharing of information which communicates trust and says we are all in this together; setting clear boundaries that increases autonomy; and creating self-managed teams that make decisions, implement them, and are held accountable. (Randolph, 1995; Blanchard, 2001; Silver, 2001). This new empowerment paradigm, however, must be implemented without fear, just as Jesus did it with his disciples (Wilkes, 1998; Maxwell, 1999).

Middle managers and supervisors must shed the fear, suspicion, uncertainty and resistance that grip them when they hear announcement of impending empowerment work systems. They must shed the fear that the change is a threat that leads to loss of power, influence and importance. Managers must also shed the fear that, if operational issues are handled directly by those involved, they will become less involved. Instead, they should take the challenge and develop cross-functional careers as the older career ladders get eroded and dismantled.
Likewise, employees must shed the fear of greater responsibility and accountability. They must also take up the challenge to develop and enhance both their technical skills and social abilities. Just as Jesus shared his power with his disciples without fear, so must the managers and supervisors share their powers with the employees if the new paradigm of empowerment is to take root.

The time is ripe, too, to embrace a new leadership paradigm. Leadership is much broader than power, might, force, prestige and status or position. The new paradigm is transformational leadership, (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Conger and Kanungo, 1988; Kotter and Heskett, 1992; Sashkin, 1988; Bass, 1990) and currently Servant-Leadership (Mark, Chapter 10; Greenleaf, 1970 & Blanchard et. al 2004). This kind of leadership uses power pro-socially and develops followers to become leaders themselves. Transformational leadership – Servant-Leadership, treats man as he can and should be, and then man becomes as he can and should be – a servant leader.

Indeed, to implement the new leadership paradigm is the responsibility of the three constituents of human resource development (HRD) professionals and consultants: Training and Development (T&D), Organizational Development (OD), and Organizational Career Development.

To be able to train leaders effectively, successful HRD professionals and consultants must themselves acquire necessary management competencies and skills (SHRM, 2003). That is, you cannot give what you do not have. They must be equipped
with the skills of servant leadership. Then, they shall be adequately prepared, for instance, to train empowering leaders, servant leaders, and those capable of helping organizations and individuals to attain their goals. Both professionals and consultants must blend their tasks within the whole context of the organization. Their tasks must be seen within the organizational framework. It is to this end and purpose that this research has identified one leadership model best suited for HRD professionals and consultants, namely Servant-Leadership. This is the leadership model this paper advocates to have initiated by Jesus (Mark, Chapter 10), and then given a rebirth in the modern leadership literature through the influence of Robert Greenleaf (1970).

The Servant-Leadership model is comprised of these ten qualities:

- **Service**: valuing service to others and the organization or community over self-interest.
- **Modeling**: leading by personal example as a role model who follows one's conscience that is the moral law that helps an individual to do the right thing.
- **Stewardship**: holding the organization in trust for the greater good of the society.
- **Credibility**: acting with honesty and integrity that create trust and confidence with followers.
- **Flexibility**: making decisions through consultation, collaboration and consensus.
- **Empathy**: remaining sensitive to the needs and interests of the followers.
- **Appreciation of others**: respecting, valuing, motivating and rewarding followers.
- **Communication**: listening and using persuasive language.
- **Empowerment**: sharing responsibility and authority through information sharing, boundaries setting, and creating self-managed teams.
- **Commitment**: remaining available and ready to nurture the personal, professional, and spiritual growth of oneself and followers (Gitau, 2005).

**Murang’a Diocese**

**Background**

The Catholic Diocese of Murang’a (CDM) is one of the medium seize dioceses in Kenya. It contains three political districts: Murang’a, Thika and Kirinyaga. It covers approximately 2,600 square kilometers and it is divided into four deaneries. There are 30 parishes, consisting of over 2,100 Small Christian Communities. It serves an estimated 2.1 million people, of which approximately one-half are Catholics. The CDM is headed by a bishop and has 80 priests, 70 nuns, 40 major seminarians and over 200 extraordinary ministers.

The present research has stressed two fundamental essentials of Servant-Leadership: empowerment and service leadership. These two elements are the foundation...
on which good leadership is built. These two elements must then be conveyed and understood by all the stakeholders of CDM if it is to be identified as one practicing Servant-Leadership. What this entails is a radical shift from the current hierarchical paradigm of leadership to embracing the proposed paradigm of Servant-Leadership. This is the only way the CDM will be able to give its best leadership services to its entire stakeholders.

_Empowerment_

As an organization, the Catholic Diocese of Murang’a, founded back in 1983, ought to have achieved much by now in the field of empowerment. Yet today, the opposite is true. Information sharing from top to bottom, for instance seems like a well guarded secret. While empowerment gurus (Randolph, 1995; Blanchard et al. 2001) highly recommend sharing information as the most primary strategy on the road to empowerment, in Murang’a Diocese this is more of an exception than a rule. The CEO, the Secretariat, and even many of the parishes are often accused of hoarding vital information. Many employees interpret this as a lack of trust. Financial information sharing seems especially taboo. Diocesan strategic plans are only seen by a privileged few, who more often than not, do nothing much with them. This makes people feel more like mere “employees” instead of “partners”. Although some information is shared, I believe the most important information is concealed.

Although boundaries that would encourage empowerment are set, more often than not, they seem only physical or only on paper. For example, heads of departments
unnecessarily interfere with subsidiary departments. This is because often some policies are not clear or are just ignored, and goals are neither set nor respected. Clear boundaries need to be put in place and be respected if we as an organization wish to be on the way to empowerment.

The matter of Self-Managing Teams seems comparatively better off. Various teams in Parishes are given projects to manage with little interference from diocesan headquarters. The diocese even encourages them to be responsible for defining goals, key processes, resources and measures of success. I find this very encouraging. Although many projects will more often fail than succeed due to lack of training in management, the move should be encouraged. If information sharing is improved and commitment to its dissemination shifts from “external commitment” to “internal commitment” (Argyris 1998), only then shall we claim to be on the true road to empowerment.

Also, as a Christian Organization, the CDM must know how to empower like Jesus – to empower without fear. Jesus was not afraid to share a vision that seemed impossible for his disciples to accomplish on their own (Wilkes, 1998). The one good reason for this is because he was a secure leader. To this end and purpose, those who are entrusted with power in the CDM must then share it just as Jesus did roughly 2000 years ago – to share it with the others in trust and without fear. After all, the power that leaders possess has been shared by Jesus the empowering leader. The law of empowerment says that only secure leaders give power to others (Maxwell, 1999) for leaders who operate out of fear do not share power (Laurie, 1995).
Leadership

Contrary to the trendy opinion of the day, the CDM must demonstrate the fact that a leader's greatness is measured by an unreserved willingness to serve others. Those who are in the positions of decision making must be the least and the servants of all (Maxwell, 1999). In order for this to happen, the Diocese must make a shift from the rigid hierarchical model of leadership burdened with bureaucracy. It must shift from a model of leadership with a complicated chain of command and aristocracy to Servant-Leadership. The function of leadership power must shift from "power over" to "power as an enabling factor to choose to serve others." The CDM must be the first to go by Jesus' demand of turning around the existing standards and practices of leadership that are inconsistent with the spirit of humility and service. Jesus declared that he came to serve and not to be served and also to give his life as a ransom for many (Mathew, 20: 28). Since the Church is the body of Christ, it has no option other than to be the first to carry Jesus' wish of Servant-leadership. The leaders of the Church in the CDM must "walk the talk" of Jesus.

Again, the CDM must also practice the compassionate element, which is another great sign of servant leadership. This is well demonstrated by Jesus (John, 8: 3-10) too. A servant leader must be compassionate with others. He must be in a position to take a stand to help others get back on their feet, so that they can correct their mistakes, make amends, or at least keep stumbling along until they get it right (Manz, 2005).
The CDM must also follow the foot path of Jesus as a servant leader. Those in leadership positions must be eager to train their followers themselves to become leaders. They must give their followers the “leadership pill” that will cure the contagious pneumonia of extreme bureaucracy and hierarchical infections that are killing effective leadership in the Church today. Only then will they claim to be true leaders in following their servant leader, Jesus Christ.

_Empowerment, Leadership, and the issue of Control_

In his research during the third quarter of the twentieth century, David MacCelland discovered that, while managers and executives were driven by need for power, this need could be expressed in two different ways: Some used power and influence to attain organizational performance goals by sharing power with the followers. Power for these managers was not a “zero sum game” but a commodity to be distributed across all organizational levels, making every one feel influential. In organizations where power was broadly distributed and not concentrated at the top, results were higher performance and productivity. This is the pro-social use of power because it has a positive benefit for the whole organization (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003).

On the other hand, the same research discovered other type of managers and executives whose need for power was the desire and the joy to dominate others directly. McCelland labeled this power “personalized” power. This kind of power intimidates and instills fear while those who practice it are frequently depressive, often alcoholic, typically divorced, and have few friends if any (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003).
Drawing from the work of McClelland (1975), Sashkin and Sashkin (2003) posit that everyone needs power. However, transformational leaders use their high need for power pro-socially – empowering, benefiting and transforming people and organizations, as opposed to a “narcissistic” self-serving fashion which is authoritarian, overly controlling and negatively focused. While we acknowledge the need for control, the real issue is how this control should be distributed in all levels in order to benefit both the employees and the organization. Where there is great desire for control, and particularly from above, the less the possibility of empowerment, and the less the creativity. Exercising control in form of servant leadership like Jesus might be the most effective way of distributing it in an organization.

**Final Remarks**

This paper has explored “empowering leadership” in recent empirical and popular literature. The notion of empowerment cannot be given an all encompassing definition. It has evolved over years from its simplest meaning – to delegate, a definition of empowerment from the viewpoint of the manager’s role in empowering employees (Block, 1987; Bennis, 1989); to a feeling of job ownership and commitment brought about through the ability to make decisions (Byham, 1992). In today’s terms, empowerment is understood as the assumption of appropriate or proportionate responsibility by the employees to help them identify and solve problems that get in the way. It is the releasing of the knowledge, experience, and motivational power that is already in people, but it is not being utilized (Blanchard et. al, 1999). Power therefore is not given by an outside force. Rather, power is possessed by the followers.
The role of a transformational leader is to coach or mentor followers, to release the power that already exists within themselves. The leaders’ role is then *midwifery* in nature, aiding employees like good midwives to bring forth the utmost power already in their possession. It is actually in this midwifery role a leader is termed *empowering*, hence transformational. It is in this empowering process that the best leaders try to train their followers to become leaders themselves (Follet, 1868-1933; Bass, 1985), while they themselves become transformational leaders.

Because of fear, many who would be transformational leaders have not yet made a most important leap on the path to transformational leadership. The example of Jesus (Mathew, 28: 18-20) and how he empowered his apostles without fear should serve well as a challenge to many who would be transformational leaders to shed fear and truly empower their followers. Again, Jesus’ teaching and example on servant leadership (Mark Chapter 10), and the compassionate leader element (John, 8:3-10) should serve as a model for the most effective and transformative leadership.

With the current rapid pace of change in organizations and the ever increasing demand for better customer service, I recommend Human Resource Development Professionals, Consultants and organizations like CDM give a serious consideration to the Servant-Leadership paradigm as the notion of transformational leadership continues to evolve. At the same time, I recommend further research - more empirical in nature - as the servant leadership paradigm continues to make its presence felt in organizations.
"Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord — and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example that you also should do as I have done to you.

(John, 13: 13-15)

"Good leaders serve followers, just as good followers serve. A relationship of service goes both ways and benefits both. But to truly be of service is even more difficult for the leader than the follower." Tao Te Ching, Chapter 61.

References


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