The SAGE Handbook of Organization
Studies, Second Edition

Leadership in Organizations

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Leadership has long been a major area of interest among social scientists and in particular organizational and political psychologists. The notion of leadership is one that continues to attract generations of writers, in large part because we tend to view leadership as an important feature of everyday and organizational affairs.

Leadership is still not an easy concept to define. Its widespread currency and use in everyday life as an explanation affects the way it is defined and indeed probably makes it more difficult to define than a concept that is invented as an abstraction *ab initio*. Most definitions of leadership have tended to coalesce around a number of elements which can be discerned in the following definition by a researcher whose work had a profound impact on one of the stages of theory and research to be encountered below:

Leadership may be considered as the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement (Stogdill 1950: 3).

Three elements can be discerned in this definition that are common to many definitions: influence, group and goal. First, leadership is viewed as a process of influence whereby the leader has an impact on others by inducing them to behave in a certain way. Second, that influence process is conceptualized as taking place in a group context. Group members are invariably taken to be the leader's subordinates, although that is by no means obligatory. This focus on the leader in relation to a definable group is invariably translated into research in which supervisors and their work groups constitute the focus of analysis. However, leadership need not come from the person in charge. Leadership, being a process of influence, can come from anyone in the group. Third, a leader influences the behaviour of group members in the direction of goals with which the group is faced. Effective leadership - the holy grail of leadership theory and research - will be that which accomplishes the group's goal(s).

This definition applies best to theory and research that was conducted up to the mid-1980s. While it by no means fell into disuse, later definitions, insofar as they were specifically articulated, tended to dwell on the leader as a *manager of meaning* - a term employed by Smircich and Morgan (1982). In a similar fashion, Pfeffer (1981) and Weick (1995) write about leadership as symbolic action, by which they mean that leaders engage in 'sense-making' on behalf of others and develop a social consensus around the resulting meanings. In both cases, leadership is seen as a process whereby the leader identifies for subordinates a sense of what is important - defining organizational reality for others. The leader gives a sense of direction and of purpose through the articulation of a compelling worldview. The phrase 'manager of meaning' (and the complementary notion of 'symbolic leadership') is meant to draw attention to the defining characteristic of true leadership as the active promotion of values, which provide shared meanings about the nature of the organization. The years either side of the turn of the century saw the process of leadership become more of a social as well as a psychological process of influence. In effect, more effort was put into determining the nature of the leadership processes that were manifest in organizational settings.

Perhaps because of the vast amounts of effort that have been expended on uncovering the factors associated with effective leadership in organizations, there has sometimes been pessimism about the fruits of this labour because of the many different approaches and frequently contradictory findings (Miner 1975), although the field

is less imbued with a sense of negativity nowadays.

The history of leadership research can be broken down into five main stages, which are the focus of the next section.

Five Stages of Leadership Theory and Research

Each of the five approaches to the study of leadership covered in this section is generally associated with a particular time period. The *trait approach* dominated the scene up to the late 1940s; the *style approach* held sway from then until the late 1960s; the heyday of the *contingency approach* was from the late 1960s to the early 1980s; and the *New Leadership approach* was the major influence on leadership research from the early 1980s. The *post-charismatic and post-transformational* leadership approach (Storey 2004) emerged through the late 1990s. Each of these stages signals a change of emphasis rather than the demise of the previous approach(es). Transformational leadership research, for example, is still very much alive in the 2000s: the point is that each of the time periods is associated with a change of prominence.

The Trait Approach

The trait approach seeks to determine the personal qualities and characteristics of leaders. This orientation implies a belief that leaders are born rather than made - nature is more important than nurture. Research tended to be concerned with the qualities that distinguished leaders from non-leaders or followers. For many writers concerned with leadership in organizations the findings of such research had implications for their area of interest because of a belief that the traits of leaders would distinguish effective from less effective leaders, although relatively few trait studies examined this specific issue. In general, the simplicity of the trait theory has reduced its attractiveness for scholars and from the 1940s, a more persuasive trend shifted to the examination of leadership style, although a reorientation in thinking about leadership traits and a reconsideration of research associated with the approach have resulted in a renaissance for the approach in recent years (House and Aditya 1997: 411–8).

The Style Approach

The emphasis on leadership style from the late 1940s signalled a change of focus from the personal characteristics of leaders to their behaviour as leaders. As much as a change in what was to be studied, this shift denoted an alteration in the practical implications of leadership research. The trait approach drew attention to the kinds of people who become leaders and in the process had great potential for supplying organizations with information about what should be looked for when *selecting* individuals for present or future positions of leadership. By contrast, since leader behaviour is capable of being changed, the focus on the behaviour of leaders carried with it an emphasis on *training* rather than selecting leaders.

There are a number of possible exemplars of the style approach but arguably the best known is the stream of investigations associated with an approach generated by a group of researchers at the Ohio State University, one of whose main figures was Stogdill. Not only did the Ohio State researchers generate a large number of studies, but, the concepts and methods that they employed were widely used well beyond the confines of the Ohio group, an influence that was still felt through the 1990s. The two main components of leader behaviour that Ohio State researchers tended to focus upon were dubbed *consideration* and *initiating structure*. The former denotes a leadership style in which leaders are concerned about their subordinates as people, are trusted by subordinates, are responsive to them, and promote camaraderie. Initiating structure refers to a style in which the leader defines closely and clearly what subordinates are supposed to do and how, and actively schedules work for them. Later research often suggested that high levels of both consideration and initiating structure were the best leadership style. Consideration is conceptually similar to other terms such as concern for people, employee-centered leadership, supportive, and relationship-oriented leadership. Initiating structure is

conceptually similar to terms such as concern for production, production-centered leadership, directive and task-oriented leadership.

At quite an early stage in the development of the Ohio Studies, it was noted by Korman (1966) that they were plagued by inconsistent results. He noted also that insufficient attention was paid to the possibility that the effectiveness of the two types of leader behaviour is situationally contingent; in other words, what works well in some situations may not work well in others. Later research in the Ohio tradition reflected a greater sensitivity to this possibility (e.g. Kerr et al. 1974), a trend that was consistent with the growing adherence to a contingency approach that marked the 1970s (see below). Studies using experimental and longitudinal research designs often found the leader-causes-outcome inference to be highly questionable (e.g. Lowin and Craig 1968; Greene 1975). Second, informal leadership processes were rarely investigated, and such processes have been the focus of researchers in recent years. Intra-group differences were not considered. Recognition of the impact of people's 'implicit leadership theories' on how they rated the behaviour of leaders was very damaging to the Ohio researchers. Rush et al. (1977), for example, showed that when rating the behaviour of an imaginary leader, people generated ratings that were very similar to those pertaining to real leaders in Ohio investigations. In other words, Ohio research might merely be tapping people's generalized perceptions of the behaviour of leaders. The theoretical implications of such research have become an area of interest in its own right (Lord and Maher 1991). The main drift from the late 1960s was toward contingency models of leadership.

Contingency Approach

Proponents of contingency approaches place situational factors towards the centre of any understanding of leadership. Typically, they seek to specify the situational variables that will moderate the effectiveness of different leadership approaches. This development parallels the drift away from universalistic theories of organization in the 1960s and the gradual adoption of a more particularistic framework which reflected an 'it all depends' style of thinking (e.g. Lawrence and Lorsch 1967).

Arguably, one of the best-known exemplars of contingency thinking is Fiedler's Contingency Model of leadership effectiveness (Fiedler 1967, 1993; Fiedler and Garcia 1987). Fiedler's approach has undergone a number of revisions and changes of emphasis over the years. At its heart is a measurement instrument known as the Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) scale, which purports to measure the leadership orientation of the person completing it. If their orientation is relationship-oriented, they are primarily concerned with fostering good relationships with subordinates, and are considerate. If they are task-motivated, they are preoccupied with task accomplishment. In spite of an apparent similarity with the Ohio consideration and initiating structure pairing, it should be appreciated that for Fiedler there is a key difference between his and other conceptualizations like that of the Ohio researchers. Whereas for the latter there was a focus on consideration and initiating structure as contrasting styles of leadership, for Fiedler relationship-and task-motivation are *personality* attributes, a conceptualization which ties his work much more with earlier trait approaches. As leaders, subjects would be either relationship- or task-motivated. Fiedler's work commenced a trend that lasted through the 1990s in which organizational leadership was seen more as a psychological process than as a social process.

From results relating to numerous studies conducted in a variety of work and non-work settings, Fiedler found that the effectiveness of relationship-and task-motivated leaders varied according to how favourable the situation was to the leader. More recently, this notion of situational favourableness has been dubbed 'situational control'. This idea has three components: leader-member relations; task structure; and position power. Fiedler's accumulated evidence led him to propose that task-oriented leaders are most effective in high control and low control situations; relationship-oriented leaders perform best in moderate control situations. The practical implication of Fiedler's work was that since a person's personality is not readily subject to change, it is necessary to change the work situation to fit the leader rather than the other way around.

Fiedler's model has been the subject of a great deal of controversy and debate. Much of this has centred upon

the LPC scale, with many writers and researchers unconvinced by the link that is made between a person's LPC score and their approach to leadership. There has also been considerable unease over the conceptualization of situational control or favourableness. Many students of leadership asked why situational control was the only situational factor that was the object of attention and why the three components previously mentioned were the only crucial elements in situational control. Fiedler has responded to some extent to this kind of criticism by including stress within the model's purview in more recent years (Fiedler and Garcia 1987; Fiedler 1993). But probably most damaging of all is that there has been widespread disagreement over the model's validity, that is, whether results really are consistent with the model. Fiedler's contingency approach shares with the Ohio studies a tendency to emphasize formally designated leaders to the virtual exclusion of informal leadership processes.

In the end, contingency approaches like Fiedler's probably became less popular because of inconsistent results that were often generated by research conducted within their frameworks and problems with the measurement of key variables. The idea of a contingency approach still has considerable support, although research sometimes suggests that situational factors are not always as important as might be expected. By the early 1980s, there was considerable disillusionment with contingency theories. Much of this disillusionment was as a result of controversy about the reliability and meaning of Fiedler's LPC measure. Vecchio (1983) and Peters et al. (1985) are examples of this debate. It appeared there were too many contingencies for this approach to grasp adequately. Further, the approach was beset with somewhat inconsistent findings (e.g. Hosking 1981).

In addition to specific problems with each of the contingency approaches (such as those outlined in the previous paragraph in relation to Fiedler's approach), some general deficiencies were identified. Bryman (1986: 158–9) identified several general problems. First, other contingency approaches shared with Fiedler's model the tendency for findings to be inconsistent in terms of their support. Secondly, it was frequently not clear why some situational factors were the focus of attention rather than other possible candidates. Thirdly, there was growing evidence in the 1980s that leader behaviours are not always situationally contingent (e.g. Podsakoff et al. 1984). Fourthly, the identification of leader behaviours had not moved on significantly from the era of the style approach with its emphasis on person- and task-orientation and participation. Fifthly, Bryman noted Korman's (1973) argument that there were problems of knowing in advance what critical values of a situational variable are relevant to any leadership style-outcome relationship. Sixthly, there were concerns about identifying causal patterns among variables gleaned from the typical cross-sectional design that pervaded most research. Finally, it was observed that there was little guidance in any of the theories regarding how leaders might deal with conflicting situational factors, that is, when one factor suggested a particular form of leader behaviour but another factor suggested a different form.

The New Leadership Approach

The term 'New Leadership' has been used to describe and categorize a number of approaches to leadership which emerged in the 1980s that seemed to exhibit common or at least similar themes, although there were undoubtedly differences between them (Bryman 1992). Together these different approaches seemed to signal a new way of conceptualizing and researching leadership. Writers employed a variety of terms to describe the new kinds of leadership with which they were concerned: transformational leadership (Bass 1985; Tichy and Devanna 1986), charismatic leadership (House 1977; Conger 1989), visionary leadership (Sashkin 1988; Westley and Mintzberg 1989), and, simply leadership (Bennis and Nanus 1985; Kotter 1990; Kouzes and Posner 1998). Together these labels revealed a conception of the leader as someone who defines organizational reality through the articulation of a vision, which is a reflection of how he or she defines an organization's mission, and the values that will support it. Thus, the New Leadership approach is underpinned by a depiction of leaders as managers of meaning rather than in terms of an influence process.

While many of the ideas associated with the New Leadership were presaged by some earlier writers like Selznick (1957) and Zaleznik (1977), its intellectual impetus derives in large part from the publication of Burns's study of

political leadership in 1978. In this work, Burns proposed that political leaders could be distinguished in terms of a dichotomy of transactional and transforming leadership. Transactional leadership comprises an exchange between leader and follower in which the former offers rewards, perhaps in the form of prestige or money, for compliance with his or her wishes. In Burns's view, such leadership is not ineffective but its effectiveness is limited to the implicit contract between leaders and their followers. They are not bound together 'in a mutual and continuing pursuit of a higher purpose' (1978: 20). The transforming leader raises the aspirations of his or her followers such that the leader's and the follower's aspirations are fused. Burns's distinction was popularized in Peters and Waterman's (1982) hugely successful book *In Search of Excellence*, where they asserted that a transforming leader had influenced almost all of the highly successful companies that they studied at some stage in their development. The link between transforming leadership and vision was forged by a number of writers at around the same time and can be seen in the work of Bass (1985), Bennis and Nanus (1985), Tichy and Devanna (1986), and more latterly Kouzes and Posner (1998) and Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2001). In the process, the nomenclature changed so that transform*ing* became transform*ational* leadership.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) and Tichy and Devanna (1986) adopted a similar approach of interviewing successful chief executives to determine the nature of their approaches to leadership. Bennis and Nanus are somewhat different in that they also tracked a number of their subjects. They also viewed their chief executives as leaders rather than as managers, suggesting a parallel between transactional/transforming and manager/leader. Kouzes and Posner conducted survey work across thousands of organizations worldwide. In all cases, the importance of articulating a vision was found to be a central element of leadership, which invariably involved the transformation of followers and often of organizations in correspondence with their vision. Each pair of writers recognized that the vision must be communicated and made intelligible and relevant to the leader's followers.

Much of the research into charismatic leadership has centered on community or political leadership (the sociological, psychoanalytic and political approaches), rather than leadership in organizations. The approaches, which have involved organizational leadership, include the behavioural approach (House 1977; Bass 1985; Conger 1989), the attribution approach (Shamir 1992; Conger and Kanungo 1998; Shamir and Howell 1999) and the follower self-concept approach (Shamir et al. 1993). Whereas most work on charismatic leadership has focused on the leader behaviours and follower effects as independent and dependent variables, Shamir has added to the debate by positing an explanation for the intervening variable which links leadership and effect. He suggests that charismatic leadership has its effect by heightening the self-concept of followers. In particular, charismatic leadership generates heightened self-esteem and self-worth, increased self-efficacy and collective efficacy, personal identification with the leader, identification with a prestigious and distinctive social group, and internalization of the values of the leader.

These various writings on the New Leadership can, then, be viewed as signalling a change of orientation toward the leader as a manager of meaning and the pivotal role of vision in that process. However, two other ingredients stand out. First, in the New Leadership most research is conducted on very senior leaders, often chief executive officers, rather than low- to middle-level leaders such as supervisors, sergeants, middle managers, foremen, and sports coaches, as in the Ohio and Fiedler research. Second, unlike the three earlier stages of leadership research, substantial use is made of qualitative case studies. Some writers, like Bennis and Nanus (1985) and Tichy and Devanna (1986), employed informal, semi-structured interviews as their chief source of data, others like Westley and Mintzberg (1989) employed documentary evidence. The use of such methods represents a substantial methodological shift from the quantitative studies that were typical of earlier phases of leadership research. However, a stream of highly influential research inaugurated by Bass (1985) and Kouzes and Posner (1993) includes leaders at lower levels and uses a quantitative approach in the manner of much leadership style and contingency research.

Bass's Research on Transactional and Transformational Leadership

Bass's approach (Bass 1985; Bass and Avolio 1990) draws heavily on Burns's (1978) work for its basic ideas,

but goes much further in two respects. First, rather than opposite ends of a continuum, Bass views transactional and transformational leadership as separate dimensions. Indeed, for Bass, the ideal approach exhibits both forms of leadership (Bass 1998). Second, in contrast to Burns's broad-brush style of discussing the two types of leadership, Bass has specified their basic components and has developed a battery of quantitative indicators for each component. His specification of these components has varied somewhat as his model has undergone development. According to Avolio et al. (1999), the leadership factors are:

- *Transformational leadership*
  - *Charisma/Inspiration* - developing a vision, engendering pride, respect and trust; creating high expectations, modeling appropriate behaviour.
  - *Intellectual stimulation* - continually challenging followers with new ideas and approaches; using symbols to focus efforts.
- *Developmental exchange*
  - *Individualized consideration* - giving personal attention to followers, giving them respect and responsibility.
  - *Contingent reward* - rewarding followers for conformity with performance targets.
- *Corrective avoidant*
  - *Management-by-exception (Active)* - looking for mistakes or exceptions to expected behaviour and then taking corrective action.
  - *Passive avoidant* - waiting for mistakes to occur before intervening, abdicating leadership responsibility.

Each of these components is measured in a manner similar to the Ohio approach, in that followers complete questionnaires that specify types of leader behaviour each of which relates to one of these components, through the use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). The research, which has been conducted on a host of different levels of leader in a variety of settings, typically shows transformational leadership and developmental exchange to be the components of leader behaviour that are most strongly associated with desirable outcomes such as performance of subordinates. Management-by-exception produces inconsistent results in that in some studies it is positively and in others negatively related to desirable outcomes. Programmes for the selection and training of leaders, which draw on this conceptualization and measurement of transactional and transformational leadership have been developed (Bass and Avolio 1990). Podsakoff et al. (1984; 1990) also developed a questionnaire to test for six factors of transformational leadership and four factors representing contingent and non-contingent reward, and contingent and non-contingent punishment. Podsakoff's six transformational leadership factors are: articulates vision, provides appropriate role model, fosters the acceptance of goals, communicates high performance expectations, provides individualized support, and intellectual stimulation. Like Bass's original operationalization of transformational and transactional leadership, these are pitched very much at the individual level of analysis. Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2001) also developed a Transformational Leadership Questionnaire (TLQ). This questionnaire measures nine factors, once again at the individual level of analysis and measuring 'close' or 'nearby' leadership, as opposed to 'distant' leadership.

Those nine transformational leadership factors are:

- genuine concern for others
- empowers and develops potential
- integrity, trustworthy, honest and open
- accessibility and approachability
- clarifies boundaries, involves others in decisions
- encourages critical and strategic thinking
- inspirational networker and promoter
- decisiveness, determination, self-confidence
- political sensitivity and skills.

Once again, they have been adapted for the selection and training of leaders. Importantly, Bass's and Podsakoff's measure of leadership contain a transactional component as well as transformational. Kouzes and Posner's and Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe's measures do not. Waldman et al. (1990) drew attention to the importance of the augmentation effect of transformational leadership over and above the effect of transactional leadership. This finding has been supported by den Hartog et al. (1997) with questionnaire analysis. These theoretical findings that transactional leadership by itself is necessary but not sufficient for optimal organizational performance support the conceptual conclusions of Kotter (1990) and others that 'leadership' without 'management' is insufficient for optimal organizational performance.

The notion of transformational leadership has generated an impressive set of findings and has made a great impact on the study of leadership. Some reflections about the New Leadership approach can be found in the following overview.

Limitations of the New Leadership Approach

The New Leadership offers a distinctive approach that ties in with the great appetite for stories about heroic chief executives which was referred to above and with the growing self-awareness of many organizations about their missions. The New Leadership is at once cause, symptom and consequence of this self-reflection that can be seen in the widespread reference to visions and missions in newspaper advertisements and company reports.

With the exception of the research stemming directly or indirectly from Bass's work, the New Leadership approach can be accused of concentrating excessively on top leaders. While a switch toward the examination of the leadership *of*, rather than *in*, organizations is an antidote to the small-scale, group-level studies of earlier eras, it could legitimately be argued that the change in focus has gone too far and risks having little to say to the majority of leaders. Second, as with earlier phases of research, the New Leadership has little to say about informal leadership processes, though the qualitative case studies that have grown in popularity have great potential in this regard. On the other hand, quantitative approaches like the work of Bass, Podsakoff, Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe and Kouzes and Posner, are likely to replicate the tendency to focus on formally designated leaders. Third, there has been little situational analysis. Much effort was exerted in the late 1990s to testing the situational validity of the New Leadership, transformational leadership in particular. Keller (1992) reports the results of a study of research and development (R&D) groups which use Bass's measures and which show that transformational leadership was a stronger predictor of project quality for research than for development projects. Bryman et al. (1996) show from a multiple case study of specialized transportation organizations in England how such factors as pre-existing levels of trust and resource constraint can have a pronounced impact on the prospects of transformational leadership. Similarly, Leavy and Wilson conclude from their investigation of four private and public sector Irish organizations that their leaders were 'tenants of time and context' (1994: 113). In so doing they draw attention to a wide range of contextual factors that can limit the room for maneouvre of prospective transformational leaders. The contextual factors that they identified were: technology; industry structure; the international trading environment; national public policy; and social and cultural transformation. Pawar and Eastman (1997) have proposed several factors that may influence the receptiveness of organizations to transformational leadership, such as an adaptation rather than an efficiency orientation and the nature of an organization's structural form and its mode of governance. Variables such as these may influence the nature of the relationship between transformational leadership and various outcome variables. Therefore, there is growing evidence that situational constraints may be much more important in restricting the transformational leader's room for maneuver than is generally appreciated. On the other hand, Bass (1997) is insistent that transformational leadership works in almost any situation, except that the way in which it works very definitely is situation-ally contingent. Fourth, Bass's research approach probably suffers from some of the technical problems identified in relation to the Ohio research, such as problems of direction of causality and of implicit leadership theories (for a discussion of such issues, see Bass and Avolio 1989 and Bryman 1992). Fifth, there is a tendency for New Leadership writers to emphasize the exploits of successful leaders, and insufficient examination of the reasons for the loss of charisma. This can generate a distorted

impression since there may be important lessons to be learned from failed transformational leaders.

Apart from these concerns, Yukl (1999) provided an evaluation of the conceptual weaknesses in the transformational leadership theories. One weakness is the omission of the specification of important behaviours, and ambiguity about other transformational behaviours. In part, this criticism has led to the development of Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe's transformational leadership questionnaire, with a broader range of leadership behaviours and interactions with followers. Another weakness was insufficient identification of the negative effects of transformational leadership. This shortfall has in part been rectified by Bass and Steidlmeier's (1999) examination of authentic and inauthentic transformational leadership, and also by discussion by Maccoby (2000) and Kets de Vries and Miller (1985) and others on the problems of narcissism with people in senior leadership positions. A third weakness was ambiguity about the underlying influence processes associated with transformational leadership. It is expected that the greater use of qualitative methods to research leadership will remedy this perceived weakness over time. A final weakness identified by Yukl (1999) was an overemphasis on dyadic processes of transformational leadership. Once again, the greater use of qualitative methods to research leadership, as a social process found generally within organizations, should move researchers toward a resolution of this problem.

In spite of such problems, the New Leadership provided a 'shot in the arm' for leadership researchers, by providing an approach which enjoyed a broad swathe of support among both leadership researchers (and many writers of popular works on management) and which broke with many aspects of earlier phases of the field. It is possible to exaggerate the differences. Like its predecessors, much if not most New Leadership writing is wedded to a rational model of organizational behaviour. However, Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) have acknowledged the differences between authentic and pseudo-transformational leadership. They argue that authentic transformational leadership is more than just behaving in a transformational way. They argue that it is grounded upon moral and virtuous foundations. Whereas an authentic transformational leader will focus on universal values, the pseudo-transformational leader might highlight 'our' values against 'their' values. Whereas an authentic transformational leader will sound the alarm when real threats arise, the pseudo-transformational leader might manufacture crises where none exist. Whereas an authentic transformational leader will develop followers into leaders, the pseudo-transformational leader might develop submissive disciples. Both leaders will achieve these very different outcomes by *behaving* in essentially the *same* way. Also Post (1986), Kets de Vries and Miller (1985) and Maccoby (2000) have discussed the impact of personality aberrations such as narcissism upon the performance of people in senior leadership roles. Craig and Gustafson (1998) developed an instrument to assess the perceived integrity of leaders. Parry and Proctor-Thomson (2002) utilized a modified version of that scale to test the relationship between transformational leadership and perceived integrity. They found a generally positive relationship, but that six per cent of leaders in New Zealand organizations were found to be above average in the display of leadership yet below average in perceived integrity. These figures resonate with Gustafson and Ritzer's (1995) and Babiak's (1996) finding that approximately one in 20 managers are aberrant self-promoters, a mild form of organizational psychopath. The implication is that some people are enacting all the right transformational behaviours, yet what is in their heart is not as honorable as they would like their followers to believe.

Distributed Leadership

A separate tradition which focuses on 'distributed' or 'dispersed' leadership seems to be emerging to offset these tendencies. Five strands in recent writing illustrate this development. First, Manz and Sims (1991) and Sims and Lorenzi (1992) have developed an approach, which specifies the advantages of a type of leadership that is expected to supersede the 'visionary hero' image that is a feature of the perception of leaders in the New Leadership tradition. They develop the idea of SuperLeadership, which is 'the leadership culture of the future, the new leadership paradigm' (Sims and Lorenzi 1992: 296). A keynote feature of SuperLeadership is the emphasis that is placed on 'leading others to lead themselves' (1992: 295), so that followers are stimulated to become leaders themselves, a theme that was in fact a feature of Burns's (1978) perspective on transforming

leadership. Second, Kouzes and Posner (1998) argue that credible leaders develop capacity in others, and have the capacity to turn their 'constituents' into leaders. For Kouzes and Posner, the issue is not one of handing down leadership to others, but of liberating them so that they can use their abilities to lead themselves and others. These three strands signal a change of focus away from heroic leaders, from the upper echelons, and towards a focus on teams as sites of leadership (see also, Reich 1987).

The third expression of an emergent dispersed leadership tradition can be seen in the suggestion that there should be much greater attention paid to leadership processes and skills, which may or may not reside in formally designated leaders. Hosking (1988; 1991) conceptualizes leadership in terms of an 'organizing' activity and spells out some of the distinctive features of leadership in terms of such a perspective. For example, she identifies 'networking' as a particularly notable organizing skill among leaders, in which the cultivation and exercise of wider social influence is a key ingredient. But such a skill is not the exclusive preserve of formally appointed leaders; it is the activity and its effects that are critical to understanding the distinctiveness of leadership. In like fashion, Knights and Willmott (1992) advocate greater attention to what they call the 'practices' of leadership. This emphasis means looking at how leadership is constituted in organizations, so that in their study of a series of verbal exchanges at a meeting in a British financial services company, they show how the chief executive's definition of the situation is made to predominate. Unfortunately, the distinctiveness of this research and Hosking's (1991) investigation of Australian chief executives is marred somewhat by a focus on designated leaders. As a result, it is difficult to disentangle leadership as skill or activity from leadership as position. However, the potential implication of these ideas is to project an image of leadership as much more diffuse and dispersed within organizations than would be evident from the tendency for leadership to be viewed as the preserve of very few leaders, as in many versions of the New Leadership approach.

A fourth expression of distributed leadership is Gordon's (2002) distinction between dispersed and traditional leadership discourse. By using observation and discourse analysis within an organizational setting, Gordon asserts that the deep power structures of organizations serve to maintain traditional notions of differentiation between leader and follower with low levels of sharing of power and information. This high differentiation adversely affects the behaviour of team members. Further, Gordon asserts that organizations frequently have surface level, or espoused empowerment, but serve to maintain domination at the deep structure levels. The surface level empowerment includes the discourse of empowerment, the flattening of hierarchy and the act of delegation. However, the deep power structures are represented by seating arrangements, intimidating language, deference, implied threat, offensive humour, the allocation of rewards and the like. By so doing, the deep power structures serve to reinforce pre-existing leadership relativities in spite of the rhetoric and discourse of the distribution of power that those in senior positions would have followers believe. By contrast, Collins (2001) asserts that Level 5 leadership, a combination of humility and fierce resolve, will enhance leader credibility and achieve genuine empowerment and the motivation of followers to achieve optimum performance.

A fifth expression of distributed leadership is leadership within the context of e-commerce (Brown and Gioia 2002) or an advanced information technology environment (Avolio et al. 2001). The technology associated with e-commerce and with advanced technology systems, also called Group Support Systems (GSS; Sosik et al. 1997) provides particular challenges for leadership. On the one hand, leaders are able to get information to large groups of followers quickly and in large volume. On the other hand, group members can access large amounts of information independently of their leaders. In effect, leaders lose much control over information flow and the power that goes with it. Avolio et al. (2001) conclude that in some settings, people can observe and model from others how they should interact. By so doing, technology becomes part of the social transformation in the organization, and in turn, part of the leadership process. In other settings, other leaders may view the technology as a cost-effective way of controlling employee behaviour through constant monitoring of deviations from standards. This latter style of leadership is likely to generate a very different social system from the former. Brown and Gioia (2002) found that the e-commerce environment was characterized by speed, ambiguity and complexity. They agree with Avolio et al. (2001) that not only is leadership influenced by this

context, but also integrated with and even defined by it. To Brown and Gioia, leadership is not solely a set of characteristics possessed by an individual, but an emergent property of a social system, in which 'leaders' and 'followers' share in the process of enacting leadership. The notion here is very clear that effective leadership depends upon multiple leaders for decision-making and action-taking. 'Collective effort' with 'mental and organizational agility' would describe their interactions and leadership style.

In these five sets of writings, we can see an alternative perspective that emphasizes the importance of recognizing the need for leadership to be viewed as a widely dispersed activity which is not necessarily lodged in formally designated leaders, especially the heroic leader who is a feature of much New Leadership writing.

Post-charismatic and Post-transformational Leadership

Storey (2004) has posited that transformational and charismatic leadership were very much constructs of the late twentieth century. The technology of the time and the prevailing management orthodoxies were very much those of the heroic or capable individual leader being able to transform corporations and transform the perceptions and motivations of people within those corporations. The increasingly distributed nature of leadership, combined with concerns about narcissistic and pseudo-transformational leaders and the shadow or 'dark' side of charisma has led to a more recent conceptualization of leadership for organizations. Fullan (2001) bases this new and implicit model of 'post-charismatic' or 'post-transformational' leadership around embedded learning, truly distributed leadership in teams, and learning from experience and failure. Leadership practice is more consciously made public and open to challenge and testing. Some major failures of corporate leadership at the turn of the century have provided fertile ground for the uptake of these ideas. By examining the life and achievements of Benjamin Franklin, Mumford and Van Doorn (2001) proposed a theory of pragmatic leadership, which would help to meet the shortfalls of the transformational, transactional and charismatic approaches. Transformational and charismatic leadership rely overly upon communication of values and ideals while transactional leadership relies overly upon control and the exercise of power. Mumford and Van Doorn argue that pragmatic leaders exercise influence by identifying and communicating solutions to significant social problems, meeting the practical needs of followers, working through elites in solution generation, creating structures to support solution implementation, and demonstrating the feasibility of these solutions. These tactics are just as valid in modern organizational settings as they are in public leadership. This pragmatic or utilitarian notion helps to bring more conventional management theory into the function of leadership in organizations, the absence of which has been a shortfall of leadership theory for some time.

Spirituality of Leadership

The movement away from the behaviours and styles of the transformational or charismatic leader has also led to an interest in the spirituality of leadership. Conversations about the dark side of charisma, narcissism and pseudo-transformational leadership have led inevitably to theoretical discussion about the 'right' and 'wrong' of leadership, rather than just the utilitarian effectiveness of organizational leadership. After all, Bass's original (1985) notion of transformational leadership included the role of enabling followers to transcend their interests above the day-to-day transactional concerns and to take inspiration from emotional appeals to a higher spiritual level of interest. The notion is not new, but the interest in it is escalating as the twenty-first century unfolds.

While much of the discussion at the turn of the century has a theological angle to it, authors such as Hicks (2002) are at pains to differentiate leadership from religious or theological canons. As Hicks notes, there are a number of characteristics of leadership that resonate in the mainstream literature, which have a spiritual tone to them. These characteristics include self-actualization and self-consciousness, authenticity, balance, the management of meaning, emotion and passion, intrinsic motivation, wisdom, discernment, courage, transcendence, and interconnectedness; as well as morality, integrity, values, honesty and justice. However, it is unwise simply to conclude that leadership is about living a good life and being a good Christian or Muslim or Hindu, or whatever. Rather, to avoid eschewing 50 years of leadership research, any theory of spiritual leadership should demonstrate its utility through its ability to impact favourably upon organizational

performance (Sass 2000) as well as its ability to discern right from wrong and to morally uplift leader and follower alike.

Fry's (2003) theory of spiritual leadership posits that leader values, attitudes and behaviours, which essentially are covered comprehensively within the New Leadership literature, will generate organizational outcomes via the intrinsic motivation of followers. Further, it posits that intrinsic motivation is a factor of followers' needs for spiritual survival. Those needs are met through being understood and appreciated, and by a feeling that life has meaning for them and that they can make a difference. In one sense, it could be argued that followers' needs for spiritual survival are merely a reiteration of Shamir's self-concept theory of motivation blended with Smircich's sense-making and the management of meaning theory. On the other hand, more realistically, Fry's theory is a more comprehensive examination of how these more recent leadership concepts come to have their ultimate impact upon organizational performance. The spiritual leadership literature is also an effective and persuasive way to integrate and make sense of concepts as disparate as altruistic love, honesty and integrity on the one hand and narcissism and pseudo-transformational leadership on the other. In a sense, the literature on spirituality is about the spirituality of leadership rather than a new theory of spiritual leadership. The latter reads like a new type of leadership, which the literature is not suggesting. Instead, the spirituality literature attempts to make better sense of the extant leadership literature.

The Art of Leadership

Another trend in the literature is to examine leadership more as an art than as a science. Grint (2000) looked at leadership through the lenses of:

- the performing arts - the deployment of persuasive communication
- the martial arts - the choice of organizational tactics
- the philosophical arts - the invention of common identity
- the fine arts - the formulation and transmission of a strategic vision.

Grint argues that the extant knowledge about leadership can be viewed through these four lenses, and all existing dimensions of leadership are represented in virtually every leadership challenge in organizations. Rosener (1997) and Calás and Smircich (1997) looked at leadership through the lens of gender stereotyping and concluded that mainstream leadership literature has traditionally been couched in masculine terms and that leadership can be interpreted as seduction. The use of dramatic performance as the metaphor for leadership is discussed later in this chapter. However, the artistic or aesthetic approach to leadership involves more than merely using art or acting as metaphors for leadership. Ropo and Eriksson (1997) and Ropo and Parviainen (2001) brought an aesthetic perspective to the study of leadership when they examined leadership as 'bodily' knowledge within the context of the performing arts industry. They asserted that a result of organizational leadership could be bodily knowledge, as distinct from cognitive knowledge or affective influence. Bodily knowledge is a type of tacit knowledge, derived from demonstration and learning-by-doing, and is conceptually similar to the 'sixth sense'. Just as the conductor of an orchestra might have a 'feel' for the music, the leader within an organization will have a 'feel' for what other employees are sensing and feeling. As far back as 1938 Chester Barnard (cited in Ottensmeyer 1996) cited terms pertinent to the executive process of management as being 'feeling', 'judgment', 'sense', 'proportion', 'balance' and 'appropriateness'. The appreciation of the art of leadership is not new. In researching R&D intensive knowledge work, Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003) found an inherent ambiguity of senior management work in that this work was found to be characterized by incoherence, contradiction, confusion and fragmentation, instead of the coherence, pattern and predictability which many years of leadership literature have led us to expect will result from visions, values and strategies. This ambiguity was reflected in the discourse, which emerged from the leaders of the organization. The ideals that are reflected in the leadership discourse were found to be contradicted by the discourse of 'micro-management' that leaders must engage in. This ambiguous muddle presents an 'ugly' or 'un-aesthetic' and therefore unappealing side to organizational leadership. Another example of research into the aesthetics of

leadership is the study of the photography and portraiture of chief executive officers by Guthey (2001) and within organizational life more generally by Strati (2000). These works have illuminated the intended and unintended impact of leadership within large organizations.

Clearly, the aesthetics of organizational life have always been relevant to leadership, but leadership research had been dominated by cognitive science for many years. This aesthetic perspective on management emerged through the 1980s, but took until the late 1990s to have an impact on leadership research and scholarship.

Leadership and Organizational Culture

There is an affinity in many scholarly discussions between leadership and organizational culture. This tendency can be seen in the advantages that were seen as stemming from an organization's possession of a 'strong culture' (for example, Peters and Waterman 1982) or a 'transformational culture' (Bass and Avolio 1993). Such cultures were seen as providing organizational members with a sense of their distinctive-ness, a sense of purpose and the 'glue' that binds people together. Companies became increasingly self-conscious and forthcoming about their values and traditions. Moreover, the visions of leaders were seen by many writers as making a distinctive contribution to cultures. The notion of leadership as having culture creation as a core (if not *the* core) element can be discerned in a number of writings, other than that of Peters and Waterman. Schein, for example, asserted that the unique and essential function of leadership is the manipulation of culture (1992). In Bass's model, changing organizational culture is an outcome of transformational leadership, which in turn has an impact on the follower's level of effort and performance.

Changing vis-à-vis Creating Culture

The connection between leadership and organizational culture is especially noticeable in the case of the founders of new organizations whose values and preoccupations often leave a distinctive imprint on their creations (Schein 1992). Leaders who follow in the founder's footsteps often see their role as that of maintaining and reinforcing the early culture. At a later stage in their development the distinctive cultures that were created might come to be seen as liabilities, as environmental realities change. Trice and Beyer (1990; 1993) helpfully distinguish between the maintenance and innovation aspects of 'cultural leadership'. Innovation takes place as the founder creates a new culture or when a new leader replaces an existing culture. Much of the New Leadership writing tended to concentrate on situations in which the leader is confronted with a culture that is in need of change because it is out of tune with current realities or because the culture is a barrier to a change of strategic direction. Such a view is exemplified by an investigation of Jaguar and Hill Samuel in the UK, which concluded that a transformation of the organization's culture was a prerequisite for radical strategic change (Whipp et al. 1989). Similarly, Kotter and Heskett's (1992) quantitative study of the links between organizational culture and firms' performance led them to conclude that the really critical factor is that a culture is adaptive, that is, it seeks to anticipate and adapt to environmental change. Leadership becomes a particular consideration for Kotter and Heskett in that it is needed to change cultures so that they are more adaptive. Here too, then, is a depiction of leaders as having a responsibility for culture creation.

It is striking that this perspective on leadership as culture management ties the study of leadership to 'value engineering' - the leader comes to be seen as someone who moulds how members are to think about the organization and their roles within it. In this way, leadership theory and research become implicated in the drift in the study of organizational culture from essentially academic discussions towards more normative, managerial approaches (Barley et al. 1988). Willmott (1993) argues that in these managerial discussions, culture is little more than an extension of management control in which the aim is to colonize the minds of members of the organization. Therefore, the wider political and ethical ramifications of cultural manipulation tend to be marginalized. Equally, the predominant paradigm for examining leadership in relation to culture is imbued with what Martin (1992) refers to as an 'integration' perspective. Martin distinguishes this approach from two others - a differentiation and a fragmentation perspective.

Integration Perspective

In the integration perspective, there is consistency between the various components of culture and there is fairly widespread agreement and understanding of the culture's precepts. Leadership is about creating, maintaining or changing cultures along the lines that have just been encountered in the writings of Schein et al. and Trice and Beyer. Alvesson (1992) provides an alternative position within an integration perspective, which views leaders as transmitters of culture within organizations. He shows how subsidiary managers in a Swedish computer consultancy firm have a social integrative function in that they transmit the organization's culture to combat the potential for the firm to splinter due to the highly decentralized and heterogeneous nature of the work of consultants. In this case, leaders transmit rather than mould culture.

Differentiation Perspective

In the differentiation perspective, leadership occupies a quite different position. Culture is seen as pervaded by lack of consensus across the organization. The perspective particularly draws attention to sub-cultural diversity and the resulting enclaves of consensus that form within the wider organization. Martin suggests that when investigators have explored leadership within a differentiation perspective, they have typically examined leadership exercised by groups. Such a perspective brings into play informal leadership processes that have invariably been absent in organizational research. However, it is difficult to believe that individual leaders, albeit informal ones, do not exercise leadership to promote or express subcultural positions. The notion of a collective arrogation of leadership by a group is feasible, but it is hard to believe that individual leaders are not instrumental in the process. Indeed, Martin cites the illustration from her own research (Martin and Siehl 1983) of the way in which John DeLorean formed a contraculture in his division at General Motors. He employed alternative dress codes, physical arrangements, and formal practices to promote an oppositional culture within the company. It may be that leadership by individuals has a greater role to play in the fostering of contracultures than of subcultures, but studies of informal organization have frequently pointed to the important role played by leaders in the context of subcultures (Homans 1950). The issue of how senior organizational leaders deal with subcultural variety within organizations also needs greater attention than it has been given so far, but the main contribution of the differentiation perspective is that it departs from the naive view of consensus within organizations and of leaders as sources of that integration.

Fragmentation Perspective

Martin distinguishes a third approach to reading organizational cultures - the fragmentation perspective. This approach seems almost to decentre if not eliminate the role of leadership in organizational cultures. The fragmentation perspective characterizes organizational cultures as suffused with ambiguity and confusion. The meaning of cultural artifacts and their relationships to each other are unclear and confusing to members of the organization. The sheer complexity and heterogeneity of modern organizations tends to engender cultures whose elements lack the capacity to provide 'sense-making' that was often attributed to them by earlier generations of culture researchers in the early 1980s and by the exponents of the integration perspective in particular. The decentring of leadership in the fragmentation perspective can be discerned though a number of themes in Martin's (1992) writing, though it is not confronted in a direct way. She argues that the perspective offers very few guidelines to those individuals (presumably mainly senior executives) who might wish to implement cultural change. Indeed, from the fragmentation perspective the attempt to impose a coherent culture by dint of one's organizational vision is futile and dishonest because it fails to acknowledge the diversity, ambiguity and fluidity of modern cultures. However, the fragmentation perspective need not marginalize leadership as much as Martin's analysis implies.

An important feature of leadership within the fragmentation perspective is that leaders, far from being the sources of a coherent world-view as in the integration perspective, may come to be sources of ambiguity themselves, an observation that is consistent with Alvesson and Sveningsson's (2003) previously mentioned research. Tierney (1989) notes how the presidents of 32 higher education establishments in which he conducted

his research frequently sent out symbols, which were inconsistent with other cultural elements or with other symbols in which they dealt.

In another investigation, an ethnographic study of a catholic liberal arts college in crisis, Tierney (1987) shows how others consistently misunderstood the new leader's symbols and messages. The new president, Sister Vera, attempted to change the organization's culture from a family orientation to a more professional one. She introduced an Executive Committee as a forum for the discussion of important decisions and to broaden the constituency of staff involved in decision-making. For Sister Vera, the Executive Committee was meant to symbolize a shift away from autocracy and towards a team approach to decision-making, but instead of signifying 'open communication and more team involvement' it actually signified the opposite (1987: 242). When she decided that the committee's agenda should be published as a further sign of her commitment to openness, this too was widely interpreted as the opposite of what was intended. Even her 'open door' policy was interpreted, not as a symbol of openness, but as indicative of a failure of communication. In large part, this misinterpretation (though within a fragmentation perspective it is questionable whether the notion of misinterpretation has any meaning) arose because of the clash between the open door and other signs and symbols that she emitted that indicated otherwise, such as her practice of not going into staff members' rooms to chat to them.

This case and the fragmentation perspective more generally may provide a lesson, which shows that leaders' signs and symbols may be inherently more tenuous and equivocal than has typically been appreciated. Equally, the case demonstrates how matters of leadership can have a significant role within the purview of the fragmentation perspective, but perhaps their chief frame of reference is not so much leadership as the management of meaning as the transmission of equivocality. The former is intentional and is indicated by attempt to impose clear-cut meanings on others; the second is often an unintended consequence of the management of meaning in that the resulting messages may be more ambiguous to the listener than is typically appreciated by writers within the integration perspective and leaders themselves.

Imaginative Consumption of Culture

In support of the fragmentation perspective is the notion of the imaginative consumption of culture. This notion receives reinforcement from an emerging emphasis within organizational culture research on how culture is received. Linstead and Grafton-Small argue for greater understanding 'through the examination of users' meanings and the practice of *bricolage*' of the creativity that is involved in culture *consumption* (1992: 332). This orientation shifts attention away from examinations of culture production, which is the main interest of New Leadership, culture management and integration perspective writers, towards the investigation of the imaginative consumption of cultural messages. In the process the role of leadership in culture production shifts from the centre to the periphery of the empirical agenda. This kind of position can be discerned in Hatch's (1993) reworking of an ethnographic investigation of strategic change by the new president at a large US university who employed a 'symbolic vision' to propel the change (Gioia and Chittipeddi 1991). Hatch notes that the president's actions underwent modifications and were even resisted by many organizational members. She argues that:

Although the president was a major player in the initiation of strategic change, his influence depended heavily on the ways in which others symbolized and interpreted his efforts. The outcome of the president's influence ultimately rested with others' interpretations and the effect these interpretations had on cultural assumptions and expectations. In this light, it is worthwhile questioning whether the president was as central to the initiation effort, or the organizational culture, as he first appeared to be. (Hatch 1993: 681–2)

The implication which can be derived from Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) and Hatch (1993), as well as from the foregoing discussion of leadership within a fragmentation perspective, is that organizational members are not passive receptacles, but *imaginative consumers*, of leaders' visions and of manipulated cultural artifacts.

Similarly, Martin et al. (1998) conducted research on a leader-led culture change programme in a British local authority and found considerable skepticism about the programme, as well as apparent misinterpretations of its main tenets. Research such as this reminds us that organizational participants interpret and react to the cultural messages that leaders purvey and as such do not react as automata. They forge their own meanings of cultural messages and symbols.

There is much that is attractive about this view of organizational members as imaginative consumers of culture. There is a kind of optimism in the view that people are able to carve out spheres of interpretative autonomy which distance them from the mind-games of leaders who attempt to control what others think and feel. It countervails the tendency for studies of organizational culture to adopt the managerialist, normative stance with an emphasis on the control that was identified by Barley et al. (1988). It also has affinities with the interpretative stance with which much culture research is imbued (for example, Louis 1991), but as Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992) recognize, it is inconsistent with the emphasis on shared meanings that is a feature of much interpretative thinking. Also, it is congruent with and probably requires the kind of in-depth ethnographic approach to which many culture researchers are drawn.

Control of the Cultural Agenda

However, the implicit optimism of the imaginative consumer account of organizational culture and of the roles of leaders in relation to it requires an element of caution. It must not be forgotten that visions and the cultures, which may spring from them, are attempts to frame people's ways of thinking. This is not to suggest that organizational members passively absorb cultural messages, but that these messages set limits and boundaries on how people are supposed to think and respond. The very language within which visions and cultures are couched and the intentional privileging of some themes and issues over others frame how people think about organizational issues, even if it means that some people reject the message or react with cynicism. The rejection of the messages takes place within the frame of those messages. Organizational members can only respond to the messages that are transmitted. They cannot be imaginative consumers of cultural messages that are absent. Those messages, which are transmitted, will have been designed with certain effects (such as control, performance enhancement, or reorientation) at their core. They may have a greater impact on how members think about organizational issues than the emphasis on imaginative consumption implies, since senior leaders' control over the cultural agenda means that many potential themes do not surface. Organizational members cannot be imaginative consumers of willfully omitted messages and symbols and therefore the impact of cultural manipulation and of the part played by leaders in moulding organizational members' thinking should not be under-estimated. Instead, there should be direct examination of the extent to which leaders' attempts to manage culture are subverted in the act of consumption by others. This would involve attention being paid to the significance of leaders' control over the cultural agenda as well as to how the messages and symbols are consumed. A balance is needed in empirical investigation, which assumes that people are neither cultural dopes who passively imbibe cultural messages emanating from leaders, nor that the manipulation of organizational culture is constantly being undermined through imaginative consumption on the part of organizational members. The former position also invites us to question the seeming omnipotence with which leaders are often imbued by New Leadership writers, whereby the capacity of leaders to effect fundamental change is barely questioned.

Opportunities for Research

The examination of leadership in relation to organizational culture has been a fertile area for theory and research. After an initially rather naive view in which leaders were viewed as builders of cultures, which in turn had an impact on the thinking and behaviour of members of the organization, the role of leaders and the implications of culture were problematized. Leadership seemed to be marginalized as a focus for analysis. It is being suggested here that the processes whereby leaders frame the ways in which members conceptualize organizational concerns and how the ensuing culture closes down alternative discourses and modes of thinking

should be major issues in their own right. When issues such as these have been touched on, it has been shown that even when a culture and the vision that maintains it is treated with considerable skepticism, the culture nonetheless has considerable implications for how people apprehend organizational matters (e.g. Smircich and Morgan 1982; Smircich 1983). Interestingly, there is an affinity between the fragmentation perspective and the emerging focus on distributed leadership in that both emphasize the diffusion of power. Also culture can be instrumental (or not) in conditioning people's responsiveness to such things as self-leadership. However, a fragmentation analysis invites us to question whether the symbols of a cultural emphasis on dispersed leadership will be unambiguously understood and whether it might sometimes be viewed as a political maneuver for securing greater effort from employees under the guise of handing over greater responsibility and empowerment.

Gender and Leadership

There is no consensus in the literature about gender differences in leadership styles. For example, only weak evidence exists suggesting that women display more transformational leadership than men (e.g. Eagly and Johnson 1990; Bass and Avolio 1994; Bass 1998). Eagly et al.'s (2003) meta-analysis of transformational leadership research revealed a slight but significantly more frequent display of transformational leadership by women over men. Some studies point to gender differences in particular behaviours. For example, Astin and Leland (1992, cited in Tucker et al. 1999) found that women believe more so than men that listening to and empowering followers is important, and are more likely to use conferences and networks to achieve results. Burke and McKeen (1992) suggest that such differences occur because men and women view the world differently, and consequently male leaders seek autonomy and control over their followers, while women favour connection and relatedness.

Furthermore, people do have stereotypical beliefs about 'natural' leadership gender styles (Cann and Siegfried 1990), and these might influence actual behaviours within the work place. Eagly's (1987) social role theory suggests that to avoid criticism and to achieve praise, people behave consistent with society's expectations of their gender. Therefore, as leaders women will strive to be nurturing and caring, while men will be more task-focused, ambitious and competitive. In a large-scale meta-analysis of organizational, laboratory and assessment studies, Eagly and Johnson (1990) reported small, but reliable gender differences in leadership style. Female leaders were found to emphasize both interpersonal relations and task accomplishment more than men. However, these differences reduced considerably among organizational leaders vis-à-vis leaders at lower levels. These findings suggest that women might engage in more social processes by establishing more interpersonal relations as well as clarifying task objectives and resolving uncertainties.

Eagly and Johnson's (1990) findings suggest that leadership processes might vary according to the gender composition of the workplace as much as the gender dominance of the industry. Chatman and O'Reilly (2004) found that women expressed greater commitment, positive affect and perceptions of cooperation when they worked in all-female groups. Walker et al. (1996) found that in mixed sex groups, men were much more likely to exercise opinion leadership than women.

Gardiner and Tiggemann (1999) found that women and men in male-dominated industries did not differ in their interpersonal leadership orientation, however women in female-dominated industries were more interpersonally oriented than men. Furthermore, women exhibiting an interpersonal oriented leadership style in male-dominated industries reported worse levels of mental health. This finding suggests that both the gender of leader as well as the gender ratio of the industry in general affects leadership styles, although the findings are inconclusive overall. Clearly, one future direction for research is to assess the impact on leadership of gender domination in the workplace and within the industry generally.

Methodological and Epistemological Issues in the Study of Leadership

There can be little doubt that the bulk of leadership research has been conducted within the tradition of

quantitative research in which leadership variables are related to various outcomes. That domination is enduring. Qualitative research has had increasing influence on the field, but the change in trend has been slow in emerging. The drift towards the New Leadership approach in the 1980s and the growing interest in organizational culture and post-transformational perspectives resulted in greater use of qualitative research. Within the New Leadership approach, there has been greater emphasis on the leader as a manager of meaning. This emphasis has led to an awareness that the ways in which this process occurs requires in-depth understanding of particular cases and detailed probing among both leaders and subordinates of aims and impacts. To such ends, a methodological strategy seems to be required which involves observation, in-depth interviewing and the detailed examination of documents, all of which are closely associated with qualitative research. Another strategy is dramaturgical analysis of the discourse associated with leadership (Gardner 1992; Starratt 1993; Gardner and Avolio 1998; Harvey 2001; Clark and Mangham 2004). Gardner and Avolio examined charismatic leadership from the perspective of it being a performance, with a script, plot, audience, stage, and emotional and cognitive impact upon the intended audience.

The role that is typically given to qualitative research by quantitative researchers is as preparation; in other words, if it has a role at all, qualitative research has often been reduced to a source of hypotheses to be taken up by quantitative researchers for subsequent verification. Such a division of labour keeps quantitative research very much in the methodological driver's seat. However, in the social sciences at large there is a growing recognition of the contribution that qualitative studies can make. In the process of generating such recognition, it has been necessary to discard some of the baggage of epistemological debate that has sometimes held back discussions of quantitative and qualitative research. For some writers, quantitative research is ineluctably tied to the label of positivism, while qualitative research is similarly enjoined with phenomenology. As a result of such associations, quantitative and qualitative research is deemed to be irreconcilable paradigms because of their incompatible epistemological underpinnings (e.g. Smith and Heshusius 1986). An alternative view is to recognize that quantitative and qualitative research are simply different approaches to the research process, and as such can be mutually informative and illuminating about an area like leadership, and can even be combined (Bryman 1988; Conger 1998; Bryman and Bell 2003; Kan and Parry 2004).

There can be little doubt that quantitative research on leadership offers huge advantages to the researcher who wants clear-cut specification of causal connections between different types of leader behaviour and various outcomes (like subordinate job satisfaction and performance) under specific conditions. The very fact that the New Leadership has been dominated by a quantitative research approach is a testament to these strengths, which can be seen in the stream of research deriving from Bass's work, as well as that of alternative quantitative research approaches such as those of Podsakoff et al. (1990), Kouzes and Posner (1998), Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) and Schriesheim et al. (1995). On the other hand, qualitative research brings to the study of leadership an approach that sees leadership through the eyes of leaders and followers. In the process, the very notion of leadership is problematized by depicting the variety of meanings associated with 'leadership' or of 'good leadership' among leaders and followers (e.g. Mumford and Van Doorn 2001).

Qualitative research is also acutely sensitive to the contexts of leadership. Through the use of a single case over time or the judicious comparison of cases, the qualitative researcher is able to highlight specific features of context and how they impinge on leaders (Bryman 2004). In the multiple case study by Bryman et al. (1988) of three construction projects in England, the specific circumstances of such projects and the variations in those circumstances proved to be important factors which influenced the styles of construction project leaders. Also, qualitative research can be especially instructive when it comes to the examination of processes of leadership. By 'process' is here meant how leadership is accomplished and how leadership impacts occur over time. In detailed case studies, both features of a processual investigation may be in evidence. Examples include the basic social processes that emerge from grounded theory analysis of leadership phenomena. The social processes of 'resolving uncertainty' and 'enhancing adaptability' emerged from Parry's (1999) examination of the leadership processes at work in a local government amalgamation. Irurita's (1994) process of 'optimizing'

emerged from her examination of nursing leadership in an Australian city. Kan's theory of 'identifying paradox' (Kan and Parry 2004) emerged from her research into leadership within a major hospital in New Zealand. All these processes emerged as the essence of the leadership process being enacted in each setting.

Equally, as in the social sciences generally, quantitative and qualitative studies can usefully be combined (Bryman 1988; Bryman and Bell 2003, chapter 22) and conducted concurrently as readily as they can be conducted consecutively. The use of quantitative and qualitative research in tandem is still quite unusual in leadership studies. One major example is House et al.'s (2004) GLOBE study of leadership around the world. It combined a range of methodologies to research organizational leadership within the context of the culture of the society within which that leadership was embedded. Kirby et al. (1992) employed a combined approach in the context of an investigation of school leaders and found a slight difference between the two sets of findings. When they employed Bass's framework and measures, their findings were extremely similar to those typically found by researchers using this approach. By contrast, their analysis of narrative descriptions of 'extraordinary leaders' found that the capacity of leaders to provide opportunities for professional development was more prominent than the kinds of leadership orientation identified by Bass. Kan and Parry (2004) found conflicting results between qualitative data and quantitative data. The quantitative questionnaire data, using Bass and Avolio's MLQ, suggested that there was considerable leadership being displayed. The qualitative data, mainly from observation and interview, suggested that leadership was not being realized within that particular organizational context. Further theoretical coding analysis of the questionnaire data and of new and existing qualitative data provided a resolution of this apparent paradox. The managers who were the subject of the questionnaire were attempting to display leadership, rather than successfully displaying it, because of the characteristics of the culture of the workforce and the deep power structures underlying the working environment. Either data set, by itself, would have provided an inaccurate perspective on the leadership processes that were in operation. Together, and analyzed qualitatively, they provided a richer and more accurate and insightful interpretation of the phenomenon. Egri and Herman (2000) also used qualitative and quantitative data as well as both types of analysis in their examination of leadership in the environmental sector. Once again, the impact of context upon leadership could be determined, along with other psychological variables such as personal values, need for achievement and the like.

It is easy to view these differences within a framework of 'triangulation' (Jick 1979; Webb et al. 1966) and to ask which is right. However, a much more promising avenue is to ask why the different contexts of questioning produce contrasting results and to see them as having gained access to different levels of cognition about leadership - general behaviours in the case of the quantitative study and more specific behaviours in the qualitative one - and to recognize that the research question needs to be linked to the appropriate kind of research design and instruments.

The injection of qualitative research into the study of leadership has great potential for the field. More particularly, the *concurrent* use of multiple sources of data and multiple methods of analysis seem to have greatest potential. It can allow a different set of questions to be addressed and can address issues that are not readily accessible to a quantitative approach. For example, informal leadership has typically been neglected by quantitative researchers but may be more accessible to qualitative research. One of the reasons quantitative researchers concentrate on leaders is that they provide a ready-made focus for the administration of questionnaires. If acts of leadership are indeed dispersed, an important issue for researchers is that of identifying leadership and the acts and skills associated with it. Qualitative research is much more likely to provide the open-endedness that such a stance requires.

There continues to be great optimism about the field of leadership in organizations. In shifting towards a range of post-transformational approaches to the phenomenon of leadership, and in recognizing the potential of a greater range of research styles, the subject is well placed as a major area within the field of organization studies.

Overview

There is clearly much greater optimism about the field of leadership in organizations than in the early 1980s. In shifting towards a view of leadership as the management of meaning and in recognising the potential of a greater range of research styles, the subject is well placed as a major area within the field of organization studies. Here we want to suggest two issues that are of particular significance. Firstly, leadership theory and research has been remarkably and surprisingly uncoupled from organization theory more generally, in spite of the fact that the two fields clearly have implications for each other. Thus, for example, one of the more influential theories in the field since the late 1970s has been the population ecology perspective (Hannan and Freeman 1984). This approach represents something of an implicit critique of leadership theory and research, but has hardly been acknowledged as such by those working within the leadership field. Population ecology proposes that the environments within which populations of organizations operate have a limited carrying capacity and that as a result some organizations are 'selected out' and die. This perspective suggests that human agency is of limited help in effecting the survival of organizations. The implications for the study of leadership are considerable because population ecology seems to reduce the importance of leadership greatly. The specific issue of whether leadership can make a difference to organizational survival is an important one for students of leadership and cannot be ignored.

Secondly, one feature that leadership theory and research of recent years shares with organization theory (and indeed the social sciences more generally) is the growing influence of research methods and research designs that lie outside the field's dominant methodological paradigm. As we have shown in this chapter, studies of leadership involving qualitative research and case studies, for example, have become much more commonly seen in the journals than in the past, although the majority of research in this area continues to involve experimental or questionnaire studies (Lowe and Gardner 2000). However, the growing influence of methodological approaches that lie outside the conventional paradigm is significant in at least two respects. First, it has resulted in a greater sense of eclecticism in the field. Second, a considerable number of researchers who have employed alternative methodological approaches have been from outside North America. As House and Aditya (1997: 409) have observed, the main theories of leadership and around 98 per cent of the empirical evidence 'are distinctly American in character'. While some writers have employed qualitative research to illuminate aspects of leadership that are associated with the conventional ways of approaching leadership, others have employed it to explore areas that are not typically emphasized (for example, the discursive aspects of leading or the aesthetics of leadership). Thus, the growing use of qualitative research is associated with a wider variety of aspects of leadership being the focus of attention and the greater impact of non-American writers and ways of approaching the field.

Perhaps for these reasons, one senses less pessimism about the field than when writers summarized developments in theory and research in the 1970s through the early 1990s. Avolio et al. (2003: 277) have remarked that part of the way through many conferences on leadership someone intones: 'Never has a construct been studied so much that we know so little about.' These authors argue that this remark is both obsolete and wrong, and indeed we have a sense that such a remark is unlikely to be heard nowadays. The growing infusion of new approaches, methodologies, and writers from outside the North American orbit has almost certainly contributed to a greater degree of optimism about the field, such that calls like Miner's (1975) for the leadership concept to be abandoned are both far less likely to be heard and less credible when viewed in relation to the exciting and productive field that leadership has become.

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