

APPENDIX 2. Leadership review and additional data analysis notes.

Leadership review

1. In the mainstream research on leaders and leadership - essentially positivist in nature and focussed on the qualities and attributes of 'leaders' - leadership is usually defined in general, universal terms. Recently, for example, 'transformational' and 'transactional' categorisations of leadership have been in vogue as conceptual and analytical categories (see, for example, Hemphill *et al* 2006, pp65-66). For Purdue (2001, p2213) 'transformational leadership' denotes the ability that leaders have to transform a situation, and 'transactional leadership' concerns the relations between leaders and followers. Debates based on transformational and transactional notions of leadership revive Weberian notions of charisma to focus on the agency of leaders, who with particular attributes and characteristics, have the capacity to make change. The idea of 'social entrepreneurs', a term sometimes used in relation to debates surrounding community development, grew out of these conceptualisations of leadership. Social entrepreneurs (a variety of community leader) 'win confidence through their reputation for competence in acquisition and management of resources, and goodwill by their personal attributes of vision, commitment and energy' (Purdue, 2001, p2215). Hemphill *et al* (2006, p66) argue that transformational and transactional constructions of leadership are best seen, and utilised, as complimentary in explaining the roles of leaders.

Contingency leadership is another influential approach in recent leadership research and is frequently interwoven with transformational and transactional categorisations. Theories of contingency leadership revolve around the idea that the success of a leader is contingent on the attributes of that individual and context (the setting in which the individual is embedded) (Purdue 2001, p2213). However, Grint (2005) argues that contingency theory is 'premised upon an essentialist notion of context: in other words, that we can render the context or situation transparent through scientific analysis' and in so doing the extent to which context - 'environment, the resources available and the history of the organization' - is 'actively constructed by the leader, leaders, and/or decision-makers' is neglected (p1470)

The idea of shared or distributed leadership is another strand in the study of leaders and leadership that has developed in recent years (Feyerherm 1994, Crevani *et al* 2007). Leadership is seen as a collective and shared activity involving actors beyond those identifiable as formal leaders in which the result is increased efficiency and effectiveness (Crevani *et al* 2010, p78). Thus leadership can be viewed as being rooted in relations between group members rather than as being a product of a hierarchy or a single leader (Avolio *et al* 2009, pp431-432).

Critical responses to mainstream leadership research have, in recent years, started to appear in the literature. These tend to adopt a broadly interpretive position (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003, p362). Importantly, these responses share a focus on leadership as process, practice and interaction (Crevani *et al* 2010, p78, Barge and Fairhurst 2008, p227). This shift in perspective opens up to scrutiny prior definitions and established conceptualisations of 'leader' and 'leadership'. Underlying this

development is a perceived need 'to be much more open than has been common about the paradigmatic assumptions, methodological preferences, and ideological commitments permeating the majority of leadership studies and writings' (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003). For example, are notions of 'romanticised' and 'heroic' leaders and leadership concerned with legitimising particular hierarchies and inequalities (Bresnen, 1995, p499), and should taken for granted and dominant constructions of leadership be challenged as exclusive and elitist? (Crevani *et al* 2010, p80).

All this suggests a change of focus from conceptualisations rooted in notions of 'leaders' and 'followers' to the notion of 'leadership' as a social phenomenon (Crevani *et al* 2010, p78). Attempts to create fixed, universal categorisations deny that leadership in a given context may be characterised by asymmetrical and shifting power relations blurring the distinction between 'leaders' and 'followers' and highlighting issues of conflict and legitimacy (Collinson, 2005). Within research that adopts such views, definitions of leadership are consequently rare but when encountered are presented as heuristic devices, for example, leadership as 'a co-created, performative, contextual, and attributional process where the ideas articulated in talk or action are recognised by others as progressing tasks that are important to them' (Barge and Fairhurst 2008, p232).

Rather than being concerned with defining, a more useful and interesting direction is to problematise the notion of leadership: does leadership exist beyond the definitions, categories and discourses of researchers (such as the focus on the attributes of formal leaders), for example? Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003) argue that leadership as a standalone phenomenon is 'based on a set of assumptions and a methodology that means that leadership is effectively produced: respondents are interpolated as leaders and asked to report about their leadership [...] Seldom are they asked to consider whether leadership is a relevant term or to think critically about it' (p364).

The notion of leadership - as a clear facet of relations within organisations and socio-political processes - is arguably more fragile and intangible than the majority of the literature assumes. It seems to 'disappear' amongst other social and organisational activities and phenomena (Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003, p379). Kelly (2008), however, challenges this view. The apparent 'fragility' of leadership may be a product of how it is researched, namely a single-minded search for leadership amongst the 'milieu of everyday life'. Leadership, according to Kelly, involves 'other kinds of work' and this 'should be of primary interest to the interpretive and reflexive researcher of leadership'. So,

depending on the activity that is examined, it may be that leadership is expressed through the holding of budget meetings, team meetings, through the telling of jokes, a chat over a coffee, giving speeches, dealing with complaints, sending e-mails, opening post and generally getting on with ordinary work (Kelly 2008, p770).

To Grint (2005, p1471), 'leadership involves the social construction of the context that both legitimates a particular form of action and constitutes the world in the process. If that rendering of the context is successful - for there are usually contending and competing renditions - the newly constituted context then limits the alternatives available such that those involved begin to act differently'. Here leadership is linked to the power to act and constitutes a dominate discourse which is at least to some extent legitimate in the eyes of others. Grint advocates this interpretation of leadership in explicit contrast to contingent notions of leadership. Though both theories rest of notions of context, Grint's contends that attempts to arrive at objective and independent accounts of 'context, situation, leader and followers' are unsatisfactory. Instead the focus should be on the 'construction of contexts that legitimates their intended or executed actions and accounts' (Grint 2005, p1472). Building on these broadly interpretivist developments in leadership research we eschew universal, fixed definitions in favour of context dependent and fluid conceptions of leaders and leadership.

Additional data analysis notes

2. 'Discourse analysis' is a broad term used in this paper to describe the mode of analysis used in the interpretive research component of the paper. It is a variety of discourse analysis traceable to the work of Maarten Hajer (Hajer 2006, 1995, Hajer and Versteeg 2005). 'Discourse' here refers to 'a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorizations that are produced, reproduced, and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities' (Hajer 1995, p44). Interview recordings and notes, were 'coded' – that is reordered and categorised - to attempt to highlight members' discourses concerning various aspects of the Group and its membership.

3. Quadratic assignment procedure (QAP) correlations were used due to general issue of non-independence of data points in networks, and is a popular method of testing the association between two networks (Prell 2012). The correlation coefficient used was Goodman-Kruskal Gamma, as the data were binary. This coefficient was computed first, then rows and columns of the matrices were randomly permuted hundreds of times to determine the proportion of random trial that would generate a coefficient as large as, or equal to, the observed coefficient.

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