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## PAUL'S IMPACT ON CONTEMPORARY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: AN IDEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Khandicia Randolph, M.P.A., M.A. Law

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This paper aims to analyze leadership development from a Biblical perspective and compare it to contemporary leadership development and theoretical approaches. Examination of the leadership development of the Apostle Paul is used as the pretext for comparison. The exegetical analysis utilized to explore Pauline texts is ideological texture analysis. Using this method allows the study to focus on the people of the text akin to members of an organization. Unique challenges of organizational infancy and magnified cultural inflection and mitigation prove to be obstacles and impedances to Paul's leadership development. Paul's cultural intelligence and agility remediated these impedances. This article divulges the consideration and integration of collective attributes and antecedents into the total leadership system elevated Paul's leadership and moved more effectively than contemporary leadership development. Additional proficiencies in communication and trust attainment provided aid to the optimal leadership development model. The article also provides an equation for leadership development and several recommendations for future research.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Leadership development is not a new concept to the corporate world or the business of salvation and building the kingdom of God. According to *Matthew 28:19-20 (KJV)*, the global expansion of Christianity and the Gospel through leadership development has been the church's mission since its inception. The execution of the full range of leadership development requires the development of leaders through a total

leadership system inclusive of leaders, followers, situations, time orientation (past, present, future), organization, and context (Sosik & Jung, 2018). There is no more remarkable example of the full spectrum of leadership behaviors and attributes than the Apostle Paul. In the quest to galvanize the Gospel, his success was contingent upon the ability to consider and incorporate everyone while simultaneously considering the characteristics each brought to the organization/church and the purpose of the church (Zhang & Cao, 2018). This paper will examine the disposition of leadership development from the theoretical thesis of Christ as the leader and Paul as the follower and Paul's development as a leader and the resulting contingency of leaders he developed.

Outlined in this article are the components needed for Paul to engage in leadership development and carry out the mission of the church. The elements to implement leadership development during the infancy of organization and the components required for global expansion of the church as Christ developed Paul, transforming him into an exemplary leader (Diaz et al., 2019). The resulting transformation yielded social capital then dispersed to the church and its members. Beginning in the book of Acts and throughout the examination of several New Testament texts written by Paul, this article will identify the necessity of being culturally intellectual, astute, and agile to reflect the values of his leader and create alignment with his followers (Lingenfelter, 2008). The secondary component of this essay is an application of Paul's leadership development tenants to contemporary leadership development theory and practice, highlighting potential areas for improvement based on Paul's work.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for the analysis of Paul's leadership development through the Pauline text is ideological texture. The premise of this method of (exegetical) commentary is people (Robbins, 1996). Location plays a vital role in understanding the ideological texture and quest to globalize the Gospel through varied interactions with different groups and subgroups of people (Robbins, 1996, p. 101). The consideration of the location and customs of the text is analogous to the situation, time, and context examined within the total leadership system as outlined by Sosik and Jung (2018). Ideological texture places into a global context recurring themes essential to discuss, such as the cultural nuances of Jews vs. Gentiles and geographic positions and how such challenges mitigate leadership development. It also examines the responses of Paul's followers as it relates to other human dynamics of ethnic, racial, economic, social, and gender lines that Christianity challenges and addresses in the Pauline text. This analysis interpretation focuses on semantics used secondary to the people and the acquired attributes of the system composition.

### III. ANALYSIS OF TEXT

Ideological Texture is a system of ideas or thought paradigm as it relates to the personal vantage point of Paul's development as a leader and those he encountered and interacted with concerning fulfilling the mission and vision of Christ, his leader, to globalize the ministry of the church and bring salvation to the world. It also examines the cultural responses of various groups to Paul's mission and approaches beyond linguistic translation (Elliott & Boer, 2012). These groups include Jews, Gentiles, and diverse geographic societies. However, it also involves Paul's responses to his followers regarding willingness to follow Christ, their resistance to thought paradigm and practical implementation, and their inability to fully align with Christ's ordinances (Owen, 2007). The most prominent parallel behavior exhibited by Paul's leadership development barred against today's leaders and followers is the redaction of his culture as he develops into a leader and the remediation of culture from the followers' standpoint (Shah, 2010).

The key to understanding the ideological texture and analysis of Paul's depiction and role as an emerging leader in the early first-century church throughout the text of the New Testament lies in grasping what Duvall and Hays (2012) refer to as the historical-cultural aspect of the text; understanding how ideological texture reveals the critical themes of understanding the text from the original author and audience's perspective. Proficient comprehension of the organic archetype yields a greater transference of knowledge and application to contemporary leadership theory. Ideology is a system of ideas and ideals, especially one that forms economic or political theory and policy (ideology, 2019) derive. Recurring ideologies of Paul's text were socioeconomic differences, the cultural and ethnic difference between Jews and Gentiles, and the geographic disparities that existed based on the physical locations of the followers such as Athens, Corinth, Rome, Philippi, Macedonia, and beyond all of which impacted how he developed as a leader (Malul et al., 2011). Conversely, the same antecedents preclude and predict the efficacy of current leaders (Shah, 2010).

Ideology and culture cannot be considered independent of one another, and ideological imaginations of culture can lead to demonization and negative projections of foreign culture (Holliday, 2010). Both elements are interwoven into every leadership system and context. Anderson and Adams (2016) postulate that leadership begins with a conversation. Therefore, leaders are unable to develop followers and help create other leaders without proficiency in communication. As with any organization, the church is a global and diverse entity that requires leaders to possess adequate skills to receive and transfer information to followers and throughout the leadership system. Intercultural communication is necessary for cultural agility (Landers, 2017). In its absence, leaders fail to understand foreign and external cultures and individual and cultural artifacts (Schein, 2017) from individual and groups' perspectives.

Within the Full Range Leadership Development theory (FRLD), as presented by Sosik and Jung, these artifacts are known as antecedents. Paul's proficiency in cultural agility, intercultural communication, and weaving together unknown ideology and culture is evidenced throughout the New Testament. He traveled from Rome to Greece, Macedonia, and Jerusalem, expanding the church and spreading the Gospel. Such agility provides a model example of a leader's ability to engage in the entire cognitive

spectrum of the Full Range Leadership Development theory is contingent on their character's strength (Pickering & Garrod, 2013).

Because Paul was intentionally nomadic with his expansion of the church and in his quest to globalize the Gospel, his ability to flow between cultures seamlessly, understand culture-specific rituals, and perhaps most importantly, transcend the Gospel beyond Jews to be fully inclusive of Gentiles required a great depth of understanding of the three levels of human uniqueness in mental programming (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). This ideology was indisputably the most important of his entrepreneurial quest: teaching and proclaiming God's love, equal and equitable distribution of salvation, and dispensation of grace to all humanity (Marsha, 2018). *Romans 2:11* states, "there is no respect of persons in God," and *Galatians 3:28*, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye all one in Christ." The importance of values, beliefs, purpose, mission and the collective good of others are attributes of transformative leaders (Sosik & Jung, 2018). Such characteristics as love, honesty, and kindness allow for establishing deep and meaningful relationships between leaders and followers, thus allowing leaders to develop the full potential of followers (Maister et al., 2000).

Love, kindness, and honesty also breed humility and empathy, all of which are imperative to leading in all situations and through the entire spectrum of the FRLD (Morris et al., 2005). Thereby sustaining the original assertion there is no better example of leadership development than Paul. He possessed a unique sensibility of discernment between culture and human nature, which was necessary for his expedition. He continually responded to the various churches and followers with a human nature response, not a cultural response. Culture is learned and derives from specific environments; however, human nature is common to humanity (Hofstede et al., 2010). Paul understood the critical necessity of this element of mental programming for himself and its role in fostering the edification and advancement of the church. Failure for followers to understand the integral importance of human nature would continue to allow ideological divisions based on Jews vs. Gentiles, social status, nationality, and gender differences (Ames, 2017).

As a leader, Paul was not solely looking to advance the church's mission but to revolutionize the socio-religious world. A perfect alignment between the leader and organization or confluence of leader, follower, and situation leads to this magnitude of leadership (Thoroughgood et al., 2001). However, leaders must be cautious and prudent of the behaviors displayed as the magnanimous influence can create positive or destructive leadership. Christianity challenged the status quo. This thought concept posed enormous risks for early-day Christians (Maxwell, 2018). Paul's success hinged on forming a trusted relationship with them to allow followers to take the necessary risk (Bellman, 2002). This trust was not initially easily garnered as Paul previously persecuted Christians and admits in *1 Timothy 1:15 (KJV)* he was the chief of sinners.

Because values are cognitive transformations and representations of needs (Hultmann & Gellerman, 2002), they dictate the manifestation of right and wrong. However, through living the values of grace and redemption, he was able to exhibit the Gospel message in real-time and earn the trust of his followers. It is insufficient to pontificate leadership rhetoric from an etymological standpoint. Followers are intransigent to such disingenuous displays and exhortations. As with contemporary

leaders who lose trust, humility is necessary to gain confidence, influence, and garner relationships (Morris et al., 2005).

Due to his proficiency in cultural responses, he was able to adapt to various cultures appropriately, understanding that attempting to eradicate centuries of traditions and ritualistic practice would not occur immediately and would not bring people to salvation. Instead, he integrated culture (Yoon et al., 2017), as evidenced in Galatians chapters two and three, where Paul talks about adherence to the law. He does not discount the significance of the lineage of the people being descendants of Abraham. However, it stipulates that because of Christ, the dominion of the law no longer reigns. He further imputes that Abraham was found righteous by God, not due to the law, but faith and purports, "*the just shall live by faith.*" The cultural agility to integrate the significance of the past with their current prerequisite and value of faith was tantamount to accomplishing and achieving his goal (Fokkema & de Haas, 2015). Understanding the intricate nuances and complexities of a leadership system translates to the ability to consider the elements of culture while considering time and environmental inflections on followers. Prudent the acquisition of this understanding is a leader's ability to have empathy and possess competencies in emotional intelligence (McNaney & Bradbury, 2016). All of which Paul displays throughout the New Testament, creating a template for contemporary leadership development.

The ideology of circumcision, its cultural importance to Jews, and its role in the Jews vs. Gentiles discourse interlaced throughout Paul's writings. Paul first admonishes Timothy to be circumcised in *Acts* chapter 16. However, beginning as early as *Romans* chapter 2, he begins to delve into the depth of the meaning and symbolism of circumcision concerning the law, spreading the Gospel, and expanding the church. The literal and metaphorical discourse of the issue continues throughout his writings and is found in the book of Philippians, Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Galatians. Ideological analysis reveals the Jews' response to any suggestions to disrupt the ritual of circumcision was thought to be disrespectful to culture and heritage (Neutel, 2016). However, further examination of this ideology reveals that Paul's stance on the issue had less to do with the concrete act of circumcision and more to do with the division and perpetuation of inclusion and exclusion of people and their access to God and the church (McClymond, 2016). His thought paradigm was a precursor of the modern-day diversity and inclusion initiatives. Moreover, through his endeavors to include all members of the system and incorporate their attributes and antecedents, emulate the composition of transformational leadership, resulting in increased productivity, performance, and follower well-being (Hannah et al., 2020).

#### IV. APPLICATION

Contemporary leadership development theory purports that leaders seek to grow and develop their followers to maximum potential for followers' benefit and positively impact their organizations and the world (Sosik & Jung, 2018). Successful leadership development at every organizational level is contingent upon accountability, ethics, and trust, especially from a Biblical leadership development lens (Boyer, 2019). The rudimentary foundations of the global church beginning in factional clusters illustrate the necessity of Paul's aforementioned strategy. Moreover, leadership development from

the Biblical lens requires a global context, thus producing global leaders who seek to resolve unsolved problems, ignored social injustices, or business opportunities that have gone unexploited (Cabela & Unruh, 2012). The business of the church is affected by the cot

Paul embodied the definition of leadership development as he sought to resolve answers to problems that had gone unanswered, specifically as it related to cojoining the Jews and Gentiles under one pedagogical body, the dispensation of grace through Jesus. Leaders who head businesses and organizations during mergers and buyouts face the same challenges as Paul. He understood the social, cultural, political, and religious differences and customs that separated people in the initial expansion of this organization (the church) (Cabela & Unruh, 2012). The social, cultural, political, and religious differences seen in the formation of the Christian church are the attributes infused in the total leadership system by members (Aktas et al., 2016). Modern-day leadership development formation and execution must consider every individual and collective attribute within the leadership system and understand its maximum and minimum mitigation rate to integrate into the system aptly.

Leadership development requires an astute cognizance of the remediation of the attributes and their influx and effects on an organization (Elkington et al., 2017). However, instead of allowing the differences and diversity to stifle the growth or derail the mission, he embraced it. He utilized it to his advantage, understanding that leaders value the diversity of thought and persons because it adds values and brings a different perspective to an organization (Swenson et al., 2016). This understanding is evidenced in *Romans 12 (KJV)* and *1 Corinthians 12 (KJV)*, where he speaks of the body, being the church, having many parts, and each portion with a specific function; however, each part remains affixed to one body. Leadership development focuses on the cohesiveness of the organization, not individual ambition.

However, unlike contemporary leaders, Paul did not seek personal or financial gain. Paul, much like Christ, was unconventional in his approach to globalizing the Gospel. He was willing to cross ethnic, economic, and cultural boundaries to fulfill the mission of Christ and globally distribute and exponentiate the redeeming message of salvation. This aspect of leadership is often lost in today's religiosity and the organizational structure of Christianity (Fulop & Raboteau, 1997). The organic and original mission and vision for the existence of the church are lost by people in leadership positions who have become preoccupied with the lesser essential nuances and bureaucratic inertia of running buildings and organizations rather than embodying the mission and living Christ's values, so they are actual values, not espoused values (Hultman & Gellerman, 2002) that draw people to salvation instead of repelling the unsaved due to hypocrisy (Efron et al., 2018). Such displays of leadership generate tenants of destructive leadership, such as narcissism (Narayanan & Murphy, 2017) and the negative aspect of charismatic leadership (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000).

Identical problems exist in every organizational category as the focus tends to human capital and the development of individuals, leader development. Whereas leadership development focuses on social capital and the development of with an intended goal "*promote an organizational culture in which leadership processes and emergence are fostered and supported and in which leadership can emerge from surprising places in unusual circumstances (Elkington et al., 2017 pp. 1039).*" As with

leadership theories that predate servant and transformational leadership, leader development focuses on the leaders, whereas leadership development and approaches such as servant and transformational leadership focus on those being led (followers) for their betterment (Elkington et al., 2017), as Paul evidently showcased.

The same can be said of organizations where leaders no longer create alignment and congruence between the espoused values of the organization and the leader's actual values. The failure to develop and sustain this alignment impedes followers and employees from trusting leaders, establishing meaningful relationships, and aligning themselves with this organization (Sachsenmaier & Guo, 2017). Thus, resulting in several negative outputs for the organization, lower work satisfaction, higher turnover rates, fewer rates of successful followership, and ultimately, the organization's vision, mission, and goals are not accomplished (Magomaeva et al., 2014). Such imagery is contrary to the example Paul depicted on how to lead from a global standpoint. Leadership development must be able to develop meaningful and valuable relationships with followers predicated on trust and values-based behaviors to ensure that even in the leader's absence, followers continue to carry forth the directives and vision of the leader because of the leader's earned trust (Wibowo & Neuneung, 2019). Leadership development requires investing in the global manifestation of an organization's most considerable capital, its people. Also, mindful that an organization's leadership development hinges on its leaders' development.

A global mindset is a component of leadership development that consists of cultural intelligence and international business orientation (Story et al., 2014). Because of the complexity of the construct, the average member of an organization is not vested in developing a global mindset, nor is an organization committed to investing one in them. The global mindset construct has personal, psychological, and role complexity antecedents (Story et al., 2014) and four cross-cultural competencies of unique attributes, cognitive knowledge and skills, motivation, and resources for adapting behavior (Andersen & Bergdolt, 2017). Paul's qualities infused in the organizational culture of the early church are comparable to the consideration leaders must give to attributes brought by each member of the total leadership system. Each person, and their behavioral antecedents, impact and affect the complete leadership system, the development of leaders, and the ability for contextual factors to lead to organizational success (Li, et al., 2012).

Thus, it is reserved for strategic and normative management levels. Paul's leadership depicted he was strategic in his approach to global expansion. Additionally, his leadership was normative. He sought to transform his organizational members' cognitive thinking and behaviors to one where they transcended from operating under the law to operating under grace (Neutel, 2016; Osserman, 2017). Today's leaders must seek to change the cognitive behaviors of followers by displaying cognitively superior behaviors such as love, humility, and trust.

Leadership development is a uniquely complex task for an organization and its members. It requires many various components. If given an equation to illustrate the necessary elements, it might be Leadership Development = Leadership, the ability to influence others to a shared goal (Northouse, 2018) + Cultural Agility, the capacity/competency to perform well in cross-cultural situations (Caligiuri, 2012) + Systemic Integration over time, need for leadership to be systematic and integrative

over time (Suderman & Randolph, 2020; Youssef & Luthans, 2012), + Cultural Remediation and Redaction Understanding combined with intricate cognitive abilities throughout the full spectrum of behaviors and emotions (Neutel, 2016; Osserman, 2017; Pickering & Garrod, 2013). Leadership development requires employing all these factors to be successful. Paul's leadership assuredly compromised all these factors as he led the church to the shared goal of globalizing the Gospel, which has endured over 2000 years. Consequently, contemporary leadership theory must seek to develop every member of the leadership system in tandem with developing the organization while fielding contextual factors.

## V. CONCLUSION

The globalization of an organization or business can be complex. Many challenges will be faced by those in leadership positions from the global context and the domestic sideline. However, Paul was able to globalize his organization in its infancy without the advent of modern technological advances and departments dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Moreover, the expansion occurred as he was transformed and molded into a transformational and servant leader (Caza, Caza, & Posner, 2021). He accomplished it by understanding human nature, understanding and respecting the culture, and aligning himself with the values of his leader, Christ, and the church's mission, vision, and declaration. Anyone seeking to create and develop leaders within an organization or context must illustrate alignment, live the values, and articulate the organization's vision to generate buy-in from followers and form a comprehensive culture derived from didactic interactions and communications (Hung et al., 2010). Paul's proficiency in these areas was tantamount.

The alignment created congruency within an organization, which is the most significant predictor of success and thus allowed him to form trusting relationships with his followers and organizational members, thereby accomplishing the mission and goals of the organization and Christ (Cameron & Quinn, 2011). Participants and benefactors of leadership development recognize the importance of cultural diversity and use it to the advantage of advancing the organization (Hayat, 2014). They are culturally agile, competent, and possess a wealth of global capital, which builds the social capital necessary to impact organizational culture and cultivate leadership development positively. Paul provides an optimal leadership development model. Recommendations for future research include examining how culture influenced the success rate of leadership development in the first century. Additional suggestions are for exploring the impact of Paul's leadership development on the contemporary church and how his use of inclusivity catalyzed rapid organizational expansion. A final recommendation is analyzing the interplay between leader development and leadership development in an organization and its correlation to church leadership.



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## About the Author

Khandicia Randolph is a fourth-year Doctoral Candidate at Regent University's School of Business and Leadership, Doctor of Strategic Leadership Program. A Chicago native, Khandicia holds a B.A. from the University of Missouri, an M.P.A. from Walden University, and an M.A. in Law from Regent University's School of Law. She has presented on the topics of effective communication in member-based organizations and effective communications in leadership development domestically and internationally. Her passion is helping non-profit organizations develop leaders and leadership pipelines and create and maintain well-functioning and thriving organizations. Khandicia is the oldest of eight children and currently has seven nieces and nephews.

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