



Henceforth, We Will Never Walk Alone: Empirical Study on the Benefits of Participatory Governance and Leadership

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Abstract

Moving beyond the ‘great man’ view of the organization which had regarded leaders as all-knowing and repository of knowledge and tactics, this study empirically examines how a flexible system of management (networked approach) provides benefits for organizations in terms of decisional breakthroughs and practical problem resolution in society. The study is underpinned by the system approach to leadership and a transdisciplinary framework which, strives for a flexible management system through greater interaction between leaders and their relevant stakeholders in organizational decision processes. Seventeen (17) cases were drawn from diverse organizational settings within public and private sectors of Ghana (Africa) to empirically demonstrate how networks in leadership proffer solutions to “ill-structured” and “moderately structured” challenges that confront organizations. The study observes that wicked problems are inevitable in organizations. We conclude that efforts at building bridges between leaders and their environment are not only good for human relations per se but remain the “lifeblood” for organizational breakthroughs, especially, in situations of critical challenges that involve complex decisions. The study concludes that although leaders may be well endowed in knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), organizational issues in most cases go beyond familiar issues and from the ‘ordinary’ to ones that are subtle, complex, extraordinary, and sophisticated in nature and in most cases requiring social capital to liaise between the organization and other actors for successful negotiations and resolutions, not ‘quick-fix solutions’.

Keywords Leadership · Transdisciplinary · Cases · Networks · Wicked problems · Flexibility

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Introduction

Traditional public administration had been structured by a strict sense of Weberian bureaucracy and Taylor's scientific management theory (Frederickson et al 2015; Bingham et al 2014) which has been viewed as overly mechanistic in nature with top-down control as well as the top-down flow of authority and instructions from superiors to subordinates. Rational calculation (excessive control) and mechanistic rules associated with these theories tended to reduce leaders and workers into a bureaucratic machine and behaved as 'a cog in a wheel'. Consequently, the relationship between leaders and followers was more of a master-servant where the former issue commands as dictated by regulations and the latter obliged to comply. This model of organizational management and leadership has been viewed as very robotic and has consequently received backlashes from New Public Management (NPM) theorists who rose in the 1980s and 1990s to advance a need for flexibility, innovation, managerialism, and responsiveness in the public sector (Miles et al. 1997). Both regimes are centered essentially on the management specialty and expertise of the leader. Public service management in the last five decades has witnessed a gradual and widespread transition from hierarchies towards networks. This shift has assumed a global phenomenon: in the UK (see Ferlie and Pettigrew 1996), in the Netherlands (see Kickert et al. 1997), in other EU countries (Bovaird et al. 2002), and in the USA (Goldsmith and Eggars 2004).

A new form of public service management has been the shift from a specialist approach to one that values the collective efforts of different stakeholders along with the organization's rank and file which entails a network form of management. A full shift to network forms entails process changes, including the displacement of vertical management by broader, lateral leadership (Martin et al. 2009). This approach often based on the 'open door' philosophy, 'collaborative efforts', 'idea-sharing management', and 'distributed authority' is required for addressing "wicked problems" of society (Newman 2001). Society is faced with complex problems and requires ideas and strategies, not from a lone ranger specialist manager but a concerted effort which synergizes ideas towards a coherent whole. In a complex organizational setting faced with multifaceted dynamic problems, network leadership rather than dependence on a single individual will help enrich the leadership base and solution-seeking process (Buchanan et al. 2007; Martin et al. 2009). All things being equal, leaders and managers are required to offer the platform for collating ideas and shaping them rather than directing.

The traditional notion of public and private management has been the development of efficient, programmatic means for attaining specified goals (Moore 1983). Roberts (1995) and also argues for incorporating responsibility for goal setting and political management into the task of public administrators. Faced with complex social problems mostly ill-defined and 'wicked' in nature (Geyer and Rihani 2012; Innes and Booher 2016); it is imperative for a shift in the organizational leadership approach to one which 'criss-crosses' or 'traverses' and, thus, strives for an interplay between leaders, organizational members and external constituents in a more participatory and deliberative manner. This form of management/leadership has been theorized to benefit organizational processes and outcomes, yet beyond the theoretical arguments (see Yeboah-Assiamah et al. 2018) empirical evidence appears very limited. Ferlie et al. (2010) quiz "...but have network forms consolidated themselves in practice? Has the turn to network forms been fruitful or disappointing?"(p. 307). These and many other relevant but unanswered questions in the literature pose crucial research gaps that beg for systematic inquiry. Moving beyond

the ‘great man’ view of the organization which had regarded leaders as all-knowing and repository of knowledge and tactics, this study examines how transdisciplinary¹ view of leadership provides benefits to public organizations in terms of decisional breakthroughs and practical resolution of society’s complex problems.

Theoretical Framework: Towards a Transdisciplinary Leadership Model

There is a growing evidence to suggest that effective teams and inclusiveness produce considerable outcomes which have made scholars make a case for shared leadership (Taylor 2013; Wang et al. 2014). For instance, a study of 500 companies revealed that although the role of CEOs remained paramount, yet those companies that really performed quite well were those organized in teams with shared leadership (see Pearce et al. 2009). The notion of shared leadership stems from the systems approach which is essentially an approach to perceiving and thinking through a problem by identifying and focusing on those critical elements pertaining to the issues at stake. To Chen (1975) “we need to know about the nature of the problem and what kind of problem we are dealing with first” (p. 34). Rather than treating a problem in a vacuum or only from the perspective of the leader, systems approach views the problem as a greater whole.

On its part, transformational theory of leadership also focuses on the connections between leaders and followers with a view to motivating and inspiring the people by helping organizational members realize the relevant and greater good of the group. In other words, the subordinates or staff are carried along, involved in the decision processes and views are consolidated in the total decision processes.

Taking a clue from the systems approach and transformational leadership theory, we adopt a transdisciplinary leadership model (Yeboah-Assiamah et al. 2018) which believes in ‘shared leadership’ and operationalizes the idea of systems approach in decision making processes. ‘Transdisciplinarity’ is a borrowed concept from the education circles which originally is used to suggest the idea of “traversing disciplines” and the belief that there should be no rigid boundaries among academic disciplines. Transdisciplinarity is underpinned by a new principle of relativity which emerges from the co-existence of complex plurality and open unity (Nicolescu 1996). He contends that “no level of reality constitutes a privileged place from which one is able to understand all the other levels of reality” (pp 54–55).

Yeboah-Assiamah et al. (2018) developed a transdisciplinary leadership model which depicts a greater synergy between leaders, subordinates and the external environment in decision making processes to achieve organizational effectiveness. The transdisciplinary leadership model critiques the great man notion and autocratic leadership styles which *contend* that great leaders are born with unique qualities/traits which cannot be found in all members of society and the need to micro-manage people respectively. Knee-deep in the ‘great man’ mentality, many leaders/managers are tempted to carry themselves as the repository of knowledge, expertise, and experience or age and may tend to operate as a lone ranger in steering and rowing the affairs of the organization and dominating decision-making processes (Ireland and Hitt 2005).

¹ This leadership ensures optimal connection between leaders, subordinates and external constituents in goal setting and task accomplishment in a collaborative manner (see Yeboah-Assiamah et al. 2018).

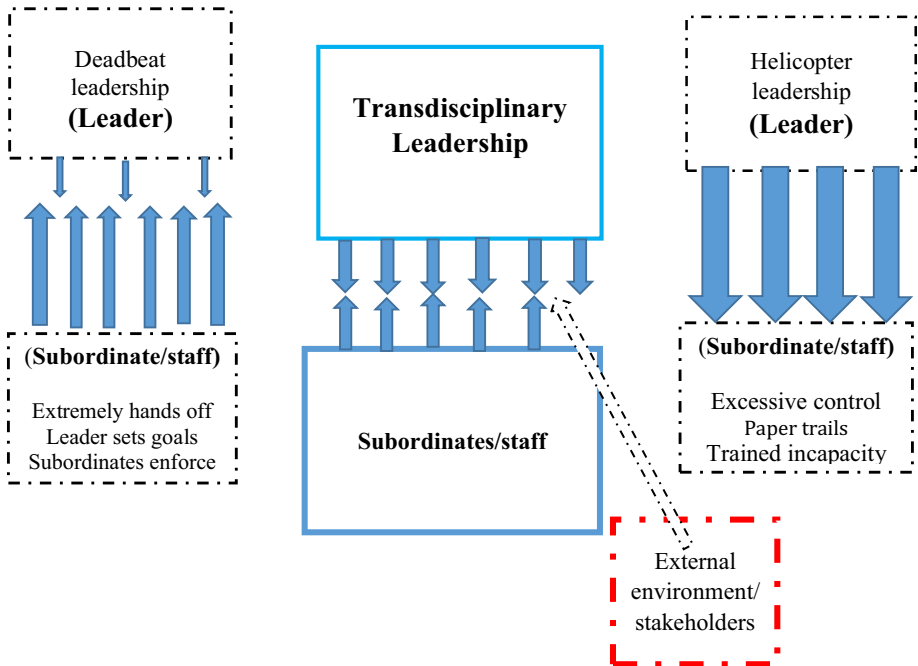


Fig. 1 Transdisciplinary leadership model. Source: Yeboah-Assiamah et al. 2018

The transdisciplinary leadership model (Fig. 1) initially designs two extreme hypothetical leadership constructs, *deadbeat leadership*, and *helicopter leadership* respectively. A midpoint between these two constructs is the *transdisciplinary leadership* model. *Deadbeat* is used to connote a purely idle and clueless leader who allows subordinates to do whatever they desire without recourse to any supervision. The *helicopter* is used to represent a leader who engages in an extreme surveillance approach, ‘micromanages’ everything subordinates do, and he/she does not allow them space for ingenious participation. All instructions, directives, insights, and inputs flow from the leader whilst subordinates are reduced to tools and objects who only comply without any meaningful input or ingenuity. The *transdisciplinary leadership* model represents a midpoint between deadbeat and helicopter leadership and consolidates other relevant features (Yeboah-Assiamah et al. 2018) which make it optimal for addressing 21st-century complex management and organizational problems. Beyond the interaction of leader-subordinate which many others such as transformational theory does, a striking attribute of the transdisciplinary leader is its open system view which lays emphasis on external stakeholders in strategy formulation and task execution. In this typology, the leadership space is very open and embraces the idea of shared responsibility (Pearce and Conger 2003) between the leader, their subordinates, and the external environment; and decisions are made taking cues from the organizational environment and external actors (Ireland and Hitt 2005).

Although the transdisciplinary leadership model may remain a useful tool to make decisions in organizations, it nonetheless could raise some critical conceptual and methodological issues such as how does the organization get to know that it may be dealing with the whole problem and not just a part of it?

Additionally, in organizations some pressing issues might require urgent attention and some decisions need to be made in real time. This may make it difficult to allow for all relevant stakeholders to bring their views before a decision can be made.

If decisions are to be made through joint effort of internal and external stakeholders, the possibility of reaching a consensus may be somewhat challenging since their goals may be conflictual. For example, customers are difficult to satisfy entities and may always strive for more which may not be in the particular interest of the organization.

Additionally, depending on the context and nature of stakeholders encountered, shared leadership may not be the best hence transdisciplinary model may not act properly but contingency theory of leadership. It is therefore, crucial for leaders to have cultural awareness in order to ascertain how the social context could foster or derail organisational affairs when transdisciplinary leadership is operationalized. In other words, the nature of stakeholders, their motivation and dedication levels, their competencies and experiences among others are crucial to the operationalization of the model.

Despite the above possible limitations, efforts at engaging and involving relevant stakeholders in decision making helps in getting real problems solved as will be discussed in this study.

Methodology

The study uses practical management and leadership case scenarios to highlight situations where leaders or management found themselves in dire situations and could only make major breakthroughs (or got workable ideas) through collective approach and upon broader consultation with various line supervisors and workers at the lower level or from other entities. Participants enrolled in the Masters of Public Administration (MPA students²) at the University of Ghana Business School were asked to provide experiences in their various organizations where the leader or management attempted to address and fix a problem but could not get it through all by themselves alone and could only make a breakthrough upon broader consultation with the various supervisors and workers at the lower level. In all, seventeen (17) cases were drawn from both the public and private sectors and from diverse organizational settings which includes management and leadership in the *education sector* (primary school, high school, private university); *local government administration*; *Church* (religious organization); *public organization (S)*; *Financial company*; *a public research agency*; and *a private company*. Submissions by participants were analyzed using a four-column analytical framework which entails (i) a first column highlighting the organizational context or setting where the issue occurred; a second column highlights the problem or management issue that was at stake as well as how management struggled with the issue; a third column highlights leadership/management fallout and the resolve to engage broadly with stakeholders; a final column highlights the results from broader engagement and the lessons. The analytical framework is discussed to provide empirical support to a transdisciplinary leadership and governance theory (Yeboah-Assiamah et al. 2018). For

² Majority of these are also managers or practitioners and each of these has at least experiences in leadership and organizational decisional dynamics either as managers or staff in the public or private context. Most of them used their current or previous workplace examples and in the original submissions the subjective pronouns “we, I” were mainly used but for ethical reasons the cases are presented to remain anonymous and somewhat general.

ethical reasons, the names of the organizations as well as issues that are not already public knowledge are not disclosed in the paper but denoted with variables. This is a way of protecting the identity of participants as well as the names of the organizations. Table 1 below presents the case summaries and lessons thereof.

Summary of Cases and Analytical Framework

Discussion and Policy Implication

From the cases and data presented in Table 1 above, the following themes stand out which form the basis of our discussion: *wicked problems are inevitable in organizations; initial management show of maestro and bravado; branching point and desire to crisscross/engage; cross-sectoral collaboration works best.*

Wicked Problems are Inevitable in Organizations

Organizations whether public or private at one point or the other is confronted with “a wicked problem” addressing such issue is convoluted as there is no straightforward solution but a resolution through collaborative and tactical efforts. An issue is said to be “wicked” in nature if it is a complex, malignant, vicious, tricky, and ill-structured problem, without a ready-made solution. Problems in human or social organizations are ‘messy’ in nature as “distinguished from problems in the natural sciences, which are definable and separable and may have solutions that are findable, the problems of (social organizations and society) are ill-defined; and they rely upon an elusive political judgment for resolution” (Rittel and Webber 1973 p. 160). Wicked problems have many constituents and stakeholders who are equally equipped, interested, and/or entitled to judge the solutions, although none has the power to set formal decision rules to determine correctness. Their frame for judging is likely to differ widely in accordance with their sectional or personal interests, their special value-sets, and their ideological predispositions. Their assessments of proposed solutions are expressed as either “good” or “bad” or, more likely, as “better or worse” or “satisfying” or “good enough.” The literature suggests network forms are particularly effective in tackling ‘wicked problems’ which according to Rittel and Webber (1973) refer to far-reaching problems, issues and situations where: (1) there is no obvious solution; (2) many individuals and organizations are necessarily involved; (3) there is disagreement among stakeholders; and (4) where desired behaviour changes are part of the solution. ‘Wicked problems’ according to Clarke and Stewart (1997) go beyond the scope of one agency (for example, anti-crime or smoking strategies) and unaligned interventions by one agency have perverse side effects. Instead, they require a broad systemic response, working across boundaries and engaging citizens and stakeholders in co-producing policy-making and implementation. So structural change towards networks has been reinforced by a policy emphasis on a ‘leadership’ capability (as opposed to vertical management) (Graham et al. 2015).

Table 1 Cases depicting benefits of transdisciplinary leadership

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Local government context Case 1	<p>A Market was to be constructed in District K because an existing one could not contain the growing market population and client-base. The District Chief Executive Officer (mayor) together with his officials unilaterally sited the market at a point without proper consultation with market groups and community people. The market got constructed and there was the need to move the market women from the old into the newly built market. The people remained reluctant to move to the new market and the few who complied complained of poor sales because of the siting of the market somewhat far from the township. Local government officials resorted to coercion by inviting the military to sack sellers from the old market. Few months after the operation the new market was still abandoned</p>	<p>Local government officials realized a need for proper consultation with the chiefs and opinion leaders in the town as this had not taken place a priori. The District Chief Executive (mayor) and his crew adhered to the opinions of the market women and the chiefs and decided to involve them in decision making</p>	<p>All parties agreed to use the new market on 'market days' only and to use the old market on any ordinary day. By so doing, gradually they will switch to the new market and finally leave the old market once they begin to operate and like the place</p> <p>Lesson: The lesson learnt from this case study is, lack of broader consultation with stakeholders and the governed will make even well-meaning policies fail</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Public organization Case 2	<p>Productivity dropped gradually at its card production department which affected the quality of ID cards issued to clients whilst the quantity also diminished. Management attributed this observation to poor staff performance hence rolled out stricter company policies such as introducing electronic doors at the department which recorded the time employees arrived and left the office and also took records of the time one spent out during lunch breaks, employee targets were also raised unreasonably and rotating staff at the various units to put them on their toes. These knee-jerk decisions by management rather began to create newer problems such as an error in the data being entered onto the electronic system. Employees at Department felt they were being treated unfairly since management did not consult nor communicate with them before introducing these stringent measures. Employees felt unappreciated and stressed out hence productivity began to further decline</p>	<p>Management finally met with the manager, supervisor, and the lower-level staff to discuss the way forward since the measures introduced did rather create new problems. Upon meeting with staff as well as key actors in this department, management was made aware of real problems within the department which were largely with the operating software used in running and printing the cards was erratic. Printers used in printing the cards also began to breakdown due to the number of cards they were required to print per day which was beyond their capacity</p>	<p>Management didn't consider these possible causes prior to the meeting because they had a lot of confidence in the software and machines that were being used with less knowledge of the fact that these are machines that could develop faults or even break down at some points in their usage. Through the dialogue and participatory approach, a workable solution was derived and adopted which helped improved operations at the department Lesson: Without dialogue and consultation with the rank and file of the organization, it is difficult to really understand the nature of a problem. A problem could be poorly structured which may lead to poor decisions and what is typically called type III error</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Public organization Case 3	<p>There was a problem with 'scanning of documents' which delayed the approval process of members' registration application forms. The stage was required to generate a Social Security Number (SSNO) in the case of fresh applicants. This had created a huge backlog of member registration application forms to be processed. The organization was engaged in the payment of huge sums of money as overtime for workers who stayed after work or reported on weekends and holidays to clear backlogs</p>	<p>The new manager posted to the department decided to adopt an open-door policy to welcome suggestions on the way forward from the unit heads, supervisors, staff and National Service Personnel who directly work on these forms</p>	<p>A workable solution to help clear the backlog was identified as a result of the consultation. The process and procedures were to be altered; the changes in the SOP did not negatively affect the processing of the forms or its expected outcome</p> <p>Lesson: The lesson that can be learned from this case is that, knowledge is not the reserve of one person and that open deliberation across the entire hierarchy of an organization has a consequential impact in finding solutions to problems</p>
A public research agency Case 4	<p>The agency faced the challenge of workers being late to work by workers. A new director adopted a knee-jerk measure by suspending some of the workers who reported late for work. This worked for a few days but after some time it was noticed that almost every worker in the company had been served a query letter for lateness. It generated a lot of workers' dissatisfaction for the new director who was seen as insensitive, given that most of the workers live far off from the company premises. Despite the queries and sanctions, the problem persisted and that showed the lateness could not be solved by the approach the new director was using</p>	<p>After a meeting with departmental heads, the director got to know that the lateness was partly caused by a breakdown of the staff bus which picked workers in the mornings. There was a general meeting between management, line supervisors, and staff who all resolved to contribute money to get the bus back to the road. After this, no worker reported late for work</p>	<p>The root cause of lateness was identified and the staff willingly and wholeheartedly contributed towards fixing the broke down staff bus</p> <p>Lesson: A well-diagnosed problem through consultations with the entire staff within an organization is already half solved. However, if a problem is wrongly diagnosed as a result of the absence of consultation, no management solution known to man can resolve it</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Public Research agency Case 5	<p>The organization 'C' collaborated with an international body 'M' on a research project to explore new ways of dealing with a particular threat to one of its cocoa varieties. The nature and value of the project was such that 'C' needed to come up with something that will change the resistance level of the variety and make its cultivation beneficial for farmers. 'M' provided a blueprint from Mexico for 'C' to follow. Management of 'C' stuck to the guidelines from 'M's framework in an attempt to come up with a solution to the problem. After six months of research, 'C' was not making any headway with that blueprint. The Director held a meeting with the entire research scientists and told them of the problem at hand and how to go about it.</p>	<p>Two members were drawn from each department to constitute a team to supervise and search for the solution. After several meetings with the entire workforce, it was agreed that 'C' puts aside the blueprint from 'M' and uses its local approach and technology to drive the search. Each Monday, the team met with the entire staff to review and revise progress</p>	<p>Within two months, the new team led us to use our indigenous approach to come up with a solution that has become a reference point for dealing with that particular threat</p> <p>Lesson: Most solutions to an organization's problem lied within, but lack of consultation with the rank and file of the organization, can cloud them, and that every organization has peculiar problems and one size fit all solution outside the organization barely produces the desired outcomes</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Parliament Case 6	<p>After the inauguration of the Job 600 offices for the Members of Parliament, the MPs required Research Assistants to assist them in their offices. The HR of Parliament assigned Research Assistant to the MPs without consulting the MPs. Due to this most of the MPs refused to work with the personnel assigned to them. The reason given was that they were not consulted in the selection process and they could not trust their credibility since the nature of MP's work is sensitive and politically motivated. This affects the smooth implementation of the policy</p>	<p>A stakeholder meeting was organized comprising the Speaker of Parliament, the leadership of Parliament, and the Parliamentary Service to deliberate on the issue and finding a lasting solution to it. It was resolved that MPs select their own Assistants to work with but the person must meet a minimum qualification</p>	<p>The decision of each MP proposing their own Research Assistant was highly welcomed by the MPs. Each MP was to submit the details of the preferred Research Assistant to the HR for processing and now the policy is a success now Lesson: Solutions unilaterally and externally imposed are mostly bound to fail, however a consultative approach in providing a solution to a problem more often than not produces desirable outcomes and legitimacy of decisions</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Church (religious organization) Case 7	<p>All parishes within a Church 'P' in Ghana take general direction from its headquarters in Accra. Respective parishes are assessed annually and corresponding monetary payment is to be (to headquarters to run church) honored based on the outcome which is usually determined by parish status, population, location. Parishes who fail to pay their due and/or on time suffer penalties and the respective resident pastor is refused a salary for that defaulting period. Pastors consequently are obliged to raise funds from the congregants to settle the church due after assessment. Issues of excessive offertory demands and incessant fundraising (silver collection in church) grossly reduced the population of 'A' Parish of the 'P' Church in Ghana. As the move continued over time, members became overburdened and some moved to other parishes whilst others became truants or stopped completely and Parish 'A' nearly came to a collapse. Previously with thousands of worshippers suddenly reduced with few people showing up on Sundays for church service because they were billed too much</p>	<p>The resident pastor triggered stakeholder consultation to devise a workable solution. Church Elders, management, all wings, and every member of the Parish had a voice in the deliberation. At the said meeting, a solution was reached that Parish A should enter into a business venture that will help fetch supplementary income to settle its annual fees and obligations to its headquarters. Suggestions including investment into drinking water business and the use of the church premise (it has a large compound) to hold wedding receptions and other activities to generate money. These were enforced and had since helped Parish A with enough income every month</p>	<p>Parish A has returned to its past glory and congregants come to church regularly than before. Key actors making this possible have been the ordinary congregational members, generational group leaders, and the Presbyters as well as the ministers-in-charge</p> <p>Lesson: In management's desperate attempt to make things work, the workable solution actually lies with the people</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Education management (Primary school) #Case 8	<p>Management sought to project the school's image and reputation finding ways to score 100% pass rate in the BECE which will entice other parents to enroll their wards. A thirty-candidate threshold approach was adopted to repeat weak students and only present 30 best candidates to register for the Basic Education in the name of the school. This decision led to a debacle as it greatly reduced the population size and financial strength of the school. A lot of parents rather withdrew their wards from the school and the school started heading to a halt</p>	<p>Upon consultation with the staff and PTA, it emerged that the idea of repeating plenty of students and registering only 30 candidates for exams is not the best option. It was suggested rather promoting students and providing incentive packages for teachers to boost their work and equip them. Management embraced the suggestions and took them into consideration and reversed the old decision</p>	<p>The school which headed into collision revamped and is now a great school with a large population size than ever before. Students pass well and are able to proceed to secondary school. Up to date, the school is the best among the lot in the community, and that products from the school are scattered across the various senior high and tertiary institutions in the country Lesson: Desperate unilateral decisions is certainly bound to fail, however, broader consultations with stakeholders often yield fruitful solutions</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Education (SHS) Case 9	<p>A new headmistress assumed the position and had a philosophy to transform the school's direction from being sports-focused to a more academic-oriented one. Acting unilaterally, she issued directives to teachers to report to school during instructional hours whether they had lessons or not. She unilaterally banned all sporting and entertainment activities ostensibly to push her pro-academic agenda. Her approach yielded some marginal success but in less than three months students began agitating. The consequence reached criminal levels where students attempted to physically assault her which saw the police intervening to protect her and the school. The teachers remained mute and were only observing events perhaps with joy as they themselves were not involved in the decisions resulting in those directives</p>	<p>It became imperative to bring the teachers on board since their alienation had had an implication on the impasse. It took the local chiefs to intercede and persuade the teachers to let sleeping dogs lie. The headmistress now reasoned with the teachers and students to discuss the way forward</p>	<p>The participatory approach enabled all stakeholders especially teachers who are in constant touch with students bring on board workable and sustainable ideas to enable the headmistress (or school) to achieve her pro-academic agenda without incurring the wrath of students and staff</p> <p>Lesson: To effect any meaningful change, it is prudent to foster broader consultation with line managers and all other subordinates</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
A primary school Case 10	<p>There was a tide of falling academic performance in the school. The Headmistress put all blame on teachers and introduced a number of policies including key performance indicators which were tied to the salaries of teachers. At the end of the month, she slashed teachers' salaries and dismissed some of them at the end of the year. Yet at the end of the year, the performance of students had not improved</p>	<p>At the end of year meeting and review, the School's Management Committee (SMC), parents, and teachers traded ideas and came to the conclusion that the problem could rather be ameliorated by an effective partnership between all stakeholders. Parents agreed to pay for extra classes and would supervise their wards at home to do their homework</p>	<p>The SMC was tasked to pay visits to the school. The headmistress also agreed to have one on one engagements with her teachers to understand their challenges. In the end, the collaborative effort by all stakeholders turned out to be more effective in dealing with the falling standards in the school Lesson: Open engagement with stakeholders in tracing the root of a problem, is the surest way to devising an appropriate and workable solution to it Lesson</p>
Private tertiary Case 11	<p>The school began to experience a decline in student enrollment which also affected its financial position and began to run on overdraft. Since tuition fee happens to be the major funding source, management came out with various strategies to the extent of introducing February admissions in addition to the normal September admissions. This strategy did not help in resolving the issue. Management then resorted to various marketing mechanisms, like holding conferences in various Senior High Schools across the country aimed at projecting the institution and giving the students an overview of the courses available in the institution. Aside that, they offered 'on-the-spot' admissions in major shopping malls in Ghana and offered very flexible fee-payment terms</p>	<p>The institution then employed a new vice-chancellor who called a convocation comprising the academic board members, academic staff members, heads of various departments, administrators, and members of the students' representative council. In a calm and emphatic manner, the vice chancellor sought the view of the convocation on the possible factors leading to a decline in student enrollment (from their own discretion)</p>	<p>The vice-chancellor noted all issues and suggestions and made a commitment to address them. It is good to know that student enrollment shot-up by 30% that year compared to the previous year Lesson: In identifying and finding solutions to problems in society and organizations, all shades of opinions and ideas must be sought through deliberations</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Catering and Logistics Case 12	<p>Management observed workers waste time in attempts to access food during lunch breaks. In an attempt to motivate and to reduce time-wasting management sought out to create a canteen with the provision of lunch for its workers. Management hired a professional cook to develop a staff menu for a week which would run throughout the course of the year for workers of the company. There was a high turnout of staff patronizing the firm's canteen services for only four months when it started decreasing. Staff again searched for foods outside the premises again for lunch which had implications on productivity and caused wastage of resources and food. Management together with the hired cook sought to address the issue by revising the canteen menu. The situation still did not improve as workers continued to ignore the canteen and moved out in search of food during their lunch breaks</p>	<p>Management inquired from workers and got to know it was with the menu. With this information from its workers, it developed an organizational opinion poll on the kind of menu choice workers would like to see in its canteen. After the poll, it happened most workers preferred more local dishes in their canteen to continental. This result was incorporated in the new staff menu for its canteen, patronage rates began to increase once again and management's goal of reducing delays and increasing work productivity was achieved</p>	<p>Workers were not consulted at the initial stages especially in developing the menu for staff. The canteen largely served continental menu except on Fridays meanwhile majority of workers (save management) are not fans of the continental menu. Involving staff in redeveloping the menu helped bring out their desires which increased patronage</p> <p>Lesson: regardless of how well-intentioned an intervention is, if it is applied to a problem that is ill-diagnosed due to lack of consultation, it may not yield the expected outcome</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Financial company Case 13	<p>Owing to client base expansion, a Financial Company had to restructure their internal data and software systems to accommodate the new increase. To do this required a migration of all company's database and systems from the old operations software unto a new one. An international consultant was engaged by Management to train and assist staff in this data migration process. In the process, however, several challenges (loss of client data and frequent system failure) were encountered. The Executive Director was determined to solve the problem on his own at the management level dealing directly with the external Consultant. The software still encountered system errors and failures which led to loss of clients' information and other essential data</p>	<p>These problems continued for weeks hampering the efficiency of the company until the line managers of the company decided to meet the Executive Director and advised that there should be a general meeting with all the staff, management, and the external consultant</p>	<p>It was at this round table meeting that offered the staff an opportunity to articulate the specificity of the software problems to the consultant. Now with a better understanding of the problems the software engineer was able to correct the errors and assist the company in completing the migration of the company data unto the new system</p> <p>Lesson: without a proper definition of a problem through consultation with frontline staff, even the best technology will prove futile</p>

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Financial company Case 14	A new Human Resource Director introduced sweeping reforms to ensure the efficiency of staff and performance. A staff performance appraisal was to be completed by all Department Heads. The scores by junior staff in the appraisal were to determine bonus, promotion, and pay structure. All departmental heads completed training on how to appraise their staff except the Marketing Department which was at the time outside the company for client outreach. After a period of 3 months, it was observed that the performance of Marketing Department officers had lowered and there were signs of apathy and absenteeism on the part of staff. In a knee-jerk reaction, the Human Resource and Executive Director decreased the salaries of Marketing Staff and sacked some of those at the Sales Department. These measures could not spur up performance	The Executive Director requested for a general meeting with Management and Staff to deliberate on the issue. At this meeting, Staff at the Marketing Department voiced their concerns and explained that their Unit Heads had failed in completing and submitting staff appraisal forms to the Human Resource Department. Unit Heads did not adequately understand how to conduct the appraisal which had led to a decrease in staff bonuses and hence affecting their performance. The training was organized for the Marketing Department on how to conduct an appraisal for their unit members	After this, staff performance in the department boosted and overall worker satisfaction was achieved. It was noted that knee-jerk reaction of decreasing salaries as well as the dismissal of staff was inappropriate Lesson: Without fruitful crisscrossing of ideas about reforms between management, line managers and staff, even the most draconian punitive measures will yield nothing
A private University Case 15	A university established its satellite campus in town 'T' but 4 years after the student population began to fall rapidly due to fierce competition (from 300 student intake to 50 per academic year and sometimes below). This adversely affected the finances of the campus and stalled all developmental projects. Lecturers' turnover kept rising because salaries were withheld for months	The Coordinator of the campus alarmed by the situation put together a 4-member publicity committee comprising the assistant registrar, the principal administrative assistant, assistant lecturer, and an office assistant. The committee upon its hearings was able to come out with workable suggestions which boosted student numbers	Student enrolment increased within a short period even beyond the containment capacities of the campus's academic facilities Lesson: Brainstorming among stakeholders and collating their ideas can help in finding solutions to problems that may seem challenging if left with one person

Table 1 (continued)

Context	Contextual problems and management debacles, issues	Intervention	Results
Same University Case 16	<p>The collaborative efforts of all stakeholders in the decision-making process helped increase students' numbers. The increase in students' enrolment led to the introduction of a regular stream in addition to its weekend and evening schools. However, the campus' facility could not accommodate the increasing number of students. Offices were converted into lecture halls as short term measure. This was still not enough. Students began to agitate over the discomfort of overcrowded lecture halls. A section of the students even threatened to bring the situation to the attention of the media. The university was in a dilemma because it was falling below the requirement of the National Accreditation Board and could be sanctioned</p>	<p>While putting measures in place to achieve the greater goal. Management had to consult some 'P' Churches within their metropolis who had spaces within their facility that could be used as lecture halls. The Coordinator of the school did a broad consultation using both the teaching and non-teaching staff because most of them worshipped at various parishes of the 'P' church within the metropolis and could talk to their ministers on behalf of the school. Three congregations agreed to give their facilities (ie their conference rooms) for lectures at a fee payable yearly</p>	<p>This measure helped the situation to a large extent in the short term. This however had a financial implication on the University due to scattered lecture halls. There was a need long term solution which would see lecture theatres constructed. The campus coordinator using his open-door approach got a highly connected member of staff who brought on board a philanthropist/investor willing to put up the facility as required by the campus with 24 months. Plans are far advanced and construction is underway Lesson: Open solicitation of ideas by management, from staff as well as the external environment, plays an instrumental role in the success of organizations</p>
A private company Case 17	<p>The human resource director observed that qualified and skilled workers have been recruited yet the productivity of most workers was low. Management believed maybe the incentives were perceived as low for those who had low productivity. Management decided to increase the hourly wage of the employees. However, the situation still persisted after two months of the initiative</p>	<p>Upon consultation with the line managers and supervisors, it was discovered that employees who came to work with their cars had higher productivity than those without cars and had to board public transport. It was noticed that most workers who boarded public transport usually came to work late and already exhausted affected their productivity</p>	<p>As a problem observed in almost all the departments, the human resource manager decided to buy a bus for the company to take its worker at advantageous points to work This initiative has helped very well to increase productivity and work output by staff Lesson: A lesson that can be learned from this is that most organizational problems can be resolved with ease through proper consultation and discussion with everybody in a view to identify their challenges from their own experiences and perspectives</p>

Initial Management Show of Maestro and Bravado

In most cases, it may be typical of leaders and managers to attempt at addressing wicked problems their own way and perspective which in many cases do not get anything done but rather exacerbates the issue at stake. An issue which began with a level 1 “messiness” may degenerate into even level 5 “messiness” if management demonstrates maestro or bravado through a lone ranger display of power and naked force to compel and force a ‘solution’ down the throats of organizational members/constituents. Through such display of power and force, leaders muddy the waters by increasing the “messiness” of the issue which is an indication that such an approach is undesirable. The growing complexities of public problems and sophisticated public (stakeholders) in the twenty-first century flies in the face of the traditional idea of how organizations and the public sector should operate; which necessitates transdisciplinary leadership. The fundamental distinction between traditional notions of leadership and transdisciplinary leadership is that the influence process is built upon more than just downward influence on subordinates or followers by an appointed or elected leader. The latter entails broadly sharing power and influence among a set of individuals rather than centralizing it in the hands of a single individual who acts in the clear role of a dominant superior. In the cases, there is unanimous evidence that management/leadership in most cases attempts to solve problems in their own way based on their own understanding and perception of the issue and attempts all means to make their approach work including a naked display of power. Particularly with case 1 local government officials invited the military to force traders to comply; with case 2, management attributed the problem to staff at the said department and treated them as strict robots and differently from others; and with case 9 management, the new headmistress attempted to force her philosophy down the throats of all through radical reforms. The results of the display of naked and brute force in attempting to solve a “wicked problem” has been counter-effective in the medium to long term which suggests that a display of management bravado and the threat of force is not a sustained way of dealing with complex managerial and society problems.

Branching Point and Desire to Crisscross/Engage

When it becomes clear that the initial display of management bravado and maestro or deployment of lone ranger specialist command and control approach is failing or has failed, it is only imperative to crisscross and engage broadly with relevant stakeholders within and outside the organization for ideas. In all cases reviewed, it is evident that managers/leaders when faced with obstacles in their resolve to display bravado take a U-turn to seek help from the internal and external environment, and those that realize the value in this approach mostly get the best benefits. Essentially, public leadership should be viewed as a dynamic, unfolding, interactive influence process among individuals, where the objective is to lead one another toward the achievement of collective goals and that, the influence process often involves peer influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence. The “machine-like” tendencies of helicopter leadership [underpinned by micromanagement and extreme bureaucracy] tend to complicate the task of providing good customer service and public value to citizens; Lovell (1992) puts it, bureaucracies “are developed to do a specific job” and mostly execute such jobs, but “do not lend themselves easily to change,” [even when the context demands such flexibility and dynamism] (p. 395). This type of leadership whose emphasis is on a collaborative approach to decision

making is ideal for 21st-century public sector which is confronted with complex and wicked problems which are in a flux exacerbated by advancement in information flow. Pearce et al. (2009) maintain “senior-most leaders may not possess sufficient and relevant information to make highly effective decisions in a fast-changing and complex world...” (p. 235). In reality, “managers down the line may be more highly informed and in a far better position to provide leadership” (ibid, p. 235).

Good Intention, Sound Technical Solution Yet for a Wrong Context (Type III Error)

The cases provide evidence where managers in their thinking may have good intentions for the organization or subordinates and could roll out a technically logical and sound solution to address a problem yet it will not yield the intended “theoretical” benefits. This is what Dunn (2004) calls type III error which occurs in the policy process when the right policy solutions or effective policies are formulated but for poorly identified problems. For example with case 12, the provision of workers’ canteen to reduce the burden of employees hovering and queuing outside the company premises in search of lunch food was a good initiative by management yet the issue was not just food but particular kinds of foods (local menu). With case 17, management thought perhaps decrease in productivity despite the right human resources with relevant skills prevailed was due to poor remuneration and decided to increase incentive packages. With case 9, the headmistress had good intentions of enhancing the academic focus of the school; with case 1 local government authorities had good intentions of providing traders with a modern market with adequate space to cater for their increasing population; with case 4, management had the intention of curtailing unethical code of conduct (employees lateness to work) and rolled out technically sound corporate practices; with case 6 leadership of Parliament thought it well to provide MPs with research assistants to help them with their research work. However, in all these scenarios, although the intention was good and not in bad faith, the solution appeared technically and theoretically sound yet management failed to diagnose the real issues on the ground. In other words, the problem at stake was not well structured before attempting to implement a solution. Without a well-meaning crisscrossing and stakeholder engagement to appropriately help diagnose and structure a perceived or real problem in terms of its coverage, intended and unintended consequences, approaches among others, even well-meaning and well-intended management/leadership initiatives or proposed solutions may fail. To avoid this error, it is imperative to take the time to embark on a broader consultation to involve wider interests in order to appreciate the real problem, its scope, and boundaries (Dunn 2004).

System View of Leadership Complementation

Those managers who either began by engaging broadly or only got to a branching point resolved to collaborate with stakeholders witnessed breakthroughs. Decision-making is neither the sole responsibility of the leader nor totally delegated to subordinates but a joint task undertaken by both leaders and staff. Task accomplishment is also not the sole responsibility of subordinates but a brainstorming process between leaders and relevant actors on ‘how best’ to accomplish the task in a more effective and efficient manner. This leadership ensures the optimal connection between leaders and subordinates in goal setting and task accomplishment in a collaborative manner. The leader engages workers by designing

a common objective which also takes into consideration the numerous external actors who are stakeholders to the organization or would be affected by the organization's decisions. In other words, this leader is a team player, collaborative, transformational, and engages with workers within the organizational walls and those external stakeholders. Due to the collaborative approach this leadership adopts, workers are well motivated hence they perform with their hand, head, and heart (3Hs) to accomplish the desired organizational goals. This indicates that cross-sectoral collaboration works best in the organizational setting. Organizations are blessed with social capital, some individuals are assets which leaders/managers could fall to in times of specific wicked problems at stake. It will be bad of management to circumvent such assets and to struggle on their own wasting time and other resources whilst the solution sits right in their face.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the study observations and discussions, it is observed that attempts to manage unilaterally is a difficult task and may only put leaders into a very difficult situations and the net effect will be failed policies or at best delivery of sub-standard organizational objectives. This conclusion corroborates an observation by Sullivan and Skelcher (2017) that cross-cutting issues are those which have a fundamental effect on well-being... they cannot be tackled successfully by a single agency, nor will disjointed action have any real effect' (p. 56). The study reveals that efforts at building bridges between leaders, their colleagues, or the internal working environment as well as forging an alliance with external actors is not only good for human relations per se but remains a cornerstone for collating and gathering solutions to very difficult organizational challenges. At the macro and meso levels, achieving effective policy outcomes redirects attention from narrow, vertical, performance management systems to those long-term issues dependent on intermediate processes such as building inter-agency collaboration. At the micro-level, the study concludes that although leaders and managers may be the best in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), organizational issues and challenges go beyond what one is familiar with to a one which at times is relational and requires social capital to liaise between the organization and other actors for successful negotiations and breakthroughs. The conclusions above shed empirical thoughts on propositions by McCall et al (1988) that "many studies of managerial performance have found that the most critical skill for beginning managers, and one most often lacking, is interpersonal competence, or the ability to deal with people problems" (p. 19).

The study also concludes that since wicked problems are inevitable in the organization, it is also essential that leaders and managers resort to a more collaborative approach through the strengthening of networks within and outside the frontiers of the organization to have access to greater ideas synthesized into a coherent whole.

Finally, the study concludes that the approach with which leaders adopt and embark upon their ideas or decisions is as important as the substance of the decision. A technically sound decision will fail or face the wrath of organizational members if poorly adopted, rudely communicated, and badly enforced. It is against such backdrop that Ferlie and Pettigrew (1996) make a case for interpersonal, communication, and listening skills, an ability to cross boundaries as well an ability to transfer knowledge and to convey requisite standards and attitudes to be essential tools for leaders. The study contends that leaders need to actively operate with their internal environment (immediate and extended workforce)

as well as giving room to their external stakeholders also. In that regard, leaders need to develop skills including the ability to cope with complexity; the ability to negotiate interdependence; and possession of diplomatic skills of patience and perseverance in order to kick-start and maintain networks.

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