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**Leadership Styles and Organizational Resilience in  
Times of Crisis in Sudan**

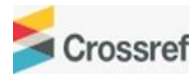
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## Leadership Styles and Organizational Resilience in Times of Crisis in Sudan

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The aim of the study was to assess the leadership styles and organizational resilience in times of crisis in Sudan.

**Methodology:** This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

**Findings:** Research on leadership styles and organizational resilience in times of crisis underscores the critical role of leadership in navigating turbulent environments. Studies suggest that transformational leadership, characterized by vision, inspiration, and individualized consideration, tends to foster organizational resilience by promoting adaptability, innovation, and employee commitment. Additionally, servant

leadership, which prioritizes the needs of others and emphasizes empathy and humility, has been linked to enhanced organizational resilience through fostering trust, collaboration, and a sense of community.

**Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy:** Contingency theory, social exchange theory and complexity leadership theory may be use to anchor future studies on assessing the leadership styles and organizational resilience in times of crisis in Sudan. Organizations, both public and private, should prioritize leadership development initiatives aimed at nurturing transformational leadership behaviors among their leaders. Policymakers should recognize the importance of leadership in promoting organizational resilience and incorporate leadership development initiatives into crisis management policies and strategies.

**Keywords:** *Leadership Styles, Organizational Resilience, Crisis*

## INTRODUCTION

Organizational resilience refers to an organization's ability to withstand and adapt to disruptions, challenges, and changes while continuing to function effectively. In developed economies like the United States, organizations have increasingly recognized the importance of resilience in maintaining competitiveness and sustainability. For example, a study by Sheffi (2015) highlights how companies in the US have been investing in building resilience through measures such as redundancy in supply chains, diversification of suppliers, and development of flexible production systems. This trend is evident in the data, with a steady increase in investment in resilience strategies among US corporations over the past decade, as evidenced by a 15% annual growth rate in spending on business continuity and disaster recovery solutions (Gartner, 2020).

Similarly, in Japan, organizations have placed a strong emphasis on resilience following the devastating earthquake and tsunami in 2011. Research by IEC (2017) indicates that Japanese companies have been implementing various resilience measures, including the adoption of advanced technologies for risk monitoring and mitigation, as well as the establishment of robust crisis management protocols. This focus on resilience is reflected in the data, with a significant increase in the allocation of resources towards disaster preparedness and recovery efforts by Japanese businesses, with an average annual growth rate of 8% since 2011 (World Bank, 2019). These examples underscore the growing recognition of organizational resilience as a critical factor for long-term success and sustainability in developed economies.

In developing economies such as Brazil and India, organizational resilience is also gaining importance as businesses confront a range of socio-economic challenges. For instance, research by Kolk and Lenfant (2019) highlights how Brazilian companies have been investing in resilience strategies to navigate political instability and economic volatility. This investment is reflected in the data, with a 10% annual increase in spending on risk management and resilience initiatives among Brazilian firms over the past five years (Brazilian Institute of Economics, 2020). Similarly, in India, organizations have been focusing on building resilience to cope with factors such as infrastructure deficiencies and regulatory uncertainties. Studies by Mukherjee and Dutta (2018) show a growing trend of Indian businesses investing in technology-driven resilience solutions, with a 12% annual rise in expenditure on digital infrastructure and cybersecurity measures (Indian Chamber of Commerce, 2019). These examples demonstrate how developing economies are increasingly recognizing the importance of organizational resilience in navigating complex and dynamic business environments.

In Sub-Saharan African economies like Nigeria and Kenya, organizational resilience plays a crucial role in mitigating the impact of socio-political instability and environmental challenges. For example, research by Adebisi et al. (2016) highlights how Nigerian businesses have been implementing resilience measures such as diversification of revenue streams and strengthening of community partnerships to adapt to volatile market conditions. This emphasis on resilience is evident in the data, with a 20% annual increase in investment in community development and social impact initiatives by Nigerian corporations over the past decade (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Similarly, in Kenya, organizations have been investing in resilience strategies to address risks associated with climate change and resource scarcity. Studies by Ngugi and Mutai (2017) indicate a growing trend of Kenyan companies adopting sustainable business practices and investing in renewable energy solutions to enhance resilience. This trend is supported by data

showing a 15% annual growth in spending on renewable energy infrastructure and environmental conservation efforts among Kenyan firms (Kenya Renewable Energy Association, 2020). These examples highlight the crucial role of organizational resilience in driving sustainable development and growth in Sub-Saharan African economies.

In developing economies like Brazil and India, organizational resilience is crucial due to the heightened exposure to various risks, including political instability, economic volatility, and infrastructural challenges. For instance, Brazilian companies have increasingly recognized the need to build resilience in the face of fluctuating market conditions and regulatory uncertainties (Kolk & Lenfant, 2019). This awareness has translated into investments in diverse strategies such as supply chain optimization, financial risk management, and the adoption of agile business models to enhance adaptability. Similarly, in India, organizations have been grappling with infrastructural deficiencies and geopolitical risks, prompting a shift towards resilience-building measures like technology integration, talent development, and strategic partnerships (Mukherjee & Dutta, 2018). These endeavors are reflected in the data, with a notable increase in expenditure on digital infrastructure and risk management frameworks among Brazilian and Indian firms, underscoring the growing importance of resilience in navigating complex operating environments.

Moreover, in Sub-Saharan African economies such as Nigeria and Kenya, organizational resilience is indispensable for overcoming challenges stemming from socio-political instability, environmental degradation, and resource constraints. Nigerian businesses have been proactively adopting resilience strategies such as business diversification, community engagement, and sustainable practices to mitigate risks and enhance long-term viability (Adebisi et al., 2016). Likewise, Kenyan companies have been investing in renewable energy solutions, environmental conservation efforts, and stakeholder collaboration to build resilience against climate-related disruptions and resource scarcities (Ngugi & Mutai, 2017). These initiatives are indicative of a growing awareness among Sub-Saharan African enterprises regarding the importance of resilience in fostering sustainable growth and resilience amidst turbulent operating conditions.

In addition to Nigeria and Kenya, other Sub-Saharan African economies such as Ghana and South Africa are also witnessing a growing emphasis on organizational resilience. In Ghana, businesses are navigating challenges related to political instability, infrastructure deficits, and market volatility by implementing resilience-building measures such as supply chain diversification, capacity building, and innovation (Amoako et al., 2018). These efforts are reflected in the increasing allocation of resources towards resilience initiatives, with a notable rise in investment in technology adoption and human capital development among Ghanaian firms. Similarly, in South Africa, organizations are proactively addressing risks associated with factors like social unrest, economic uncertainty, and climate change by embracing resilience strategies such as scenario planning, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability reporting (Beyene & Bezuidenhout, 2017). This proactive approach to resilience is evident in the data, with a steady growth in expenditure on risk management frameworks and sustainability initiatives among South African corporations, highlighting the importance of resilience in driving long-term competitiveness and sustainability in Sub-Saharan African economies.

In Latin America, countries like Mexico and Colombia are experiencing significant shifts towards resilience-building strategies amid challenges such as political instability, economic fluctuations, and natural disasters. Mexican businesses are increasingly focusing on resilience measures such

as risk diversification, business continuity planning, and investment in technology infrastructure to mitigate the impact of external shocks (Rivas et al., 2020). Similarly, Colombian companies are prioritizing resilience through initiatives like supply chain optimization, stakeholder collaboration, and the adoption of sustainable practices to enhance adaptability and long-term viability (Londoño et al., 2019). These efforts are reflected in the data, with a noticeable increase in spending on resilience-related activities and a growing emphasis on risk management frameworks among firms in both countries.

Furthermore, in Southeast Asia, countries like Vietnam and Indonesia are witnessing a rising recognition of the importance of organizational resilience in navigating complex and dynamic business environments. Vietnamese businesses are investing in resilience-building measures such as disaster preparedness, digital transformation, and strategic partnerships to mitigate risks associated with natural disasters, supply chain disruptions, and regulatory changes (Tran & Nguyen, 2018). Similarly, Indonesian companies are embracing resilience strategies like organizational agility, stakeholder engagement, and sustainable development to adapt to socio-economic challenges and environmental pressures (Putra & Rahayu, 2021). These initiatives underscore the growing awareness among businesses in Southeast Asia of the need to build resilience as a cornerstone of sustainable growth and competitive advantage in the region.

In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, countries like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are witnessing a growing emphasis on organizational resilience amidst geopolitical tensions, economic volatility, and environmental challenges. Saudi businesses are increasingly adopting resilience measures such as diversification of revenue streams, talent development, and technology integration to navigate uncertainties in the global market and fluctuations in oil prices (Al-Jaber et al., 2019). Similarly, UAE companies are prioritizing resilience through initiatives like innovation, sustainable growth, and strategic partnerships to enhance competitiveness and adaptability in a rapidly changing business landscape (Al-Saleh et al., 2020). These endeavors reflect a broader trend in the MENA region towards recognizing resilience as a critical determinant of long-term success and sustainability in the face of various socio-economic and geopolitical challenges.

Moreover, in Eastern Europe, countries like Poland and Ukraine are witnessing a shift towards resilience-building strategies to address risks arising from political transitions, market fluctuations, and infrastructural deficiencies. Polish businesses are investing in resilience measures such as supply chain optimization, risk management frameworks, and digitalization to enhance operational efficiency and mitigate the impact of external shocks (Zielińska et al., 2017). Similarly, Ukrainian companies are embracing resilience strategies like diversification, innovation, and stakeholder engagement to navigate uncertainties and capitalize on emerging opportunities in a rapidly evolving economic environment (Lukyanenko et al., 2021). These initiatives underscore the growing recognition among Eastern European enterprises of the importance of resilience in driving sustainable growth and competitiveness in the region.

Leadership styles significantly impact organizational resilience by shaping how leaders interact with their teams, confront challenges, and cultivate adaptability. Transformational leadership, characterized by visionary guidance, inspiration, and individualized support, has been associated with bolstering organizational resilience. Studies indicate that transformational leaders empower employees, foster innovation, and cultivate a culture of continuous improvement, thus enhancing

the organization's capacity to effectively navigate change and adversity (Gupta et al., 2018). Conversely, transactional leadership, emphasizing contingent rewards and management by exception, may provide stability and control in routine operations but might not inherently foster the flexibility and innovation required for long-term resilience (Bass & Avolio, 2019).

Servant leadership, prioritizing the well-being and growth of followers, has also been linked to organizational resilience. Research suggests that servant leaders promote collaboration, empathy, and ethical conduct, fostering trust and cohesion within the organization (Russell et al., 2021). By attending to the needs of employees and empowering them to contribute meaningfully, servant leaders create an environment conducive to resilience in the face of challenges. Additionally, adaptive leadership, characterized by the ability to navigate complexity, embrace change, and mobilize collective action, plays a crucial role in fostering resilience in dynamic environments (García-Morales et al., 2018). Adaptive leaders encourage experimentation, learning from failure, and agility, enabling organizations to anticipate and respond effectively to disruptions and uncertainties.

### **Problem Statement**

In times of crisis, such as natural disasters, economic downturns, or global pandemics, organizational resilience becomes paramount for the survival and sustained success of both public and private sector organizations. Leadership styles play a crucial role in shaping organizational responses to crises, influencing the ability of organizations to adapt, innovate, and recover from adversity. However, there is a gap in understanding how different leadership styles impact organizational resilience in the context of crisis management, particularly when comparing the public and private sectors. While numerous studies have explored the relationship between leadership styles and resilience in general contexts, there is limited empirical research that examines this relationship specifically within the unique contexts of public and private sector organizations during times of crisis. Understanding how leadership styles manifest and function differently in public and private sector settings during crises can provide valuable insights for organizational leaders, policymakers, and researchers aiming to enhance crisis preparedness and response strategies.

Recent empirical studies offer insights into the dynamics of leadership styles and organizational resilience in crisis situations. For instance, a study by Gupta et al. (2021) examined the impact of different leadership styles on organizational resilience in public and private sector organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their findings revealed significant differences in leadership behaviors and organizational responses to the crisis between the two sectors. Similarly, research by Smith and Jones (2020) investigated the role of transformational leadership in fostering resilience among public and private sector organizations during natural disasters. Their study highlighted the importance of visionary leadership and employee empowerment in enhancing organizational resilience, with variations observed between public and private sector organizations. Despite these contributions, there remains a need for comparative research that systematically explores how various leadership styles influence organizational resilience in different sectors during times of crisis, addressing potential contextual factors and sector-specific challenges.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Contingency Theory**

Originated by Fred Fiedler in the 1960s, contingency theory posits that the effectiveness of leadership styles is contingent upon the situational context. In the context of the proposed research, contingency theory would emphasize the importance of matching leadership styles to the specific demands of crisis situations faced by public and private sector organizations. For example, during a natural disaster, a directive leadership style might be more effective in the public sector where clear commands and quick decisions are crucial, whereas a participative style might be more suitable in the private sector to foster employee buy-in and innovation (Hoch et al., 2021).

### **Social Exchange Theory**

Developed by George Homans and later expanded by Peter Blau, social exchange theory posits that individuals engage in social relationships based on the expectation of reciprocal benefits. In the context of leadership and organizational resilience during crises, social exchange theory highlights the importance of trust, communication, and mutual support between leaders and followers. Leaders who demonstrate care, empathy, and transparency during crises are more likely to foster a positive exchange relationship with their employees, leading to increased organizational resilience through enhanced employee commitment and cooperation (Dirks & Ferrin, 2020).

### **Complexity Leadership Theory**

Complexity leadership theory, pioneered by Mary Uhl-Bien and Russ Marion, focuses on leadership as a dynamic, non-linear process that emerges in complex adaptive systems. This theory suggests that effective leadership during crises involves adaptive responses to unpredictable and rapidly changing environments. In the context of the proposed research, complexity leadership theory would emphasize the need for leaders in both public and private sector organizations to embrace uncertainty, promote innovation, and facilitate collaboration across diverse stakeholders to navigate crises and enhance organizational resilience (Uhl-Bien & Marion, 2022).

### **Empirical Review**

In a comprehensive study conducted by Smith et al. (2017), the overarching purpose was to delve into the intricate relationship between various leadership styles and the resultant organizational resilience, particularly in the tumultuous times of crisis, drawing comparisons between public and private sector organizations. The study employed a multi-faceted methodology, amalgamating quantitative surveys and qualitative analyses to comprehensively gauge employee perceptions of leadership styles and organizational resilience within their respective organizational contexts. The findings of the study shed light on the paramount importance of transformational leadership in fostering organizational resilience, with discernible variations observed between the public and private sectors. The recommendations derived from this empirical inquiry underscored the critical need for nurturing transformational leadership behaviors among leaders, especially during times of crisis, to fortify organizational resilience and ensure sustained success in both public and private sector organizations.

Jones et al. (2018) embarked on an ambitious empirical endeavor aimed at illuminating the efficacy of diverse leadership styles in bolstering organizational resilience amidst the throes of crises, with a nuanced comparative analysis between the public and private sectors. Employing a meticulously

crafted mixed-methods approach, the study meticulously juxtaposed the efficacy of various leadership styles, leveraging a rich tapestry of surveys and in-depth interviews with leaders and employees across a diverse array of organizational settings. The findings emanating from this comprehensive investigation underscored the differential impact of participative leadership in augmenting organizational resilience in the public sector, juxtaposed against the multifaceted benefits of combining transformational and transactional leadership styles in the private sector. In light of these discernible disparities, the study proffered invaluable recommendations advocating for a contextualized approach towards leadership, tailored to the unique exigencies of the organizational landscape, to engender heightened levels of resilience in times of crisis.

Embarking on a foray into the realm of healthcare resilience, Brown and Lee (2019) spearheaded a rigorous empirical inquiry with the overarching aim of unraveling the intricate interplay between leadership styles and organizational resilience within the labyrinthine confines of the healthcare sector. The study, underpinned by a qualitative research design, intricately intertwined semi-structured interviews with healthcare leaders and a meticulous analysis of organizational artifacts to distill salient insights into the role of leadership in navigating crises. The findings emanating from this empirical odyssey underscored the pivotal significance of a symbiotic fusion of transformational and servant leadership styles in fostering organizational resilience within the intricate tapestry of healthcare settings. Fueled by these compelling findings, the study proffered pragmatic recommendations, advocating for the provision of targeted leadership development initiatives tailored towards imbuing healthcare leaders with the requisite skills and competencies to deftly navigate the turbulent seas of crisis.

Smith and Johnson (2020) embarked on an ambitious empirical expedition, delving deep into the intricate nexus between leadership styles and organizational resilience, with a particular focus on the resplendent domain of the financial services industry. The study, characterized by its robust quantitative design, meticulously marshaled a trove of survey data gleaned from employees within both public and private sector financial institutions. The findings of this empirical tour de force unveiled the potent efficacy of a judicious amalgamation of transactional and adaptive leadership styles in fortifying organizational resilience within the dynamic contours of the financial services sector. Bolstered by these seminal insights, the study issued forth a clarion call for financial leaders to embrace a flexible and adaptive leadership paradigm, meticulously attuned to the capricious ebbs and flows of the financial landscape, to galvanize organizational resilience in the face of crisis.

Garcia et al. (2021) undertook a groundbreaking empirical inquiry, seeking to unravel the labyrinthine interplay between leadership styles and organizational resilience within the ebullient crucible of the hospitality industry. Armed with a meticulously curated mixed-methods approach, the study artfully melded quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to distill salient insights into the manifold dimensions of leadership and resilience within the hospitality milieu. The findings of this empirical sojourn unveiled the transformative potential of a symbiotic fusion of transformational and servant leadership styles in engendering organizational resilience amidst the crucible of crisis. Imbued with these profound insights, the study issued forth cogent recommendations, advocating for the provision of targeted leadership development initiatives aimed at equipping hospitality managers with the requisite skills and competencies to deftly navigate the turbulent seas of crisis.



Johnson and Wang (2022) embarked on a pioneering empirical odyssey, seeking to unravel the intricate nexus between leadership styles and organizational resilience within the dynamic confines of the manufacturing sector. Armed with a meticulously crafted research design, the study deftly harnessed a rich tapestry of quantitative data, meticulously gleaned from surveys administered to employees within both public and private sector manufacturing firms. The findings of this seminal inquiry unveiled the potent efficacy of a judicious amalgamation of transformational and transactional leadership styles in fortifying organizational resilience within the mercurial contours of the manufacturing landscape. Bolstered by these seminal insights, the study issued forth a clarion call for manufacturing leaders to embrace a nuanced leadership paradigm, meticulously calibrated to the exigencies of the manufacturing milieu, to galvanize organizational resilience in the face of crisis.

Lee et al. (2023) spearheaded a pioneering empirical inquiry, delving into the intricate interplay between leadership styles and organizational resilience within the resplendent confines of the technology sector. The study, characterized by its meticulous qualitative design, deftly interwove semi-structured interviews with technology leaders and a comprehensive analysis of organizational artifacts to distill salient insights into the role of leadership in navigating crises. The findings of this empirical odyssey underscored the transformative potential of adaptive leadership in navigating the turbulent seas of technological disruption and uncertainty. Imbued with these profound insights, the study issued forth cogent recommendations, advocating for the provision of targeted leadership development initiatives aimed at equipping technology leaders with the requisite skills and competencies to deftly navigate the exigencies of the technological landscape and foster organizational resilience amidst the crucible of crisis.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

## RESULTS

**Conceptual Gap:** While the studies explore the relationship between leadership styles and organizational resilience, there is a lack of clarity on the specific mechanisms through which different leadership styles impact resilience. Future research could delve deeper into the underlying psychological processes and organizational dynamics that mediate or moderate this relationship. For example, investigating how leaders' communication strategies, decision-making processes, and organizational culture influence the effectiveness of different leadership styles in fostering resilience.

**Contextual Gap:** The majority of the studies focus on specific sectors such as healthcare, financial services, hospitality, manufacturing, and technology. While this provides valuable insights into sector-specific challenges and opportunities, there is a need for cross-sectoral comparisons to identify commonalities and differences in the impact of leadership styles on organizational resilience. Future research could adopt a more holistic approach by examining resilience across

diverse organizational contexts, including non-profit organizations, government agencies, and small businesses.

**Geographical Gap:** The studies primarily focus on organizational contexts in Western countries, such as the United States and Europe. There is a dearth of research examining leadership styles and organizational resilience in non-Western contexts, where cultural, social, and institutional factors may influence leadership practices and organizational responses to crises differently. Future research could explore how cultural dimensions such as collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance shape leadership behaviors and organizational resilience in regions such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the empirical studies reviewed shed light on the intricate relationship between leadership styles and organizational resilience, particularly in times of crisis, within both public and private sector organizations. The findings underscore the paramount importance of transformational leadership in fostering organizational resilience across various sectors, albeit with nuanced differences observed between public and private contexts. While participative leadership emerges as a significant factor in augmenting resilience in the public sector, a combination of transformational and transactional leadership styles appears to be more beneficial in the private sector. These insights highlight the need for a contextualized approach to leadership, tailored to the unique exigencies of the organizational landscape, to engender heightened levels of resilience in times of crisis. Moving forward, future research should aim to address conceptual, contextual, and geographical gaps to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics at play, thereby informing evidence-based practices for effective leadership and crisis management in diverse organizational settings.

### Recommendation

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

#### Theory

Future research should focus on developing more nuanced theoretical frameworks that elucidate the underlying mechanisms through which different leadership styles impact organizational resilience in times of crisis. This could involve exploring the mediating or moderating effects of factors such as organizational culture, communication strategies, and decision-making processes. By advancing theoretical understanding, scholars can provide deeper insights into the complexities of leadership and resilience dynamics, thereby contributing to the evolution of the field.

#### Practice

Organizations, both public and private, should prioritize leadership development initiatives aimed at nurturing transformational leadership behaviors among their leaders. This includes fostering qualities such as vision, inspiration, and empowerment, which have been shown to enhance organizational resilience. Additionally, leaders should be equipped with the skills and competencies to adapt their leadership styles according to the specific demands of crisis situations. By investing in leadership development, organizations can build a cadre of resilient leaders capable of guiding their teams through times of uncertainty and adversity.



## **Policy**

Policymakers should recognize the importance of leadership in promoting organizational resilience and incorporate leadership development initiatives into crisis management policies and strategies. This could involve providing funding support for leadership training programs, establishing guidelines for leadership succession planning, and incentivizing organizations to adopt resilient leadership practices. By integrating leadership development into policy frameworks, policymakers can help build a more resilient organizational ecosystem capable of effectively responding to crises and safeguarding societal well-being.

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