

# **A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WINSTON CHURCHILL AND NELSON MANDELA'S SELF-LEADERSHIP STYLES: IMPACT ON THEIR NATIONS AND THE WORLD**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose of the study:** The purpose of this study was to conduct a comparative analysis of the leadership styles of Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela, with a specific focus on the extent to which they practiced self-leadership and how this influenced their leadership during times of crisis.

**Research methodology:** The study used a qualitative research methodology. The authors conducted a literature review of academic articles and books that examined the leadership styles of Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela. They also conducted interviews with experts on leadership and self-leadership.

**Findings of the study:** The study found that both Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela practiced self-leadership to varying degrees. Churchill was more of a traditional leader who relied on his charisma and willpower to motivate his followers. However, he also demonstrated self-leadership skills such as self-awareness, goal-setting, and adaptability. Mandela, on the other hand, was a more transformational leader who focused on inspiring and empowering his followers. He also demonstrated strong self-leadership skills, such as self-awareness, goal-setting, and emotional intelligence. The study found that the self-leadership practices of Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela had a significant impact on their leadership during times of crisis. Churchill's self-awareness and goal-setting skills helped him to maintain his focus and determination during World War II. Mandela's emotional intelligence and adaptability skills helped him to navigate the challenges of leading South Africa through apartheid.

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that self-leadership is an essential skill for leaders who want to be successful in times of crisis. The study also found that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to self-leadership. The best approach for a particular leader will depend on their individual strengths and weaknesses.

**Recommendation:** The study recommended that aspiring leaders develop their self-leadership skills. They should focus on developing their self-awareness, goal-setting, emotional intelligence, and adaptability skills. They should also learn from the self-leadership practices of successful leaders such as Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela. In addition, the study recommended that organizations create a culture of self-leadership. They should provide opportunities for employees to develop their self-leadership skills and to practice self-leadership in their work. Organizations should also reward employees who demonstrate self-leadership skills.

**Keywords:** *A Comparative Analysis, Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandela's, Self-Leadership, Styles*

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## INTRODUCTION

Leadership is a crucial aspect of influencing and guiding individuals or nations towards a common goal (Northouse, 2016). Contrarily, self-leadership entails directing this goal-accomplishment process towards oneself (Neck et al., 2019). They noted that, if we ever hope to be effective leaders of others, we need first to be able to lead ourselves effectively. Self-leadership is the practice of guiding oneself toward personal life goals, taking responsibility for one's actions and making decisions that align with personal values and goals (Neck et al., 2019). To embark on a path towards understanding and enhancing our self-leadership, we must first acknowledge that leadership extends beyond external actions. It involves recognizing that we have the ability and responsibility to lead ourselves (Neck et al., 2019).

Effective leadership is a dialogue, not a monologue (Longstaffe, 2005). The leader should listen and ask questions, aware that he alone does not have all the answers. Leadership concept is difficult to define because it is multi-faceted and defies one singular definition (Northouse, 2016). He noted that different leaders may exhibit distinct qualities, styles, and approaches making it difficult to encapsulate leadership on a single definition. One leader may be effective in one situation but not in another situation so context and circumstances matter too. Winston Churchill for instance, is

said to have been a non-abrasive, action-oriented leader who barely engaged in verbal retaliations with those who had insulted him in political arenas(Longstaffe, 2005). This attitude prevented an escalation of verbal intolerable rhetoric in the public arena. Nelson Mandela on the other hand won over the masses with his charisma and eloquence as an astute leader in the South African apartheid struggle. What set him apart was the resilience he demonstrated, fortitude, charisma, and negotiation skills. His leadership transcended boundaries of culture, age, race, gender and religion (Kalungu-Banda, 2008).

Leadership has evolved to reflect global events, generational change, and technology (Northouse, 2009). Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela left a profound impact not only on their respective nations but also on the global stage. Through their visionary leadership and resilience, they navigated through challenging times, displaying remarkable abilities to lead during times of crisis ((Johnson & Suskewicz, 2020;Kalungu-Banda, 2008; Longstaffe, 2005). The study will delve into the lives and leadership styles of Churchill and Mandela, exploring how their self-leadership approaches played a role in shaping their decisions and actions during these critical times. Neck et al., (2019) noted that self-leadership is a comprehensive self-influence process involving specific behavioral and cognitive strategies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, goal-setting that fosters quality, responsibility, and growth. These helps create goals, track progress, and adjust them since success depends on it (Holroyd et al., 2015).

Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela are two iconic leaders who left a lasting impact on the world through their visionary leadership and significant contributions to their respective nations (Kalungu-Banda, 2008; Longstaffe, 2005). They noted that both leaders faced unique challenges during their political careers and displayed exceptional leadership skills in navigating these challenges. Winston Churchill, born in 1874, was a British statesman and Prime Minister who served two non-consecutive terms in office(Gibson & Weber, 2015). He played a pivotal role during World War II, leading Britain through the darkest days of the war with his resolute and inspiring speeches (Keegan, 2002; Longstaffe, 2005; Gibson & Weber, 2015). Churchill's political career was marked by his unwavering commitment to democracy and his staunch opposition to tyranny and oppression. His leadership during the war earned him the admiration of his nation and solidified his place as one of the greatest leaders in history (Gibson & Weber, 2015). He noted that without his leadership, the outcome of World War II may have been completely different.

Nelson Mandela on the other hand, born in 1918, was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, political leader, and philanthropist (Mandela, 2016; Lodge, 2006; Smith, 2010). He became a prominent leader of the African National Congress (ANC) and led the struggle against racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa. After spending 27 years in prison, Mandela was released in 1990 and played a crucial role in ending apartheid and ushering in a new era of democracy in South Africa (Mandela, 2016). He was elected as the country's first black president in 1994, becoming a symbol of hope and reconciliation for his nation and the world (Bass, 1990; Mandela, 2016). Mandela is recognized as one of the most extraordinary symbols of this era (Boehmer, 2008, p.2 as cited by Garba & Akuva, 2020).

Both leaders faced immense challenges during their leadership tenures. Churchill had to navigate through the complexities of World War II, making difficult decisions to protect his nation from the threat of Nazi aggression (Longstaffe, 2005; Gibson & Weber, 2015). Mandela, on the other hand, had to overcome the deep-rooted racial divide in South Africa and heal the wounds of apartheid, striving to build a united and inclusive nation. Throughout their political careers, both Churchill and Mandela demonstrated resilience, determination, and a commitment to their principles. They were exceptional leaders who were not afraid to make tough decisions and take bold actions for the greater good of their nations (Northouse, 2016). George et al. (2008) asserts that self-leadership entails being true to oneself, open and transparent in exploring one's life story to understand who you are, where you fit in the world, how you can use leadership to impact the world, and how to leave a lasting legacy.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW OF THEORETICAL STUDIES**

### **Components of Self-Leadership**

Self-leadership is an important aspect of effective leadership, focusing on individuals' ability to influence and guide themselves towards personal and organizational goals (Neck et al., 2019). He goes on to say that self-leadership is the practice of guiding oneself towards personal life goals, accepting responsibility for one's actions, and making decisions that are consistent with one's personal values and goals. Understanding one's values and how they align with one's vision and purpose is also part of self-leadership (Neck et al., 2019; Drucker, 2008). They observed that such leaders are authentic and credible, and that they are capable of gaining the trust of their followers.

Great leaders lead by example and inspire their followers, which necessitates a high level of self-discipline and personal mastery (Bruce & Montanez, 2012). According to (George et al., 2008), leaders are defined by their values, which are deeply held beliefs that guide their behavior.

To lead by values is to convey one's most deeply held beliefs, and one's behavior under pressure serves as a barometer of one's values. Those who understand themselves, their abilities, beliefs, and how they function best, according to (Drucker, 2008), will succeed in the knowledge economy. Because we have only hazy predictions for the future, leadership is essential for solving existing problems and realizing unimagined opportunities (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Without leadership, possibilities cannot be imagined or realized. According to Daud (2020), a lack of self-leadership among organization's and governments has prevented them from achieving their goals. He emphasized the importance of incorporating self-leadership into leadership activities in order to increase self-awareness, self-assurance, and excellent leadership. He stated that self-leadership can influence organizational thinking by motivating, inspiring, and developing others.

Leadership skills are a combination of self-awareness, cognitive and emotional understanding of leadership, and professional competence that enables individuals to perform at a high level (William 2006). He stated that developing leadership skills is a journey from incompetence to high levels of professional understanding that is marked by learning and personal development. Finding your True North is important for all leaders, whether they have established their leadership or plan to do so in the future (George et al., 2008). To become a True North leader, he noted that understanding one's unique life story is necessary for discovering one's leadership gifts. When a person understands their why, they can significantly influence what they do and why they do it (Sinek, 2010). Neck et al. (2019) go on to argue that cultivating a sense of purpose is an essential component of a naturally rewarding work process.

The literature on self-leadership has generated a number of concepts and points of view that can help to improve a person's leadership abilities and personal effectiveness. Self-leadership is an approach from within that allows individuals to influence and guide their own behavior while inspiring and persuading others to follow them. Neck et al. (2019) cited psychological research and theory as providing the foundation for self-leadership, including those related to positive psychology, social cognitive theory, self-management, intrinsic motivation, and self-regulation.

He emphasizes that these self-leadership strategies address not only the standards and goals, as well as the reasons why something should be done, but also how it should be done.

### **Leadership and Self-Efficacy**

According to social cognitive theory, the second important self-influence process is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is essential for self-leadership because it reduces the likelihood that life demands will be negatively assessed and provides emotional protection (Bandura, 1995). He went on to say that self-efficacy is not a trait that people are born with, but rather the belief that a person has in their ability to carry out tasks, achieve goals, and overcome obstacles. Self-mastery improves self-efficacy, which in turn improves leadership (Padilla et al., 2007). A self-efficacious leader is self-assured and persistent (Maddux, 2009). According to Covey (2004), effective leaders must understand who they are. Furthermore, self-efficacy includes both cognitive and emotional beliefs in one's own ability, as well as a confident assessment of one's own behavior (Caldwell & Hayes, 2016). According to Neck et al. (2019), a person's sense of self-efficacy is influenced by their mastery experience, vicarious experience, social influence, and physical and emotional circumstances. He noted that mastery experiences are derived from prior accomplishments and levels of success or failure, whereas vicarious experiences are derived from observing others who are similar to you or whom you admire (Neck et al., 2019; Bandura, 1997).

Seeing our role models tackle difficult tasks and succeed boosts one's confidence in completing such tasks. According to Sims and Manz (1996), the rewards of effective self-leadership include setting long-term goals, short-term goals, and persisting in achieving them, which leads to personal excellence in life. Neck et al. (2019) observed that leaders with high levels of self-efficacy may take the initiative, set challenging but achievable goals, and seek feedback when problems arise. They also instill confidence and trust in their subordinates, motivating them to follow the leader's vision and contribute more. As it encourages the leader to rely on their ability to handle challenges, self-efficacy can also provide a technique for coping with stress and other issues associated with the task. Commitment is necessary for both success and failure because it allows people to stay grounded and moving forward despite setbacks (George et al., 2008). People who have high efficacy approach problems with confidence and a stronger sense of commitment.

Those with low self-efficacy, on the other hand, avoid difficult jobs because they perceive them as dangerous, lose faith in their own abilities, and are more prone to depression and stress (Bandura, 1997). Being confident in our ability to handle a variety of situations is critical to achieving our goals. A leader can be either a great problem solver or a coward when faced with a leadership challenge (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). They pointed out that leaders who are technically competent but lack the self-efficacy required to deal with problems are merely titleholders. As a result, self-efficacy is critical for self-leadership because it provides a solid foundation for leaders to set challenging goals, take initiative, seek feedback, and deal with setbacks (Neck et al., 2019). It also inspires followers' trust and confidence, making them more willing to follow their vision.

### **Leadership and Self-Awareness**

Self-awareness is the foundational component of self-leadership, involving the ability to understand one's strengths, weaknesses, values, and emotions. Self-awareness is one of the self-imposed strategies that is key to self-leadership, which can be improved to reach higher performance in work and business. (Bandura 1995). It is a crucial element that enables leaders to recognize their own behaviors and how they impact others (Bass, 1990). As argued by Neck et al. (2019), a leader should be able to display the qualities he expects to see in his followers and through self-management, demonstrate emotional competence in all situations. Drucker (2008) on the other hand believes self-management requires self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, and self-discipline. Self-awareness helps people harness their abilities and reduce weaknesses to make educated, goal-oriented decisions. Self-motivation inspires leaders (Reeve, 2001). Self-discipline exhibits self-control, focus, and work ethic. Self-awareness according to (Goleman, 2013) is a deep understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs and will. Leaders with high levels of self-awareness, according to Drucker (2008), have fewer possibilities of missing an opportunity, offer, or task and are more eager to help others achieve. According to Yukl (2010), self-aware leaders are better equipped to make informed decisions and build authentic relationships with their followers.

Self-awareness, is the first component of emotional intelligence and helps leaders and followers to integrate knowledge. According to Goleman (2013), those who have a good sense of self-awareness are self-assured are neither unduly pessimistic nor overly optimistic. Bradberry and



Greaves (2021) noted that most people are controlled by emotions due to a lack of skills to spot and use them for their benefit. They emphasized that making wise judgments requires not just factual knowledge but also self-awareness and emotional control.

Self-leadership involves being more self-aware and self-reliant and continuously learning to regulate thoughts, feelings, and behaviour while working towards the set objectives (Neck et al., 2019). This can be achieved through self-observation (Bennett, 2016). Self-awareness and self-mastery is the starting point to being an effective leader (Goleman, 2013). Self-leadership is the outcome of self-mastery. Germano (2010) suggests that individuals who have achieved self-mastery possess the qualities needed to become exceptional leaders.

Self-regulation is a fundamental component of emotional intelligence, which refers to the ability to manage and control one's emotions, impulses, and behaviours in a constructive manner (Northouse, 2019). Goleman (2013) asserts that self-regulation involves being aware of one's emotions and having the capacity to regulate or refocus disruptive emotions effectively in various situations. Baumeister (2003) argues that self-regulation refers to a person's ability to restrain, suppress, or withhold from acting on urges and wants. Self-regulation is therefore essential for maintaining emotional stability, coping with stress, and making thoughtful decisions. Leaders with strong self-regulation skills can remain composed and make rational choices even under pressure (Goleman, 2013). The ability to regulate oneself even when tempted to behave otherwise plays a key part in leadership and contributes to a leader's ability to adapt, remain reliable, and perform well under pressure.

Individuals with strong self-regulation skills can respond to challenging situations calmly and rationally, rather than being reactive or impulsive (Drucker, 2008). They can adapt their emotional responses to fit the context and exercise self-control even in high-pressure situations (Mayer, et.al, 2016). This ability helps in building resilience and prevents emotional outbursts that may harm relationships or hinder personal and professional growth. Goal-setting is a fundamental aspect of self-leadership, involving the process of establishing clear and specific objectives for oneself (Locke & Latham, 1990). Effective leaders set challenging yet achievable goals, which serve as a roadmap for their actions and decision-making. Self-regulation also plays a vital role in achieving long-term goals. People with high levels of self-regulation can delay gratification, resist



temptations, and stay focused on their objectives, leading to higher levels of productivity and success (Gross, 1998). Further research indicates that leaders who are able to control their emotions may be better at creating group goals and objectives, inspiring others, fostering collaboration and trust, and promoting flexibility in decision-making (Ivancevich, et.al, 2017).

Moreover, self-regulation is linked to improved interpersonal relationships. Individuals who can manage their emotions effectively are more likely to respond empathetically to others, demonstrate active listening, and handle conflicts constructively (Kokkinos, 2007). Studies have shown that self-regulation can be developed and strengthened through various strategies, including mindfulness practices, emotional awareness training, and cognitive-behavioural techniques (Hofmann et.al, 2010).

Self-regulation is, therefore, a critical aspect of emotional intelligence, enabling individuals to manage their emotions, reactions, and behaviors in a positive and adaptive manner (Neck et al., 2019). It offers a variety of good outcomes, including emotional stability, goal attainment, better interpersonal relationships enhanced thinking, stress-coping skills, increased attention, and improved decision-making while boosting integrity, which is both a personal virtue and an organizational strength. Self-controlled leaders have a propensity for introspection and thinking, acceptance of ambiguity and change, and integrity with the capacity to resist irrational impulses (Moon, 2021). He noted that being more aware of your interior states can help you manage disruptive thoughts and emotions. Self-mastery is the ability to better grasp what is happening both inside of you and around you. Self-leaders may learn to make better, smarter judgements in challenging circumstances by engaging in this practice (Goleman, 2013). Self-regulation and social cognitive theories both claim that everyone participates in self-regulatory processes, but not everyone is a good self-regulator (Northouse, 2019).

### **Leadership and Self- Motivation**

Self-motivation is closely linked to Self-Determination Theory. According to self-determination theory, the major mechanisms for boosting intrinsic or natural motivation obtained from a job or activity itself are the requirements for competence and self-determination (Neck et.al., 2019). He noted further that individuals seek out obstacles and make an effort to conquer them in order to feel more competent and self-determined. Self-motivation is a crucial component of self-

leadership that involves the ability to proactively drive oneself toward achieving personal goals and fulfilling aspirations (Neck et.al., 2018). It is an internal drive that pushes individuals to take initiative, persist in the face of challenges, and continuously strive for self-improvement and success. Leaders who possess self-motivation are self-driven and persistent, which contributes to their effectiveness in leading and inspiring others. Self-determination theory proposes that environments and contexts that support autonomy, competence, and relatedness are more likely to foster self-motivated behavior (Neck et al., 2019). When individuals perceive that their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met, they are more likely to engage in activities willingly, with enthusiasm, and experience a greater sense of satisfaction and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Self-reflection is the practice of examining one's actions, decisions, and experiences to gain insights and learn from past successes and failures (Bass, 1990). Leaders who engage in self-reflection continuously improve their leadership abilities and decision-making processes and are able to stay motivated (Neck et al., 2019).

### **Leadership, Mental Imagery and Self-talk**

Mental imagery and self-talk strategies are rooted in cognitive psychology are two powerful techniques that enhance self-leadership and personal effectiveness by influencing one's thoughts, beliefs, and actions (Neck et al., 2019). Both have been extensively studied in the fields of sports psychology, performance enhancement, and personal development. They offer valuable tools to improve motivation, self-confidence, and overall performance in various domains of life. Mental imagery, also known as visualization or mental rehearsal, involves creating vivid and detailed mental images of successfully performing a specific task or achieving a particular goal (Isaac et.al., 1986). When individuals use mental imagery, they engage multiple senses, including sight, sound, touch, and emotions, to create a mental blueprint of success (Munroe-Chandler et.al., 2012). By repeatedly practicing mental imagery, individuals build a positive mindset and reduce anxiety or self-doubt, which can hinder performance (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2007). They noted that self-talk is the internal dialogue that individuals have with themselves and involves using positive and encouraging language to support oneself and reinforce desired behaviors and attitudes. Self-talk can be both verbal and non-verbal and it greatly influences how individuals interpret and respond to situations (Hardy et.al, 2005). Mental level reward happens through internal speech and our imagination (Neck et.al., 2019).

Together, mental imagery and self-talk work synergistically to enhance self-leadership. When individuals visualize themselves succeeding and engage in positive self-talk, they cultivate a strong sense of self-efficacy and belief in their abilities (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2011). This heightened self-confidence positively impacts goal-setting, decision-making, and risk-taking behaviors, leading to improved personal performance and accomplishment (Hardy et al., 2005). Research has shown that combining mental imagery and self-talk can lead to significant improvements in various domains. For example, athletes who use both techniques have demonstrated increased skill acquisition, better concentration, and greater competitive performance (Smith, et.al., 2007). Similarly, individuals in other fields, such as public speaking, business, and the arts, have reported enhanced self-efficacy and improved outcomes by integrating mental imagery and self-talk into their self-leadership practices (Munroe-Chandler et al., 2012). To effectively utilize mental imagery and self-talk for self-leadership, individuals should practice these techniques consistently and align them with specific goals and desired outcomes (Hardy et al., 2005). Positive self-talk should be used to counter negative thoughts or self-doubt, while mental imagery should focus on realistic scenarios and experiences. By combining these strategies, individuals can build a strong foundation of self-leadership, enabling them to navigate challenges, maintain focus, and achieve success in their personal and professional endeavors (Moon, 2021).

Winston Churchill is an excellent example of someone who has used self-leadership to overcome obstacles on the way to becoming an exceptional leader of others (Longstaffe, 2005). He noted that Churchill's leadership embodied vision, innovation, passion, and determination, inspiring not only a nation but the world. According to (Gibson & Weber, 2015; Hashimy et al., 2023) the key leadership qualities that contributed to his success were clear and simple communication, decisiveness, risk-taking with a learning mindset, a commitment to self-improvement, and the ability to inspire and lead others. Churchill's leadership during World War II is a remarkable example of how he demonstrated various components of Self-Leadership, including behaviour, natural reward, and constructive thought-focused strategies. These aspects of Self-Leadership were instrumental in guiding his decisions and actions during critical times.

Behavioral strategies refer to the actions individuals take to effectively manage their own behavior, including self-observation, self-goal setting, self-reward, and self-efficacy (Neck et al., 2019). Winston Churchill's leadership style was characterized by courage, resilience, and a high level of

emotional intelligence, allowing him to remain composed under pressure (Longstaffe, 2005). He demonstrated this through his words and actions. An exemplary illustration of his behavior-focused strategy was his active visits to bombed sites in London during World War II, showing solidarity with citizens and boosting their morale (Addison, 2004). By visibly demonstrating leadership through his actions, Churchill inspired others to persevere in the face of danger. He was able to cast a vision for his followers and instill hope. Churchill's approach involved four steps: “explaining current realities, inspiring with a vision, providing guidance, and mobilizing into action” (Gibson & Weber, 2015, p.81).

Self-leadership plays a crucial role in creating influential leaders like Churchill who take responsibility for their actions, behaviors, and personal development (Mutalib et al., 2022). This is supported by (Maxwell, 2019) assertions that true leadership is inspiring others to dream, learn, do, and become more. Leaders who possess self-awareness are more likely to inspire and guide others through challenges with resilience, fostering a positive and empowering work environment. They exude confidence and belief in themselves, leading by example and demonstrating excellence and greatness. Longstaffe (2005) noted that the speeches and reflections of Winston Churchill continue to serve as a tremendous source of inspiration for leaders across generations.

Winston Churchill demonstrated self-leadership through the effective use of natural reward strategies. His inspiring vision, powerful speeches, and charismatic communication inspired hope and determination among the British people, serving as natural rewards for their persistence in the fight against Nazi aggression (Johnson & Suskewicz, 2020; Longstaffe, 2005). They noted that Churchill's remarkable resilience and unwavering commitment to victory acted as natural rewards for himself and others, reinforcing their determination to persevere despite setbacks. His personal sacrifices, hands-on leadership, and selflessness created a strong sense of trust and loyalty, rewarding the nation's welfare and shared purpose. Churchill's positive reinforcement and celebration of achievements boosted morale and motivation, encouraging continued effort. “No-one ever left his cabinet, meetings without feeling himself a braver man” (Longstaffe, 2005 p.81). They also noted that his display of emotional intelligence, understanding, and empathy provided a sense of connection and camaraderie, serving as a natural reward for the unity during challenging times. Churchill's self-leadership, leveraging these natural rewards, inspired a powerful sense of

purpose and determination among the British people, ultimately leading them to overcome immense challenges and achieve victory in World War II.

Winston Churchill's use of constructive thought-focused strategies was a significant factor in his effectiveness as a leader during World War II. His approach involved actively managing his thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes to maintain a positive and productive mindset. Churchill's self-leadership through these strategies can be observed in various aspects (Longstaffe, 2005; Gibson & Weber, 2015). Firstly, Churchill was a good communicator and he employed positive affirmations and uplifting language in his powerful speeches to motivate and encourage the British people during the difficult times of war. By emphasizing the nation's strengths and resilience, he instilled hope and confidence in victory. Secondly, Churchill focused on opportunities for growth and success despite facing setbacks. He encouraged his people to see the war as a chance to defend their values and build a better future, empowering them to face challenges with determination. Thirdly, Churchill displayed unwavering resilience, reframing setbacks as learning opportunities rather than insurmountable obstacles. This constructive mindset allowed him to bounce back from defeats and maintain his followers' confidence even during the darkest times of the war (Longstaffe, 2005; Hashimy et al., 2023).

In addition, Churchill practised visualization techniques, mentally envisioning a successful outcome for the war effort. Despite facing seemingly insurmountable challenges, he maintained a constructive mindset and communicated optimism even in the darkest moments (Gilbert, 2007). For instance, during the Battle of Britain, he famously stated, "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few" (Addison, 2004, p.20). This optimistic rhetoric was crucial in bolstering national morale and fostering a sense of collective purpose. By doing so, he strengthened his resolve and projected confidence and determination to his followers. Finally, his self-talk was marked by determination, confidence, and optimism. Constantly reminding himself and others of their collective strengths and capabilities reinforced their sense of purpose and unity in the face of adversity. Longstaffe (2005) noted that his speeches employed an effective style, challenging the mind, touching the heart, and then calling for action from his audience. His ability to inspire and mobilize the British people during a crisis showcased the power of constructive thinking in influencing personal and collective actions.

Churchill's ability to adapt his strategies and tactics to the changing circumstances of the war showcases his constructive thought-focused approach. Adaptability is the capacity to respond and adjust to changing circumstances and environments (Gilbert, 2007). They noted that leaders who are adaptable can effectively navigate through uncertainties and make necessary adjustments to stay relevant and effective. When faced with the threat of German invasion after the fall of France, he strategically shifted focus to strengthen alliances and form a united front with other countries, such as the United States and the Soviet Union (Gilbert, 2007; Gibson & Weber, 2015). This adaptability and strategic thinking enabled him to navigate the complexities of the war effectively. Churchill's self-leadership and application of these strategies played a pivotal role in navigating one of history's most challenging periods and establishing his legacy as a remarkable leader.

### **Self-Leadership in Nelson Mandela's Leadership**

Nelson Mandela is an excellent example of someone who has used self-leadership to overcome obstacles on the way to becoming an exceptional leader of others (Garba & Akuva, 2020). They noted that Mandela's leadership approach during South Africa's challenging transition from apartheid to democracy exemplified various components of Self-Leadership and his ability to effectively apply these strategies played a pivotal role in leading the nation towards reconciliation and unity. Mandela, also provides an excellent example of "Four 'Ss' of Twisted Leadership" (Neck et al., 2019 p.286). Team management approach comprising self-leadership, super leadership, shared leadership, and socially responsible leadership. In the 1960s, a young Mandela took a stand against the centralized, top-down, hierarchical apartheid government that reflected the "leadership disease" (Pietersen, 2015) found in many organizations today.

Nelson Mandela's utilization of behavioural strategies for self-leadership played a crucial role in his transformative leadership journey. Transformational leadership inspires followers to achieve greatness (Northouse, 2019). Leaders understand and adapt to followers' needs and motives, acting as change agents and visionary role models. They empower followers to exceed standards, build trust, and give meaning to organizational life. Throughout his life, Mandela demonstrated remarkable composure and unwavering commitment to peaceful solutions, even in the face of immense adversity (Garba & Akuva, 2020). One of the most powerful examples of his behavior-focused approach was during his long imprisonment on Robben Island. Despite enduring 27 years

of confinement, Mandela remained resolute in his advocacy for non-violent resistance and reconciliation (Pietersen, 2015). He understood the power of his actions and words as a leader and chose to embody the principles he believed in, regardless of the circumstances (Mandela, 2019). Mandela's commitment to peaceful means not only reflected his self-discipline, awareness, inner strength but also served as a source of inspiration for others (Pietersen, 2015).

Mandela showed that leadership is not just about wielding authority but about living by the values one preaches. This resonated with people not only in South Africa but also around the world, transforming him into a symbol of hope and a beacon of change (Kalungu-Banda, 2008). They noted that Mandela's influence transforms ordinary people, events and actions into extraordinary. Mandela's behavioral strategies not only guided his own actions but also influenced the collective conscience, paving the way for peaceful resolutions to conflicts and reconciliation among diverse communities.

Natural reward strategies were evident in Mandela's leadership through his use of moral authority and forgiveness as tools for national healing (Garba & Akuva, 2020). They noted that following his release from prison, Mandela sought reconciliation with his former oppressors, emphasizing the importance of forgiveness and unity to build a democratic South Africa. His emphasis on reconciliation as a natural reward for the nation contributed to a sense of collective pride and motivation to work together towards a shared future. Constructive thought-focused strategies were also a hallmark of Mandela's leadership. His ability to maintain a positive and visionary outlook during difficult times played a crucial role in inspiring hope and resilience among the South African people (Johnson & Suskewicz, 2020; Garba & Akuva, 2020). Mandela's famous quote, "It always seems impossible until it's done," (Pietersen, 2015; Shimoni, 2004), reflects his constructive thought-focused approach to tackling seemingly insurmountable challenges. This optimism and forward-thinking mindset were instrumental in mobilizing support for the transition to democracy.

Self-awareness was another essential component of Mandela's leadership approach. He had an acute awareness of the deep-rooted divisions and injustices in South African society, which he acknowledged and addressed openly (Mandela, 2016; Schoofs, 2000). By acknowledging the past and embracing the truth of South Africa's history, Mandela fostered a culture of reconciliation and collective healing (Garba & Akuva, 2020). They noted that Mandela's self-awareness extended to



recognizing the need for personal growth and transformation. Mandela demonstrated humility by admitting past mistakes and learning from them, embracing a growth mindset that allowed him to evolve as a leader (Mandela, 2016). This self-awareness and willingness to change contributed to his ability to build bridges across racial and cultural divides.

### **COMPARING CHURCHILL AND MANDELA'S SELF-LEADERSHIP PRACTICES**

During times of crisis, Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela demonstrated distinct leadership styles. While both leaders demonstrated outstanding self-leadership components in their approaches, they differed in their strategies and behaviours during critical periods. Self-awareness is an important component of effective leadership, as demonstrated by Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela during their respective leadership journeys. According to (Drucker, 2008), leaders with high levels of self-awareness are less likely to miss an opportunity, offer, or task and are more eager to help others succeed.

Churchill demonstrated a thorough understanding of the challenges that Britain faced during WWII, adapting his leadership style accordingly (Hashimy et al., 2023; Longstaffe, 2005). Similarly, Mandela demonstrated remarkable self-awareness, acknowledging apartheid-era societal divisions and working towards reconciliation (Pietersen, 2015; Kalungu-Banda, 2008; Mandela, 2016). Because of their self-awareness, they were able to empathise with others and connect with their respective countries, gaining trust and support. They also practised self-reflection and continuous growth, learning from mistakes and making sound decisions. Churchill valued decision-making over fear of failure and punished only inaction. He viewed mistakes as opportunities for growth and readily admitted when he was wrong (Longstaffe, 2005). Churchill's tolerance for opposing viewpoints and Mandela's commitment to dialogue aided in the transition to peace and reconciliation. Their legacies highlight the importance of self-awareness for leaders navigating complex situations and enacting transformative change (Neck et al., 2019; Northouse, 2016; Goleman, 2013).

Goal-setting was an important aspect of Winston Churchill's and Nelson Mandela's leadership. During the critical period of World War II, Churchill demonstrated unwavering resolve in setting the lofty goal of defending Britain against Nazi invasion and preserving its sovereignty (Gilbert, 2007; Longstaffe, 2005). Mandela's vision of a united and democratic South Africa, on the other

hand, served as a clear and powerful goal that he pursued with unwavering dedication (Clinebell, 2014; Kalungu-Banda, 2008; Mandela, 2016). Their ability to set goals enabled them to provide a sense of direction and purpose to their respective countries, rallying their people around a common vision and driving transformative change.

Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela both used mental strategies and self-talk as part of their self-leadership, which increased their effectiveness as leaders in their respective contexts. During World War II, Churchill used powerful mental imagery to visualise Britain's victory and to maintain a positive mindset even in difficult times (Longstaffe, 2005). Similarly, Mandela used mental strategies to endure prison and fight apartheid, framing setbacks as learning opportunities and remaining focused on the goal of a united South Africa (Garba & Akuva, 2020; Petersen, 2015; Kalungu-Banda, 2008). Churchill's self-talk focused on determination, inspiring the British people to persevere, whereas Mandela's commitment to peace and reconciliation led his followers to nonviolent resistance. Both leaders' positive affirmations and constructive thought patterns helped them stay resilient and inspire transformative change, demonstrating the importance of self-leadership in shaping their leadership styles and impact on the world.

### **CONTRASTING THEIR SELF-LEADERSHIP PRACTICES**

Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela's communication style played a pivotal role in their leadership (Petersen, 2015; Kalungu-Banda, 2008; Longstaffe, 2005). Churchill's exceptional oratory skills and inspiring speeches during World War II were instrumental in rallying the British people and instilling hope and determination (Gibson & Weber, 2015). His ability to effectively communicate with the nation garnered widespread admiration and support (Longstaffe, 2005). On the other hand, Mandela's leadership approach emphasized inclusivity and reconciliation through dialogue and negotiation (Mandela, 2016; Petersen, 2015). He encouraged open communication to bridge the divide between different racial and ethnic groups in South Africa, seeking to unite the nation through dialogue and understanding (Garba & Akuva, 2020). Both leaders used their unique communication styles to connect with their people and inspire them towards a shared vision of a better future.

Adaptability was a key characteristic displayed by both Churchill and Mandela in their leadership journeys. Churchill's adaptability was evident in his flexibility to adjust military strategies in

response to changing circumstances (Gibson & Weber, 2015). His ability to make critical decisions and adapt to evolving challenges contributed significantly to Britain's survival during the war (Johnson & Suskewicz, 2020). Similarly, Mandela demonstrated remarkable adaptability by transforming from a militant activist to a statesman advocating for reconciliation and peace ((Garba & Akuva, 2020); Scoofs, 2000). He displayed a willingness to compromise and embrace a peaceful resolution, which ultimately paved the way for the transition to a democratic South Africa. Both leaders' ability to adapt and respond effectively to changing situations showcases the importance of adaptability in successful leadership, allowing them to navigate complex and challenging contexts while achieving transformative change (Northouse, 2016).

Churchill's negotiation approach primarily focused on formal diplomatic engagements with allied leaders to strengthen the coalition against Nazi Germany (Gilbert, 2007). His assertive and direct style aimed to maintain unity among the allies. In contrast, Mandela's negotiation approach involved informal and behind-the-scenes dialogues, including talks with prison officials during his imprisonment (Pietersen, 2015). His ability to build relationships and trust facilitated the transition to a democratic South Africa (Garba & Akuva, 2020). Resilience was a defining trait exhibited by both Churchill and Mandela, albeit in distinct contexts. During the relentless bombing of London, known as the Blitz, Churchill's unwavering determination showcased his resilience in the face of adversity (Longstaffe, 2005). His ability to remain composed and inspire hope during these challenging times earned him widespread support and trust from the British people. In contrast, Mandela's resilience was evident during his 27-year imprisonment on Robben Island, where he endured harsh conditions but remained steadfast in his pursuit of justice and equality (Mandela, 2016). His unwavering commitment to the struggle for freedom and his ability to maintain hope and strength during years of captivity exemplified his extraordinary resilience.

Both leaders' resilience demonstrated their capacity to overcome significant challenges and serve as beacons of hope and inspiration for their nations. The leadership contexts of Churchill and Mandela were shaped by distinct historical circumstances and objectives. Churchill's leadership during World War II revolved around defending Britain's sovereignty and securing victory against the threat of Nazi Germany (Gilbert, 2007). His leadership style was characterized by strength, determination, and decisiveness, as he faced the immense challenge of leading the country through a global conflict. In contrast, Mandela's leadership context involved the dismantling of the

oppressive apartheid system and the establishment of a multi-racial democracy in South Africa (Mandela, 2016). His leadership approach emphasized reconciliation, inclusivity, and the building of a united nation. While both leaders faced significant challenges, their leadership contexts called for distinct approaches that aligned with their respective goals and historical circumstances. Both leaders' resilience and dedication to their causes remain enduring legacies of their remarkable leadership journeys.

### **IMPACT OF SELF-LEADERSHIP ON CHURCHILL AND MANDELA'S SUCCESS AND FAILURE**

The influence of Self-Leadership practices played a significant role in the success and failure of Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela leadership during critical periods of their leadership. Winston Churchill demonstrated self-awareness and self-regulation during World War II, effectively managing his emotions and inspiring hope amidst the chaos of war, earning widespread support and trust from the British people (Longstaffe, 2005; Gilbert, 2007). However, his lack of adaptability and resistance to change in the post-war period contributed to his political downfall, as his leadership style became less relevant in the peacetime context, leading to his party's defeat in the 1945 general election (Gibson & Weber, 2015).

Nelson Mandela's self-awareness and adaptability were instrumental in leading the transition to a democratic South Africa (Scoofs, 2000; Mandela, 2016). During his long imprisonment, he reflected on his beliefs and goals, leading to a transformation in his approach towards reconciliation and negotiation. His self-motivation and goal setting enabled him to maintain a vision of a united and non-racial South Africa. However, in the early years of his leadership, Mandela faced challenges in balancing reconciliation and addressing the grievances of his own African National Congress (ANC) members (Scoofs, 2000). His inclination towards forgiveness and reconciliation sometimes clashed with the expectations of those who sought more aggressive measures against the apartheid regime.

In both cases, the self-leadership component of goal-setting and adaptability played a vital role. Churchill's rigid leadership style after the war limited his ability to adapt to changing circumstances, while Mandela's adaptive approach allowed him to navigate the complexities of the transition to democracy (Gobodo-Madikizela, 1999; Garba & Akuva, 2020). Furthermore, the

use of constructive thought-focused strategies positively impacted both leaders. Churchill's use of inspirational communication and storytelling during the Battle of Britain boosted morale, while Mandela's emphasis on forgiveness and reconciliation helped heal a deeply divided nation.

### **THE IMPACT AND LEGACY OF CHURCHILL AND MANDELA'S LEADERSHIP**

The lasting impact of Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela's leadership on the world stage has been profound, and their Self-Leadership practices played a pivotal role in shaping their enduring legacies (Johnson & Suskewicz, 2020; Garba & Akuva, 2020). Winston Churchill's leadership principles have remained timeless and continue to inspire modern-day leaders in politics and business. In the current landscape where effective leadership is crucial, Churchill's vision, passion, determination, courage, and integrity served as a powerful example to those he led. According to (Longstaffe, 2005), leaders today can enhance their leadership skills by emulating Churchill's behavior and drawing insights from his and other contemporary leaders' experiences of overcoming challenges and achieving success.

His motivational speeches and resolute determination to resist Nazi aggression rallied nations together in the fight against tyranny (Keegan, 2002; Longstaffe, 2005). Churchill's ability to instill hope and maintain a sense of purpose amid adversity left an indelible mark on history. His Self-Leadership practice of goal-setting was evident in his unwavering commitment to defeat fascism and preserve democracy. His vision of a free Europe influenced the shaping of post-war international relations, and his insistence on the United Nations as a global peacemaking body helped lay the foundation for the post-war world order (Gibson & Weber, 2015).

Mandela's enduring legacy stems from his self-leadership practices of self-awareness, adaptability, and forgiveness. His ability to let go of past grievances and promote national healing became a model for conflict resolution and inspired similar processes in other countries (Pietersen, 2015). Upon his release, he pursued a path of negotiation and inclusivity, avoiding a violent uprising in South Africa. His self-leadership practice of adaptability allowed him to transcend his role as a freedom fighter and become a unifying figure in post-apartheid South Africa. Garba & Akuva (2020) noted that African leaders are urged to embrace Nelson Mandela's leadership style as a solution to the leadership crises in Africa. The promotion of Mandela's leadership approach by the African Union is crucial to address the continent's underdevelopment caused by leadership

challenges. Without adopting Mandela's leadership values, the crisis in African leadership may persist, hindering progress and development (Garba & Akuva,2020).

## **CONCLUSION**

Winston Churchill's and Nelson Mandela's leadership journeys left an indelible mark on their respective countries and the world. Throughout their careers, the importance of self-leadership in their leadership styles was evident, demonstrating how it influenced their decision-making and actions during critical periods. Aspiring leaders can learn a lot from their mistakes. To begin, self-leadership entails recognizing that leadership is more than just an outward process; it also entails leading oneself. Churchill and Mandela both demonstrated the importance of being self-aware, goal-oriented, and resilient during difficult times. Their dedication to noble causes and unwavering determination inspire aspiring leaders to strive for positive change and unwavering dedication to their vision. The long-term impact of their leadership demonstrates the powerful influence that leaders can have when they embrace Self-Leadership and lead with integrity and vision. Winston Churchill's leadership during WWII helped shape history by preserving democracy and laying the groundwork for postwar international relations. Nelson Mandela's leadership, on the other hand, was instrumental in the abolition of apartheid and the promotion of reconciliation, paving the way for a united and democratic South Africa. Their legacies live on, inspiring leaders around the world to embrace Self-Leadership and effect positive change in their communities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Given Winston Churchill's and Nelson Mandela's leadership legacies, current and aspiring leaders are encouraged to invest in self-leadership development. This necessitates a thorough process of self-awareness, goal-setting, and resilience-building. Self-leadership training and development should be incorporated into leadership programs by institutions, corporations, and governments, as it plays an important role in effective decision-making and visionary leadership. Case studies and lessons from the exemplary lives of leaders such as Churchill and Mandela should be included in educational and professional development curricula. This education would provide emerging leaders with the tools they need to face challenges head on, strive for positive change, and remain steadfast in their vision. Organizations can cultivate leaders who are not only capable of guiding

others but also adept at leading themselves, enhancing their potential to shape the future in profound and lasting ways by cultivating a culture of self-leadership.

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