CHAPTER 25

Leadership Styles and Leadership Change in Human and Community Service Organizations

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INTRODUCTION

The literature on leadership in political, governmental, public, commercial, industrial, social, and community organizations goes back to the early 1900s, and covers a wide range of areas. Almost every conceivable dimension of the topic has been explored, including various perspectives of the concept of leadership, sources and roots of leadership, leadership traits, functions of leaders, and the impact of environments on leadership roles, as well as task-oriented versus people-oriented leadership, among other issues.

This chapter aims to review some of the literature in the field, with emphasis on various theories and studies on leadership in human service and community service organizations. Specifically, the aims of the chapter are:

1. To present a review of the development of different approaches in research on leadership in organizations, as well as recent theories and studies dealing with a broad spectrum of topics related to leadership in community organizations as well as human service organizations
2. To present our perspective of leadership based on the theoretical review, which will provide the conceptual framework for the description of cases in the chapter
3. To present different types of leadership and patterns of management in welfare organizations, community service organizations, and voluntary nonprofit organizations
4. To analyze processes of adaptation and change in patterns of leadership throughout the organizational life cycle
5. To examine the implications of research on leadership for management of human service organizations, community service organizations, and voluntary nonprofit organizations, as well as for training and development of leaders in those organizations
RESEARCH ON LEADERSHIP: THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND FINDINGS

A historical review of the theoretical and empirical literature dealing with the concept of leadership reveals a variety of approaches that have developed over the years. One of the first approaches, which prevailed in the literature in 1930–1950, was the traits approach (Bargal, 2001; Hersey and Blanchard, 1982). This approach focused on personal attributes of leaders, assuming that "leaders are born rather than made." However, the attempts to identify leadership traits were not successful, and this approach was rejected later.

Subsequent studies revealed that leadership is a dynamic concept, and involves processes of constant change in the leaders themselves, their skills, their followers, and the situations that they encounter (Hemphill, 1949). These studies focused on the "leadership approach," but never developed a solid theoretical framework to explain their findings (House and Aditya, 1997).

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, research on leadership began to emphasize patterns of behavior and leadership styles (Likert, 1961; Stogdill and Coons, 1957). Two concepts that prevailed in the literature during that period were the "employee orientation" and the "production orientation." Leaders who are described as employee-oriented stress the aspect of their job that deals with personal relationships. The production orientation, by contrast, emphasizes production and technical aspects of the job, and views employees as a means to accomplish the organization's goals. To a great extent, the two orientations are parallel to the autocratic (task) and democratic (relationship) patterns, as well as to "initiating structure" and "consideration" (Halpin, 1959).

The next major developments in research on leadership took place in the 1970s, with the introduction of contingency theories. These included Fiedler's contingency theory of leadership (Fiedler, 1967,1977), the path-goal theory of leadership effectiveness (House, 1971; House and Mitchell, 1974), life cycle theory (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982), cognitive resource theory (Fiedler and Garcia, 1987), and decision process theory (Vroom and Yetton, 1973). All of these theories attempted to link leadership patterns with different types of organizational and personal situations or contingencies. In other words, they attempted to specify how situational variables interact with the personal traits and behavior of leaders. In various studies, they also emphasized the behavior of leaders and its impact on groups of followers.

Those approaches reflect a major transition from the traits approach to theoretical models, which emphasize the impact of changing organizational situations on patterns of leadership, and claim that leaders need to adapt their leadership patterns and management styles to the demand of the organization's situation. These approaches also led to the development of other leadership theories. For example the theory of charismatic leadership derived from the path-goal theory (House, 1977), and cognitive resource theory derived from contingency theory.

Later paradigms and theories, which are known as neocharismatic theories, were developed in the mid-1970s. These include the theory of charismatic leadership (House, 1977), the theory of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978), attributional theory of charismatic leadership (Conger and Kanungo, 1987), visionary theories (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Nanus, 1992), and the value based theory of leadership (House, Shane, and Herold, 1996), which is an extended version of House's theory of charismatic leadership (House, 1977).

The new approaches emphasize the role of leadership in encouraging high levels of motivation among leaders, admiration, respect, trust, commitment, sacrifice, self-investment, dedication, and high performance. This literature focuses on the emotional energy that leaders invest in achieving goals, empowering leaders, and forming alliances and partnerships. In