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**LEADERSHIP TYPOLOGIES FOR SCHOOL MANAGERS: ALIGNING
LEADERSHIP STYLES WITH MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS**

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Abstract

This paper examined various leadership typologies—architect, philosopher, gardener, surgeon, and soldier—and their application to secondary school management, particularly in the context of human and financial resource management. By aligning these leadership styles with key managerial functions—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling—school managers can improve institutional performance and staff development. The architect leader excels in long-term vision and strategic planning, while philosopher leaders foster strong ethical cultures and trust within schools. Gardener leaders focus on nurturing talent and innovation, which is vital in dynamic educational environments, whereas surgeon leaders demonstrate effectiveness in handling crises and making decisive corrective actions. Soldier leaders, known for their discipline and efficiency, thrive in maintaining operational order in structured settings. Drawing on both empirical studies and examples from African educational leadership, the paper highlighted the critical role of context in determining the effectiveness of each leadership type. By aligning leadership approaches with appropriate managerial functions, school managers can enhance their leadership effectiveness, promote academic success, and create a supportive learning environment. The review concludes that adaptive leadership, informed by these typologies, is crucial in navigating the complexities of school administration and driving long-term educational success.

Keywords: Leadership, School management, Leadership typologies, Managerial functions, Educational leadership, Secondary schools

Introduction

Effective leadership is crucial in secondary school management, especially when addressing the core aspects of human and financial resource management. Various leadership typologies offer strategies that can help school managers align their leadership approaches with the fundamental steps of the management process: planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. This essay will explore how different leadership styles—Architect, Philosopher, Gardener, Soldier, and Surgeon—can be applied to these management steps. Empirical evidence and notable examples from African leaders will illustrate the effectiveness of these leadership typologies.

Leadership Types and Managerial Functions

Leadership, as a field of study, recognizes diverse types that reflect different managerial styles, functions, and impacts on leadership effectiveness. Scholars have identified several archetypes of leaders, such as the architect, philosopher, gardener, surgeon, and soldier, each with unique attributes aligning with key managerial functions—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling (Mintzberg, 1973). These archetypes demonstrate how leadership effectiveness is shaped by the leader's approach to management and their alignment with organizational needs (Northouse, 2018).

Architect Leader

The architect leader is defined by their focus on structure, systems, and long-term planning. In the context of school management, the architect leader ensures that the academic institution has a clear vision and structure for academic success. This leadership type aligns primarily with the planning function of management, emphasizing strategy and vision (Kegan & Lahey, 2009). Architect leaders excel in designing organizational frameworks, ensuring a stable foundation for sustainable growth. Nadler and Tushman (1990) highlight that architect leaders are particularly effective in managing transformational change by aligning organizational structures with strategic objectives. For example, leaders in African educational systems, such as Nelson Mandela, who laid the foundation for educational reform in South Africa, exemplify the architect leader's ability to create lasting structures for academic

progress. However, their emphasis on structure can sometimes limit flexibility in dynamic environments, as Galbraith (1994) observes.

Philosopher Leader

Philosopher leaders are introspective and value-driven, prioritizing ethical considerations and organizational culture. In schools, philosopher leaders build strong academic communities by fostering a shared vision and sense of purpose among staff and students. They align with the leading and organizing functions by focusing on motivating employees and fostering shared values (Gardner, 2011). These leaders emphasize trust-building, a key factor in organizational effectiveness. Covey (2006) underscores the importance of trust in leadership effectiveness, especially in settings such as schools, where cooperation among teachers, students, and parents is essential for success. Philosopher leaders contribute to the formation of cohesive academic environments, similar to the impact of Kwame Nkrumah, who emphasized unity and purpose in post-colonial Ghana's educational development. However, their reflective approach may pose challenges in environments requiring immediate decision-making (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

Gardener Leader

Gardener leaders emphasize talent development and organizational growth, which is essential for cultivating educators' potential and promoting a nurturing learning environment. In schools, this leadership type plays a critical role in fostering innovation and teacher development. Gardener leaders align strongly with the leading and organizing functions by fostering talent development and creating environments conducive to professional growth (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). Research by Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002) demonstrates that emotionally intelligent leaders, such as gardener leaders, are effective in promoting creativity and collaboration, which are vital in dynamic school settings. Their focus on growth makes them ideal for contexts like post-colonial Africa, where educational leaders sought to nurture young democracies by investing in the professional development of educators and students. However, their long-term focus may slow decision-making processes in environments requiring immediate results (Tichy & Devanna, 1986).

Surgeon Leader

Surgeon leaders are known for precision and decisiveness, traits that are critical in addressing crises or making difficult decisions in schools. In the school context, a surgeon leader might be responsible for removing underperforming staff or addressing systemic issues that threaten the school's success. They are aligned with the controlling function, excelling in situations where immediate action is necessary to maintain school stability (Finkelstein, 2003). Leaders who exhibit surgeon characteristics thrive in addressing inefficiencies or underperformance quickly. Research by Yukl (2013) shows that leaders with strong decision-making abilities stabilize organizations during periods of uncertainty, such as when schools face financial crises or safety concerns. However, their short-term focus may neglect longer-term strategic goals, as noted by Hamel and Prahalad (1994).

Soldier Leader

Soldier leaders align closely with the organizing and controlling functions, excelling in maintaining order, discipline, and operational efficiency in schools. In secondary school management, soldier leaders may emphasize structured curricula, adherence to schedules, and the enforcement of discipline among staff and students. This leadership style is effective in maintaining order in highly regulated or challenging environments, as seen in many African schools facing limited resources or strict government oversight. Bass and Avolio (1994) argue that transactional leadership models, often associated with soldier leaders, lead to improved efficiency in structured settings. However, the soldier leader's rigid approach can stifle creativity and limit innovation, which may be detrimental to long-term academic success in more progressive schools (Burns, 1978).

Leadership Effectiveness in School Management

The effectiveness of these leadership types in school management depends on the context in which they are applied. For instance, architect leaders may be more effective in schools undergoing reform or restructuring, providing the vision and strategy needed for lasting change (Nadler & Tushman, 1990). Philosopher and gardener leaders, on the other hand, contribute significantly to the development of school culture and long-term academic success by fostering

collaboration, professional growth, and student engagement (Cameron et al., 2011). In contrast, surgeon leaders are ideal for addressing crises or underperformance, while soldier leaders excel in ensuring operational efficiency and discipline (Bass & Avolio, 1994). A leader's ability to align their style with the appropriate managerial functions—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling—enhances their effectiveness in driving school success (Mintzberg, 1973; Northouse, 2018).

Conclusion

Understanding and applying diverse leadership typologies is essential for school managers aiming to improve academic performance, foster professional growth, and create a positive learning environment. Each leadership style—architect, philosopher, gardener, surgeon, and soldier—provides valuable insights into managing the complex processes of secondary school administration. By aligning their leadership approaches with the management functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, school managers can navigate the challenges of human and financial resource management while achieving long-term educational success.

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