The Leader-Follower Relationship:

A Leader-Follower Perspective

Michael Joseph Holton

MSc in Management

National College of Ireland

"Submitted to the National College of Ireland, (September) (2014)"

Abstract

There has been insufficient research into leadership in the Irish civil service. There has been even less research into followership in the Irish civil service. This research study aimed to fill this research gap by exploring the leader-follower relationship in the Irish civil service from the perspective of leader-followers.

A leader-follower is a person who occupies the roles of leader and follower simultaneously. The leader-follower relationship is the social interaction that occurs between leaders and followers as they fulfil (and occasionally alternate in) these roles. It is a complex, continuously changing relationship subject to numerous demands, choices and constraints.

This small-scale case study explored the experience of the leader-follower relationship in the Irish civil service from the perspective of leader-followers. A qualitative, interpretative research paradigm underpinned the exploratory case study methodology employed. The research methods consisted of content analysis of an earlier study into leadership, discourse analysis of semi-structured interviews with two leader-followers, and network analysis of segmented transcripts of those interviews.

This exploratory case study is intended as a pilot study since it offers actionable findings. These could serve as the foundation of a practical action research cycle to improve the practice of a leader-follower. The research study offers insights, illustrations and inductions rather than universal generalisations. These are principles for *phronesis*, or practical wisdom. For example, leader-followers should balance the need to delegate aligned tasks with the concomitant risk of operational distance.

Declaration

This dissertation was submitted in part fulfilment of a Master of Science in Management Degree at the National College of Ireland. The work herein is entirely my own production and all contributions have been appropriately acknowledged.

_____

Michael Holton

Student Number: 12110213

Dated: _____

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the advice and encouragement of my Supervisor, Fabian Armendariz, the importance of the review report by McCarthy, Grady and Dooley (2011) as a data source for this research, the impact and influence of numerous leader-followers during my time in the Irish civil service, the generosity and assistance of two specific leader-followers during this research study, and the inspiration of many other leader-followers within my life-span. Most importantly, I thank my wife, Cherie, for her encouragement and confidence during my time completing this dissertation – she is a true leader, whom I frequently and gladly follow.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Appendices

Appendix A – PO interview Questions

List of Abbreviations

Civil and Public Service Bodies:

AGS – An Garda Síochána

DJE – Department of Justice and Equality

Academic Theories:

DCC – Demands, Choices and Constraints

ZPD – Zone of Proximal Development

Civil Service Administration Grades:

AP – Assistant Principal Officer

AO – Administrative Officer

ASG – Assistant Secretary General

EO – Executive Officer

HEO – Higher Executive Officer

PO – Principal Officer

Chapter One – Introduction

1.1 Introduction

To understand a research study it is imperative that the research context, aims and objectives are delineated (Thomas, 2013; Creswell, 2014). This chapter explains why the leader-follower relationship is an important area of research in context of the Irish civil service, offers a definition of the leader-follower relationship and of the leader-follower, and presents the primary research question. Finally, an overview of the remaining dissertation chapters is given.

1.2 Research Context, Aims and Objectives

This research study was conducted within the context of the Irish civil service. The researcher had worked in the civil service for ten years at the time of the research and was interested in the experience and expectations of leaders with regard to followers. It was noted that the research in this area was leader-centric and the experience and expectations of followers was rarely sought or presented (McCarthy, et al., 2011). Therefore, research that was more follower-centric was needed. Additionally, since the researcher was motivated to find recommendations to improve his practice as a follower and to comprehend the expectations of leaders regarding the leader-follower relationship it was considered appropriate to employ a qualitative methodology to explore the perception of that relationship (Berg, 2009; Foreman-Peck & Winch, 2010).

1.3 The Leader-Follower Relationship

The leader-follower relationship is a fundamental human dimension of the leadership process (Hollander, 2008). It recognises that relationality, not merely positionality, is a key determinant in the success of leaders to influence followers (McKee, et al., 2008). Two definitions of the leader-follower relationship were employed in this research study (Foster, 2010). First, the leader-follower relationship is a binary connection between two (or more) persons where the roles and responsibilities of leadership and followership alternate between them in complex ways. Second, a particular person can be a leader-follower in that they possess both leadership and followership

responsibilities simultaneously. This makes their experience of the leader-follower relationship even more diverse, complex and challenging (Brown, 2003).

1.4 The Research Question

The primary research question that guided this qualitative enquiry was:

What are the expectations and experiences of the leader-follower relationship within the Irish civil service from the perspective of leader-followers (at PO level)?

This question was appropriately broad enough to address other subquestions, and yet, at the same time, the scope was purposively narrowed to a consideration of leader-followers (at PO level) within the Irish civil service.

1.5 Dissertation Overview

This introductory chapter has explained that the researcher's workplace experience and the lack of relevant research motivated this exploratory case study into the leader-follower. Chapter two reviews literature relevant to the leader-follower relationship, the teacher-learner relationship and the civil service. Chapter three delineates and defends the research design as an exploratory case study. Chapter four presents the data findings using network analysis of leadership, followership and the relationship. Chapter five critically reviews the findings in light of the literature. Chapter six suggests further research, notes delimitations and offers actionable recommendations.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

A review of literature is essential prior to engaging in any research study (Collis & Hussey, 2009). It guides the expectations of the researcher (Berg, 2009), informs the development of proposed research instruments (Eaterby-Smith, et al., 2008), assists in determining the appropriate methodology (Creswell, 2014), and offers points of comparison for the data subsequently collected (Foreman-Peck & Winch, 2010). The review of literature can influence the direction subsequent research takes, especially in flexible research designs (Cousin, 2009), thereby changing the research question, research methodology, and research participants (Creswell, 2014). This was the case in this research study.

The literature review involved a systematic study of relevant articles, papers, reports and text books in the areas of leadership, followership, education and qualitative research methods (Partington, 2002). It was imperative to consult the literature on the various theories, themes, constructs and categories that were explored and utilised in this case study (Collis & Hussey, 2009). The most salient aspects of this consultation are presented in relation to the following areas:

- The leader-follower relationship
- The teacher-learner relationship
- The Irish civil service context

2.2 Leadership, Followership and the Leader-Follower Relationship

Various theories have been proposed for the nature of leadership, including trait, contingency, transactional, transformational, situational, charismatic and servant theories (Martin, 2007; Marturano & Gosling, 2008; Ulrich, et al., 2008). Bennis and Thomas (2007) argue that leadership is shaped by important defining moments in the life of the leader, and this is supported by self-reported anecdotes (McDermott & Flood, 2010). Although some view leadership as linked to definable personality traits (Chell, 2008), others insist that this view

needs to be challenged (Bones, 2011). Leadership is not easy, and in most cases, is not purely natural (Frohman & Howard, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). There are normative claims that leadership should be authentic, ethical, resonant, or total (Friedman, 2008; Goffee & Jones, 2006; McKee, et al., 2008; Mendonca & Kanungo, 2007). Although the definition of leadership is still hotly contested (Marturano & Gosling, 2008, pp. 94-98) it is increasingly recognised that leadership is *relational* rather than merely *positional* and that it involves 'influence' rather than merely legitimate authority or power (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; McKee, et al., 2008). Such influence can be dispersed throughout an organisation (Chia & Robin, 2009; Marturano & Gosling, 2008). Leadership is a process that includes the relationship between the leader and followers (Hollander, 2008; Goffee & Jones, 2006; Northhouse, 2010).

The literature almost[1] universally acknowledges that leadership is not the same process as management although each can involve elements of the other (Mintzberg, 1973; 1990) – See Figure 2.1.
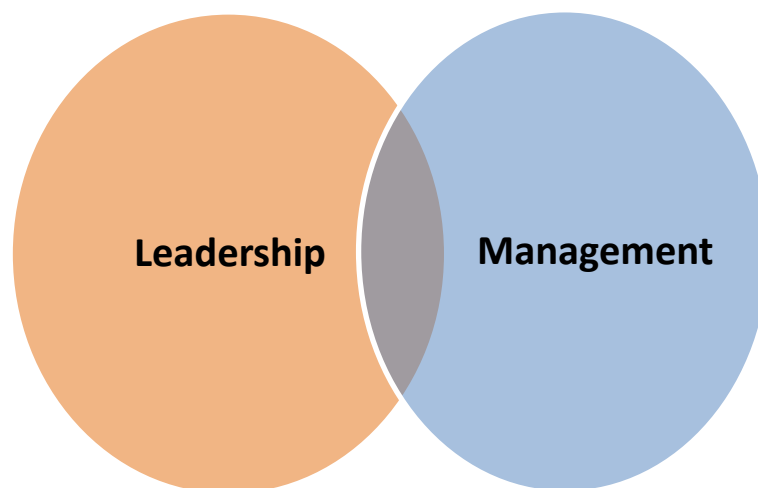
Figure 2.1: The Relationship between Leadership and Management

---

[1] There are some dissenting voices (Marturano & Gosling, 2008, p. 97).

The area of overlap varies depending on the positionality of the leader/manager, the contextual circumstances and even diachronically (i.e. through time). A manager may need to be a leader in some situations but not in others, while a leader may need to manage only rarely (or macro-manage) or may need to manage most things (micromanage) depending on the nature of the organisation (Blundel & Lockett, 2011). Stewart's (1982; Wahlgren, 2003) *Demands, Choices & Constraints* (DCC) *Management Model* (Figure 2.2) seems to apply equally well to leaders, and indeed, can be extended to organisations themselves (Burns, 2013).
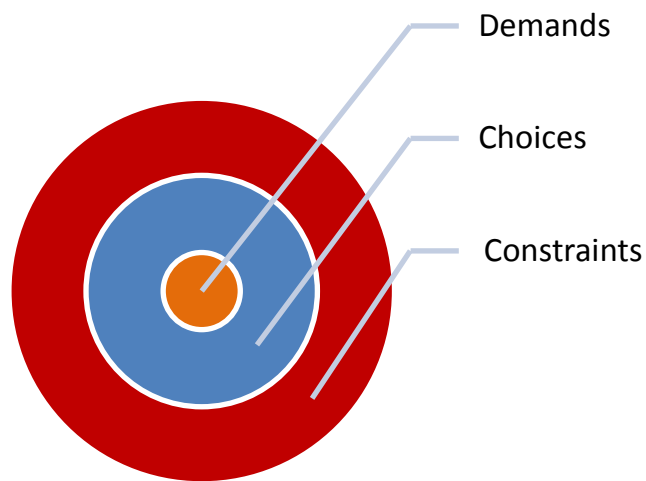
Figure 2.2: Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model*

The demands are activities that **must** be done (e.g., contractual obligations, meetings, etc.). The constraints are activities that **can't** be done (e.g., due to limitations of resources, technology, etc.). The choices are found in the arena between the outward pushing demands and the inward pulling constraints. The choices are the activities that **can** be done given the respective demands and constraints. It is here that a leader's creativity can bring a competitive advantage (Dodgson & Gann, 2010; Herbert, 2010; Burns, 2013). Mintzberg's (1990) diverse managerial roles can be accommodated within this model. The manager may have demands to fulfil interpersonal, informational and decisional roles but he also has choices about how to fulfil these roles. Therefore, Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* is comprehensive enough to encompass Mintzberg's

roles within it. So, rather than "move on from Mintzberg's roles", there is really a need to move Mintzberg's roles within the Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model*. This conceptual model can be utilized to understand the divergent flexibility exhibited by managers in fulfilling *common* managerial roles (Mintzberg, 1973; Mintzberg, 1990; Wahlgren, 2003).

Similarly, a transformative leader, acting in the arena of choices with authentic creativity, can be a change-agent and contribute to achieving the organisation's objectives in an innovative and proactive way (Burns, 2013; De Wit & Meyer, 2010; Hamel, et al., 1998; Huczynski, 2004; Novak, 2012). Such genuine and authentic leadership can transform the organisation (Johnson, et al., 2012). In embarking on such transformative endeavours, leaders need to consider the importance of people *and* products: they need to influence relationships *and* tasks (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; McCarthy, et al., 2011; McDermott & Flood, 2010). Since the qualities, traits, characteristics, behaviour and actions that are important for leadership have been extensively researched and discussed (Kouzes & Posner, 2007) there is a widespread tendency to overestimate the importance of leadership (Hollander, 2008; Marturano & Gosling, 2008). There is overwhelming glorification of leadership and of successful leaders in most societies, businesses and organisations (Bones, 2011; Grayson & Speckhart, 2006).

Leadership studies have traditionally been too leader-centric but have begun to recognise the important role that followers play in the ability of leaders to lead, and indeed, in the ability of organisations to function (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; Novak, 2012). The leader-follower relationship is intrinsic to the success of both the leader and the follower and to the accomplishment of the organisational strategy (Carpenter, 2009; Gallagher, 2009; Hollander, 2008). Indeed, leadership should be understood as dispersed throughout an organisation (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; Chia & Robin, 2009) and as involving both the process and "product of complex social relationships" (McCarthy, et al., 2011, p. 15). Although there has been an increasing recognition of the importance of

followership and followers (Chaleff, 1995; Brown, 2003; Goffee & Jones, 2006), the literature still disproportionately discusses the role of the leader (Grayson & Speckhart, 2006; Marturano & Gosling, 2008). This undermines the importance of followership and actually distorts the attempt to comprehend and capture the essence of successful leadership (Hollander, 1995; Ruiz, et al., 2011). The importance of the relationship is shown in the fact that the attitudes and behaviour of the one affect the attitudes and behaviour of the other (Ruiz, et al., 2011; Van Dick, et al., 2007).

This fact is one reason for the importance and relevance of the concepts of servant, transformational, ethical and inclusive leadership (Northhouse, 2010). Indeed, many of the leadership theories and management models postulated in the literature can apply to the roles and responsibilities of followers, at least on occasion (Raelin, 2003). For example, Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* can be applied by followers or subordinates in an organisation (Wahlgren, 2003). Interestingly, "followers and leaders orbit around the [same] purpose: followers do not orbit around the leader" (Chaleff, 2003, p. 220). This clearly indicates that followers can display many important leadership qualities and roles in pursuit of their goals (Raelin, 2003; Turak, 2012).[2]

Of course, if it is true that there has been a "dearth of literature on public service leadership in particular" (McCarthy, et al., 2011, p. 17; Van Wart, 2003), or that there has been comparatively little research into the importance of followership in general (Grayson & Speckhart, 2006), then it is certainly true that there has been insufficient research into the leader-follower relationship from the perspective of the leader-follower. The leader-follower can be defined in the following two ways (Foster, 2010). First, the leader-follower can be defined as an alternating binary connection between *two persons* – where one person who sometimes occupies the roles and responsibilities of a leader (while the other person occupies the roles and responsibilities of a follower) assumes *under*

---

[2] Especially the first follower – see http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fW8amMCVAJQ, http://sivers.org/ff, or http://www.ted.com/talks/derek_sivers_how_to_start_a_movement/transcript#t-5068.

certain conditions the roles and responsibilities of a follower while the other person assumes the roles and responsibilities of a leader. Hence the roles occupied by the two people can always be defined as leader-follower but the particular person assuming those roles alternates. Therefore, "A leader-follower is simply where "at any one time, leaders assume followers' roles and followers assume leadership roles" (Gilbert & Matviuk, 2008) which implies a system of "two or more persons working together" (Pitron, 2008).

Such a definition can be really illuminating when exploring the leader-follower relationship and as such this definition is paramount in this particular research study. Indeed, within such a leader-follower relationship "followership escapes the box of simple subordination … opens up opportunities for innovative followership that generates and enhances growth within their leader" (Gilbert & Matviuk, 2008). Therefore, Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* is applicable to the follower *qua* leader in such a leader-follower relationship.

A second definition comes from treating the term as a noun; that is, as a descriptive noun that refers to the same person: the leader-follower. Such a person occupies both leadership and followership roles simultaneously and so they experience the leader-follower relationship from both perspectives, as a leader and as a follower. This gives us a quadrant of possibilities for the individual leader-follower in the alternating roles of leader and follower (See Figure 2.3). The blue central circle area (divided into four pie slices) denotes the alternating positions assumed by the leader-follower while the two top squares reflect the leader[3] (as leader and/or as follower) and the two bottom squares reflect the follower[4] (as follower and/or as leader). This potentiality gives the leader-follower a complex set of possible social interactions and relationships to manage effectively.

---

[3] That is, the leader of the leader-follower.
[4] That is, the follower of the leader-follower.
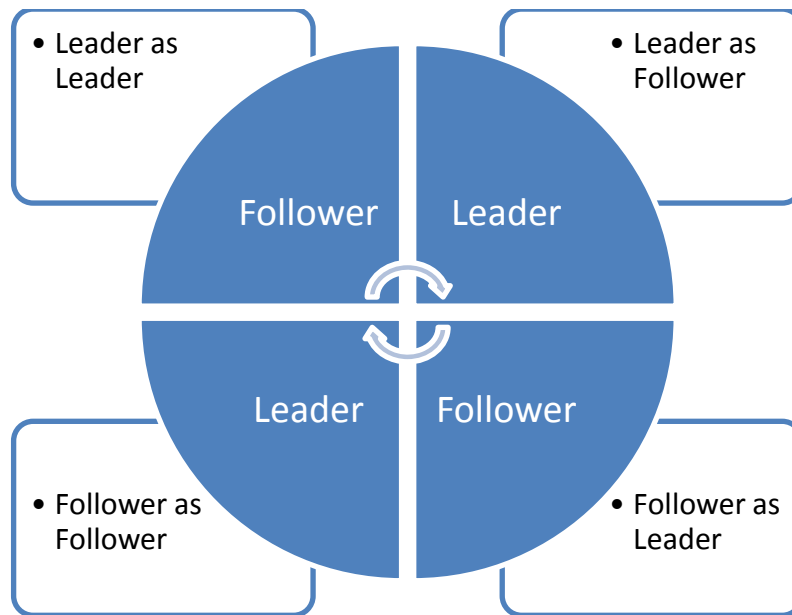
Figure 2.3: The Leader-Follower in Leader-Follower Relationships

Again, Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* is applicable. These two leader-follower definitions were merged in this research study since the unit of analysis was PO's, a primary leader-follower position in the Irish civil service. Fundamentally, leader-follower theory enables "followership to contain, within its definition, leadership concepts and contributions" (Gilbert & Matviuk, 2008).

Hegel's (1977) *Master/Slave Dialectic* offers an important insight into the leader-follower relationship. Although various interpretations of this myth can be posited (Cole, 2004; Giroux, 2001; Pinkard, 2010), the essence of the insight, for the purposes of this research study, is that the master and slave depend on each other for their designations. The master becomes a slave to the slave's labour – to his ability to produce and do things – while the slave is ennobled as a master over things the master is ignorant of. The point of the dialectic is that the roles of master and slave are, in some respects and under certain conditions, both alternating and reciprocal (Hollander, 2008). They are reversed. The relevance to the leader-follower relationship has already been asserted – the leader-follower relation is more than a binary connection – it is an interdependent relationship (Goffee & Jones, 2006; Gilbert & Matviuk, 2008). Leadership (and followership) transcend person and position – it is a process that is manifested in

a complex and dispersed web of human connections (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; Northhouse, 2010). The dialectic of alternating roles and responsibilities is the essential reality of the relationship – it is fluid rather than fixed, shifting rather than settled, and alternating rather than assigned (Evans, 2010).

2.3 Teaching, Learning and the Teacher-Learner Relationship

There has been less research on followership than on leadership (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; Maylor & Blackmon, 2005). This research study is a partial attempt to close this gap[5]. Additionally, there has not been sufficient exploration of the leader as a teacher and of the follower as a student and this seems a fruitful way to understand and explore the leader-follower relationship. Teaching and learning has been researched extensively and there is strong support for the claim that education should be learner-centred (Weimer, 2002), provided that knowledge transmission is still a priority (Alexander, 2009; Gill, 2008).

A fundamental claim that guided this research study was that educational research concerning the relationship between a teacher and a learner (Bandura, 1986; Candy, 1991; Jarvela & Jarvenoja, 2011; Jordan, et al., 2008; Knowles, 1975) can be used to explore and comprehend the relationship between the leader and the follower. Indeed, Gardner (2008) asserts that various leaders have used educational tools to change the minds of their followers – that is, they have treated their followers as learners and tried to change them through teaching.[6] Others advocate such an educational approach to the leader-follower relationship (McKee, et al., 2008; Carmichael, et al., 2011) but these also tend to be leader-centric. Vygotsky's (1978) *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD) is a prime example of an educational theoretical framework that can be used to explore the leader-follower relationship (See Figure 2.4).[7]

---

[5] The original research plan would have been a fuller attempt to close this gap as it would have focused solely on the researcher as a follower. Ethical reasons and time constraints altered the trajectory of this research. Of course, leader-followers are not merely leaders – they are also followers – and so this research can properly claim to be a partial attempt to study followership.
[6] He goes into great detail about the efforts of Margaret Thatcher, for example, to do so.
[7] It's similarity to Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* as characterised in this research study is noteworthy.
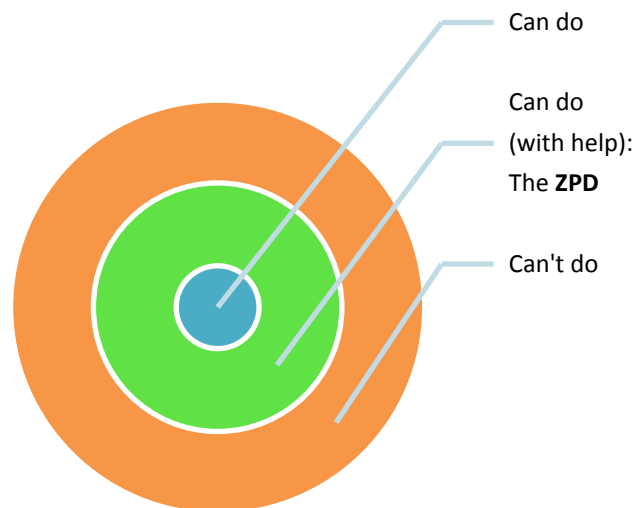
Figure 2.4: Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development

There are things that a leader (or follower) can do without any assistance (the inner expanding circle). There are things they cannot do even with assistance (the outer circle constraining them). Then, finally, there are things that they can do but only with the assistance of a teacher or a more experienced peer – this area (the middle circle) is known as the *Zone of Proximal Development* (ZPD). It is an ever-changing zone as the person learns to do increasingly difficult activities without help. There is also a collective ZPD (Moll & Whitmore, 1993) as a group can influence the learning and ability of individuals within it (See Figure 2.5).
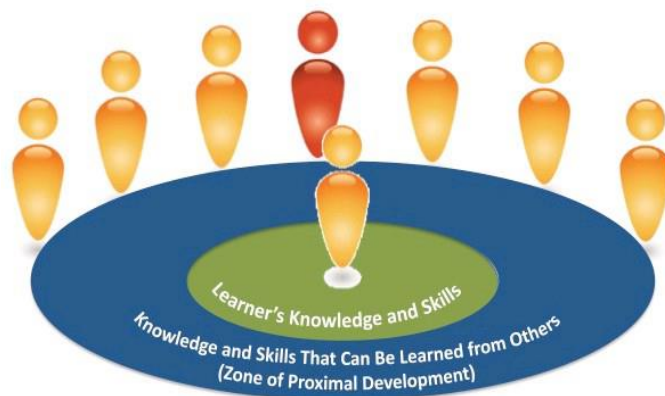
Figure 2.5: The "Collective" Zone of Proximal Development

This zone is essentially relational and involves the interactions of various human agents and is thus extremely complex and changeable. The traditional model of teaching (Jarvis, 2012; Jarvis & Parker, 2005; Winch, 2006), like the traditional model of leading (Evans, 2010; Northhouse, 2010), is insufficient to meet the demands of modern organisations in a globalised economy (Blundel & Lockett, 2011; Cetkovic & Zarkovic, 2012). Therefore, teaching should employ a more student-centred (Weimer, 2002), collaborative (Jaques & Salmon, 2007; Jarvela & Jarvenoja, 2011) approach to learning for the following reasons:

1. It is more real-world (Albanese & Mitchell, 1992; Dochy, et al., 2003; Coombs & Elden, 2004; Hemlo-Silver & Barrows, 2006),
2. It simulates (and stimulates) group work (Jaques & Salmon, 2007; Jarvela & Jarvenoja, 2011),
3. It encourages both independent and life-long learning (Broad, 2006; Candy, 1991), and
4. It develops self-regulated learners (Cassidy, 2012; Davis & Gray, 2007; Montalvo & Torres, 2004; Moos & Ringdal, 2012).

Such learners will be great assets to the learning community (Foster, 2010). Similarly, leading should move toward a more follower-centred collaborative approach (Gold, et al., 2010; Marturano & Gosling, 2008). That is, there is an important sense in which the leader is a teacher and the follower is a student. Obviously, an independent, self-directed, self-regulated student is better than one that is dependent, teacher directed and class-regulated. Similarly, a follower that is independent, proactive, self-directed and self-regulated can contribute more to an organisation than a subordinate who needs continual supervision (Burns, 2013). In essence, just as a modern student needs to become his own teacher so a follower needs to become his own leader. Motivation, self-monitoring and self-management are essential elements in this transformation (Pintrich, 1999; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Zimmerman, 2002; Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989) as a self-directed learner reaches for a specific self-chosen goal (See Figure 2.6).
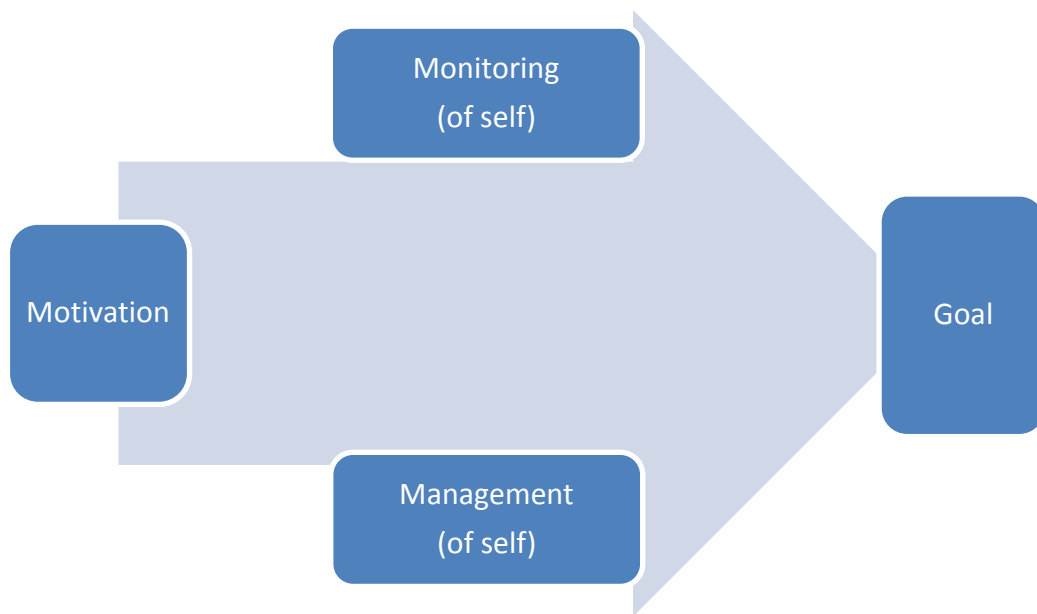
Figure 2.6: The process a self-regulated learner follows to achieve a goal

The process when followed self-reflectively leads to metacognition, which allows the student to learn how he learns. That is, the student reflects on the process to ascertain what they could manage better as shown in Figure 2.7.
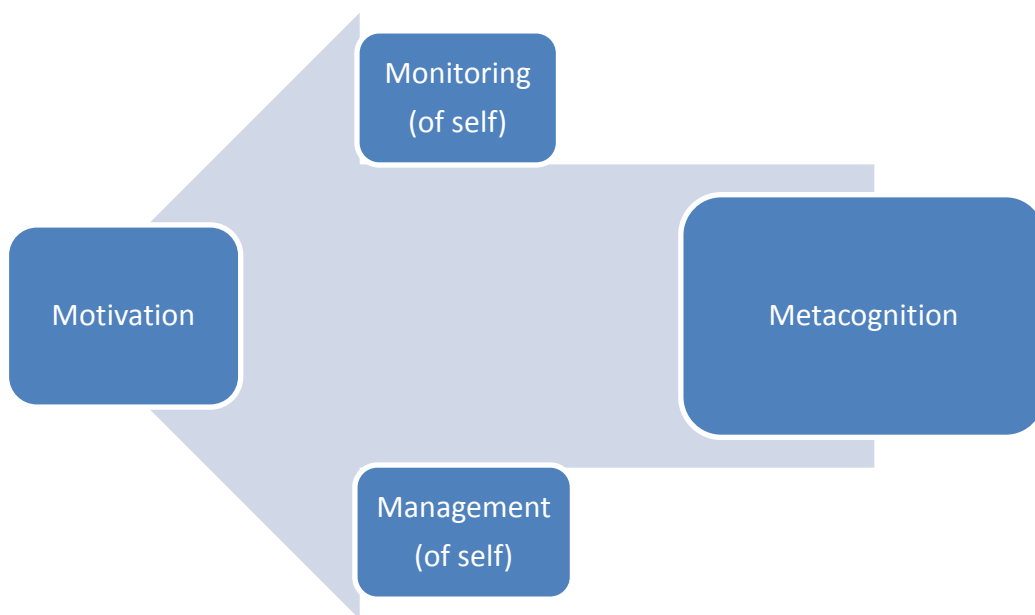
Figure 2.7: The self-regulated process results in greater metacognition

The resultant learning process can be denoted the *4-M Learning Process* (adapted from Pintrich, 1999; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Zimmerman, 2002; Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989), and involves:

1. Motivation
2. Monitoring (of Self)
3. Management (of Self)
4. Metacognition

The connection between this *4-M learning process* and the leader-follower relationship is this: The leader that fosters a climate where followers are self-regulated is also fostering greater success for his organisation and for the goals of his organisation. The follower that utilises such a *4-M learning process* will not only become a more competent follower but will also develop better leadership skills, traits and potential.

Weimer (2002) advocates changing the following five key areas of practice to encourage learner-centred learning:

1. The balance of power
2. The function of content
3. The role of the teacher
4. The responsibility for learning
5. The purpose and processes of evaluation

The balance of power shifts in leader-follower relationships since "followership and leadership are not so much about position, but about [the] ability to influence through behaviors and self-concept" (Gilbert & Matviuk, 2008). Content transfer is still paramount in the learning relationship but other elements of the relationship (usually ignored) can cement or contextualise the content (Noddings, 2007). We can transcend the usual tendency to posit strict pedagogical dichotomies (such as "student-centred *or* subject centred") by recognising the value of inclusive approaches (such as "student-centred *and*

subject centred") which admit that learners (and followers) can be important sources of information too (Alexander, 2009; Goffee & Jones, 2006). Hence, teachers (and leaders) should continue to instruct and inform (Gill, 2008; Kirschner, et al., 2006) but they should also illustrate and illuminate and accept a two-way instructional path (Hmelo-Silver, et al., 2007; Schmidt, et al., 2007). The role of the teacher (leader) is transformed in such a two-way relationship because it "opens up opportunities for innovative followership that generates and enhances growth within their leader" (Gilbert & Matviuk, 2008), such that the teacher is still learning (Carmichael, et al., 2011).

The responsibility for learning should be shared although the learner accepts increased responsibility for his own learning in the learner-centred approach (Weimer, 2002). Similarly, a follower accepts increased responsibility in a purpose-centred approach to organisational transformation (Burns, 2013; Foster, 2010). The leader-follower theory (and ironically, servant leadership theory) accepts that the follower has increased importance, influence and responsibility in the effective management of an organisation (Foster, 2010; Northhouse, 2010). Finally, the purpose and process of evaluation is transformed since the leader-follower (according to the first definition above) is an alternating binary connection. Rather than focusing merely on the achievement of tasks or objectives such evaluation will focus on transformation of the person diachronically. The *4-M learning process* is an example of effective evaluation (McKee, et al., 2008).

Figure 2.8: Leader-Follower and Teacher-Learner (Foster, 2010)

As shown in Figure 2.8, the teacher-learner relationship is an appropriate lens[8] through which to view the leader-follower relationship. Just as learners have increasing choices, responsibilities and influence in the modern educational context so followers have increasing power in the effective management of organisations so that they can be transformed into learning organisations (Foster, 2010; Northhouse, 2010). Leaders and followers revolve around the same purpose and must connect to solve practical problems.

2.4 The Leader-Follower Relationship in the Irish Civil Service

While there has been comparatively little research on leadership in the public sector (McCarthy, et al., 2011; Van Wart, 2003) there has been negligible research on followership in the public sector (Marturano & Gosling, 2008). This is puzzling since the effectiveness of the civil service is surely dependent on the effective utilisation of followers within it. Without the compliance and ability of followers to enact processes and perform tasks the civil service cannot function. The leader-follower relationship is an essential component in the functioning of the civil service. Some criticisms have focused on the dysfunctional nature of this relationship (Guerin, 2014; Toland, 2014).

For example, one report recounts the existence of "significant leadership and management problems", "ineffective management processes and structures", and the need for "a change in the leadership and management routines" (Toland, 2014:2). The report acknowledges the talent, skill and ability of most staff but highlighted "a lack of cohesive leadership and management practices", "poor management routines and practices" and "serious leadership and management failures" (Toland, 2014:8). At the heart of this failure in the leader-follower relationship are two factors: first "inadequate talent and leadership development programmes" (Toland 2014:10), and second, the lack of "a coherent, structured

---

[8] Other ways to view this relationship include that of the Principal-Agent relationship (Foster 2010) and Hegel's (1977) *Master/Slave Dialectic* (Giroux, 2001; Honneth, 2010).

communications strategy" or "clear communications processes" (Toland 2014:11).

An important quantitative study conducted into leadership in the Irish civil service (McCarthy, et al., 2011) explored this from a 360° review perspective. It offers important qualitative data that was utilised in this research study and which informed the primary data collection methods (interviews and reflective journal). An overview of this report is provided here and is essential for understanding the claims, assertions and recommendations of this research study. McCarthy, et al., (2011) utilised the Leadership Code (Ulrich, et al., 2008), as the theoretical framework to explore and explain the experience and expectation of leadership within the Irish civil service because it offers "a unified view of leadership" (p. 19) – (See Figure 2.9).
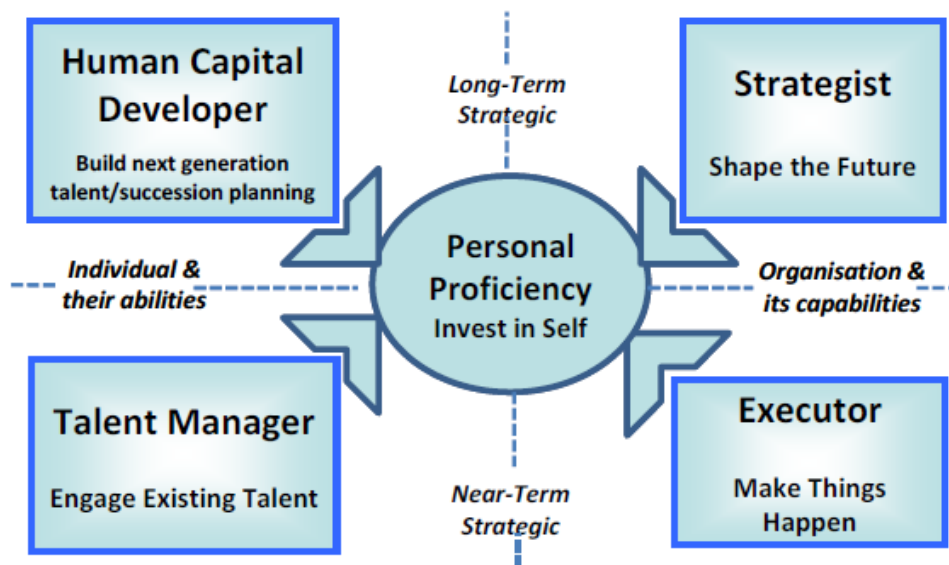
Figure 2.9: The Leadership Code

(Ulrich, et al., 2008, p. 18).

This model combines alternative approaches to leadership and recognises the centrality of the self (in leadership development), the importance of the

organisation (and its connection to the external environment) and the role of human talent as capital (both now and in the future). Hence it asserts that leaders should focus on both people and production, both relationships and tasks (Marturano & Gosling, 2008; McDermott & Flood, 2010). It also respects the important diachronic element of leadership. In summary:

> The model is based on the premise that being an effective leader starts with the self. The leader must model what they want others to master. This dimension of "personal proficiency" is at the core of effective leadership. Without personal proficiency it is not possible to keep the other dimensions in balance. The Leadership Code maps across two dimensions: time and attention. In short, the model presents both a long-term and short-term perspective on the organisation and the individual. (McCarthy, et al., 2011, p. 19).

This research study explores the relevant qualitative data from the research report by McCarthy, et al., (2011) in relation to the perception of leader-followers of the leader-follower relationship (which occupies the left side of the Leadership Code graphic). The leader-follower relationship stands slightly off-centre in the Leadership Code – yet it represents a sizeable portion of the leader's concerns. The leader must not merely possess certain qualities and attributes: he must be able to influence others through these. Indeed, at the core of the Leadership Code "are the personal qualities and characteristics of the leader. Furthermore … an effective leader cannot be measured just by what they know and do; it is also about whom they are as human beings and how much they can accomplish with and through other people" (McCarthy, et al., 2011, p. 21). Therefore, their relationship with other people (both followers and other leaders) is paramount to their success.

Three important elements of the leader-follower relationship emerged from the quantitative analysis in the McCarthy et al., (2011) report. These were:

1. Leaders tended to rate themselves less favourably than their superiors, peers and direct reports. (See Figure 2.10 – the averaged 360° feedback ratings on a scale of 1-5, where 3 rates as good and 4 as very good).[9]
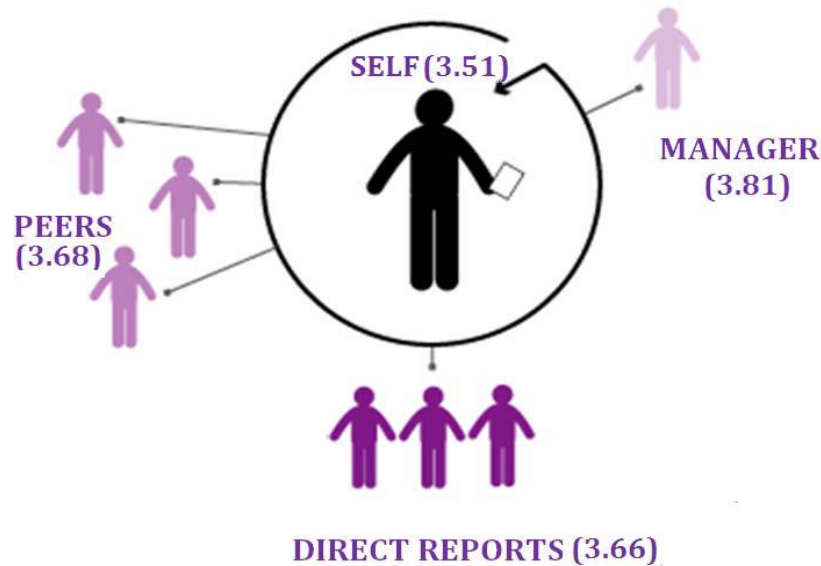
Figure 2.10: Average 360 Degree Feedback Rating Result

(McCarthy et al., 2011:29)

The researcher's noted that this was in contrast to the perception of "North American Leaders who tend to over-estimate their leadership capability" (McCarthy 2011:51). This implies that Irish civil servants are viewed as better leaders by others than they are by themselves. Another interesting feature here is that although peers and direct reports give a higher rating of their leaders than their leaders did of themselves, a substantially higher rating was offered by the leader's manager, and the ratings of the peers and direct reports were the closest aligned. This finding may indicate who in the leader-follower relationship (i.e., leader or follower) "is best placed to accurately assess leadership capability" (McCarthy et al, 2011:66)

---

[9] The 360° review involves all relevant persons in the leader-follower relationship of a leader-follower (at PO level). This is one reason these findings are important in this research study.

2. Leaders were awarded the highest score for the personal proficiency domain but the lowest for the human capital development (See Figure 2.11).
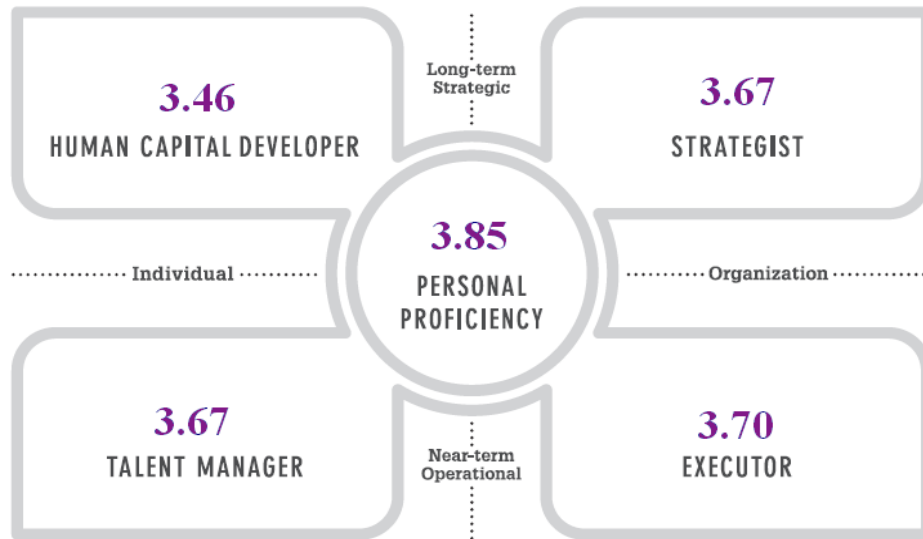
Figure 2.11: Averaged ratings of all participants by competency domain (McCarthy, et al., 2011, p. 30).

Although this seemed to indicate the need for an improvement in the leader-follower relationship it was also a positive since effective leadership "starts with the self. The leader must model what they want others to master" (McCarthy et al, 2011:19). The notion of the leader as a model or exemplar is clearly important in the leader-follower relationship and in the attempt to use the teacher-leader relationship to understand it (Weimer 2002).

3. Figure 2.12 shows the top five strengths and the top five development needs. These indicate that leaders are viewed as personally proficient but that greater consideration needs to be given to the development of followers as future leaders.

Table 3 – Top five strengths and associated average scores

TOP STRENGTHS	SCORE	DOMAIN
1) Demonstrate learning agility	4.17	Personal Proficiency
2) Balance work and non-work demands (including delegation)	4.00	Personal Proficiency
3) Tolerate stress and resilience	3.86	Personal Proficiency
4) Self knowledge	3.86	Personal Proficiency
5) Deliver results	3.85	Personal Proficiency

Table 4 – Top five development needs and associated average scores

TOP DEVELOPMENT NEEDS	SCORE	DOMAIN
1) Map the workforce	3.26	Human Capital Developer
2) Align the organisation & employee expectations	3.40	Human Capital Developer
3) Help people manage their careers	3.51	Human Capital Developer
4) Communication	3.55	Talent Manager
5) Practice clear thinking	3.57	Personal Proficiency

Figure 2.12: Top Five Strengths and Top Five Needs

(McCarthy, et al., 2011, p. 32).

This last point was also highlighted by comparing Table 7 and Table 8 of the same report, which indicated, respectively, the top three strengths of the top three management grades versus the top three development needs of the same grades (McCarthy et al, 2011:44).[10] In each case[11], the strengths related to their personal proficiency (i.e. their role as leaders) while the deficits related to the need for the development of others (i.e. their role in the leader-follower relationship). The researchers offered the following recommendation:

---

[10] The same conclusion can be obtained by comparing the top three strengths by Department in Table 9 against the top three development needs by Department in Table 10 (McCarthy et al, 2011:46-49). Generally, there was a need to develop followers into leaders.

[11] The only exception was that the top need of the very top grade (Secretary General) was a recommendation to improve "character and integrity" – i.e., a lack of leadership – however, the other two development needs were as a "human capital developer" (McCarthy et al, 2011, p. 44).

> Leaders were stronger in their organisational focus than in their individual focus. To strengthen an individual focus, leaders need to develop and engage not only the current employees but, specifically, also need to focus on the next generation of leaders—to build the leadership 'pipeline,' so to speak—in order to ensure the organisation has the long-term competencies required for future strategic success.(McCarthy, et al. 2011: 31, 65).

This research review indicated that Irish civil service leaders were better at engaging followers in the present than they were at preparing them for the future. This problem in the leader-follower relationship was a prime reason for suspecting that insights from the teacher-learner relationship could and should inform the leader-follower relationship. Other relevant qualitative data from this report will be explored in Chapter 4 as a means to both inform and triangulate from the main data collection method used in this research.

2.5 Conclusion

The review of literature illustrates the value of viewing the leader-follower relationship through the lens of the teacher-learner relationship. The main argument set forth is that just as teachers should accept and encourage learners to have greater responsibility in their own learning goals and agendas (and should follow the *4-M Learning Process*) so leaders should accept and encourage followers to employ greater self-determination in their jobs roles (using Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model*). This is necessitated by the recognition that the greatest development need of the Irish Civil service is future leadership (McCarthy et al, 2011). The solution is that present leaders can assist followers to become future leaders by using Vygotsky's (1978) *ZPD*. Finally, leader-followers are a unique unit of analysis in this research study as they fulfil all these roles and are engaged in all aspects of the leader-follower relationship, if not simultaneously, at least, continuously.

Chapter Three – Research Design

3.1 Introduction

Following the four general steps of defining, designing, doing and describing research (Maylor & Blackmon, 2005) this chapter defines and defends the research design. It is essential in the design process to delineate the research context, the research question (and associated aims), the research subjects (and associated ethical issues) and the research units and instruments of analysis (Berg, 2009; Thomas, 2013). Since qualitative research design is both flexible and emergent the evolution of the current research study is also illustrated (Eaterby-Smith, et al., 2008). It is important to acknowledge this evolution as it constitutes evidence of the reflective and reflexive nature of the research process employed (Carr & Kemmis, 1986).

Although the very notion of research *design* can be questioned (Chia & Robin, 2009; Thomas, 2013), and the research in this case has been designed flexibly (Cousin, 2009; Thomas, 2013), it is widely agreed by social and educational researchers that research should be planned and implemented in a reflective and responsible manner (Bridges & Smith, 2007; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2005; Craig, 2009; Ezer, 2009; Johnson, Yip, & Hensmans, 2012). It is important to respond to criticisms of insider research, especially concerns over the supposed surrender of objectivity (the neutral observer), reliability (generalisation) and validity (accuracy) (Cousin, 2009; Ezer, 2009; Eden & Huxham, 2002). The positionality of the researcher was actually not a shortcoming in this research study − it was a strategic vantage point that provided unique (and insider) perspective (Foreman-Peck & Winch, 2010).

3.2 Original Research Design

The original intention of the researcher was to engage in a practical/interpretative action research study exploring the leader-follower relationship through the lens of an educational model of the teacher-learner relationship. It was argued that just as education has shifted toward being learner-centred where greater responsibility and power rests with the learner

likewise the public sector could benefit from a shift toward a follower-centred emphasis. An action research study was envisaged to explore this claim via the following process:

> An interview would ascertain the leader's perception of a particular organisational corporate strategy and his expectation of the role of the follower (the research participant) in its implementation. The follower would then seek to implement goals using Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* and the *4-M Learning Process* (Zimmerman, 2002) as a practical action research cycle (Berg, 2009). A final interview would establish the leader's views on the implementation by the follower and whether improvement was noted (Ulrich, 1997; Mello, 2011). The literature review complemented the originally proposed practical action research (Craig, 2009) because the goals set would have involved a shared understanding between the leader and the follower obtained through semi-structured interview (Baker, 2002), and focused toward implementing certain self-monitoring and self-management protocols (Zimmerman, 2002), in order to achieve an agreed upon goal in line with the organisational vision, mission and objectives (Burns, 2013). Since the terminus of such a process is metacognition (Zimmerman, 1998; Zimmerman & Schunk, 1989; Zimmerman, 2002) and since practical action research is geared toward self-reflectively improving practice (Craig, 2009; McAteer, 2013; McNiff, 2013; McNiff & Whitehead, 2010) this seemed to be a good marriage of academic theory and research method

The research focus then narrowed toward a consideration of the leader-follower relationship *from the perspective of the leader-follower*. It was realised that this relationship should be understood prior to enacting the action research proposal. Time constraints, in addition to ethical issues,[12] meant that a change of research focus was necessary. The following sections explain this amended research design.

---

[12] Due to the negative media coverage of AGS during the period of this research study.

3.3 Research Context

The research aims, objectives and question have evolved and the research context has been both widened and narrowed. The research objective became to explore the experience of the leader-follower relationship within the Irish civil service from *the perspective of leader-followers*. This was twinned with the objective to establish whether the research could form the basis of a further practical action research to improve the practice of the researcher as a leader-follower within the civil service. Hence, a case study methodology was employed in the form of a pilot study (Berg, 2009; Yin, 2009).

The unit of analysis chosen was that of PO level in the civil service. The McCarthy et al (2011) report explores leadership in the civil service from AP level upwards. Hence, it contains data from both leaders and followers of PO's. Hence, it became a great source of confirming data and it also provided themes for investigation in the interviews.

3.4 Research Aims

Research aims are essential to guide the way the research is conducted (Creswell, 2014). Although flexible and revisable, these aims must be clearly articulated and justified (Thomas 2013). The research aims of this exploratory case study were first, to understand the leader-follower relationship from the perspective of those who fulfil both roles simultaneously (i.e. leader-followers) with the intent of secondly, discovering recommendations from practice. Case study can be used to either discover or test theory (Berg, 2009; Maylor & Blackmon, 2005), but it is fluid and flexible enough so that it can be used as an exploratory pilot study (Berg, 2009; Yin, 2009). The final end point of this research study was intended to be the beginning point of a practical action research cycle (Riley, et al., 2000). This exploratory case study was intended to provide the foundational recommendations for practice to be employed in a practical/interpretative action research cycle. Hence, an explanation of both case study and action research will be offered in the methodology section of this chapter.

3.5 Research Questions

A research question and corresponding subquestions helps to guide and demarcate the research (Thomas, 2013; Creswell, 2014). The following was the central research question:

1. *What are the expectations and experiences of the leader-follower relationship within the Irish civil service from the perspective of leader-followers (i.e. Principal Officers)?*

The following two subquestions were also addressed:

2. *What recommendations do these leader-followers have to improve the leader-follower relationship?*

3. *Which role is considered more important – that of leader or that of follower – and therefore which relationship is viewed as more important – that with followers or that with leaders?*

3.6 Methodology

Research methodology explains the underlying philosophical paradigm for research (Bridges & Smith, 2007). This research study relied on the validity of first-person authority to discover beliefs, emotions and behaviours (Jacquette, 2004; Lyons, 2001) and hence interviews were an appropriate method of data collection (Baker, 2002). Although this research employs an interpretative paradigm (Creswell, 2014; Thomas, 2013) and social constructivism (Bandura, 1986; Schunk, 2000), the *radical* relativism implied by postmodernism's denial of meta-narratives is rejected (Johnson & Duberley, 2000; O'Grady, 2002).

This case study research attempted to straddle a middle position between two extremes – one epistemological and the other methodological (Bridges & Smith, 2007). Epistemologically, it involved an integration of pure positivism and individualistic interpretativism (Martin, 2007). Although positivism results in genuine objective (mind-independent) knowledge the attempt to build firm *foundations* for social science is mistaken (Thomas, 2013; Moran, 2008). The claim that *only* a positivist paradigm can result in genuine knowledge or (the

stronger claim) that it can *only* result in genuine knowledge should be rejected (Misak, 2008; Rowbottom & Aiston, 2007). On the other hand, radical relativism which denies any claim to objective truth or mind-independent reality should be similarly rejected (Johnson & Duberley, 2000; Norris, 2007).

Social constructivism recognises that in *some* situations, in *some* scenarios, meaning and truth can be socially constructed (Bandura, 1986; Davey, 2010; Davidson, 2006; Jarvela & Jarvenoja, 2011). This is especially true for certain population samples that share unique identifiers (Tsohatzidis, 2007). Relativism is itself relativistic – it is true some times and in some things (O'Grady, 2002). Epistemologically, this case study recognised the plausibility of generalising some truths inductively while recognising the situated relativism of other truths (Brown & Baker, 2007; Noddings, 2007). It employs pan-critical rationality (Winch, 2006), critical realism (Johnson & Duberley, 2000), and social constructivism (Bandura, 1986; Wittgenstein, 2000), simultaneously.

Generally, a qualitative methodology seeks to generate insights rather than generalisations (Bridges & Smith, 2007; Thomas, 2013), and explore practice rather than present explanations (Cousin, 2009; Foreman-Peck & Winch, 2010). The methodology employed in this case study can be justified via critical theory as an appropriate *initial* research methodology prior to practical action research. Therefore, the recommendations for practice that flow from this case study could be used as the starting position in a practical action research study into the leader-follower relationship (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011; McAteer, 2013). A brief exposition of the justification of practical action research is necessary to comprehend the purpose (and motivation) of this particular case study (McNiff & Whitehead, 2011).

The Frankfurt School[13] held that "critical" theory differs from "traditional" theory in that is seeks to change or transform society, including the unjust structures that enslave others – hence it is inherently emancipatory (Giroux, 2001; Honneth, 2010). Influenced by Hegel's *Master/Slave dialectic* and Neo-

---

[13] The Frankfurt School stems from a loose joining of a variety of thinkers including Horkeimer, Adorno, Marcuse & Habermas (Giroux, 2001; Noddings, 2007).

Marxist (Kincheloe, et al., 2008) in its outlook it sought to "change" the world rather than merely understand it (Noddings, 2007). Educational researchers (Cohen et al., 2005; Cousin 2009; Craig 2009; Foreman-Peck and Winch 2010; McNiff and Whitehead 2011) note three general forms of action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) and three forms of case study (Yin, 2009).

The three forms of case study can be used as pilot studies for the three forms of action research – See Table 3:1.

Table 3.1. Three Types of Corresponding Research

Case Study	Action Research
Explanatory Case Study →	*Technical Action Research*
Exploratory Case Study →	*Practical/Interpretative Action Research*
Descriptive Case Study →	*Emancipatory/Critical Action Research*

(Adapted from McNiff & Whitehead, 2011, p. 46 & Berg, 2009, p. 327)

A similar justification for practical/interpretative action research and exploratory case study can be found in Aristotle's distinction between the following three forms of knowledge: *episteme, technē,* and *phrónēsis* (Berg, 2009; Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Graham, 2013).[14] *Technē* and *phrónēsis* are two different modes of "practical, as distinct from theoretical, knowledge (*episteme*)" (Chia & Robin, 2009, p. 105).

Phrónēsis is associated with *praxis* – hence it is a form of knowledge that comes through a form of action that flows from the situated reality of a person who is seeking, either consciously or not,[15] to become wholly "immersed in the activity" (Chia & Robin, 2009, p. 108; Graham, 2013). Habermas (as cited in Johnson & Duberley, 2000, pp. 117-122) posits three knowledge-domains and corresponding interests (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) - See Table 3.2.

---

[14] It is natural to associate *technē* with the technical, *phrónēsis* with the practical/interpretative and *episteme* (theoretical) with the emancipatory/critical forms of action research.
[15] Although Chia and Holt (2009) argue that it is not conscious, in this research study it should be regarded as a conscious form of action (Flyvberg, 2001).

Table 3.2: The Three Knowledge-Constitutive Interests

Science Type	Cognitive Interest	Social Domain	Purpose
Natural science (empirical-analytical)	Technical	Work	Prediction control
Cultural science (historical-hermeneutic)	Practical	Language/ culture	Understanding/ consensus
Critical science	Emancipatory	Power/ authority	Enlightenment

(*Source:* Mingers, 1992, as cited in Johnson & Duberley, 2000, p. 120)

Given that this current research study is primarily concerned with "the human practical interest that arises out of the need for inter-personal communication" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000:118) it fits best with the "historical-hermeneutic sciences" which "facilitate the apprehension of the meanings of actions and communications" (Johnson and Duberley, 2000:118). Practical action research seeks "practical wisdom, or *phrónēsis*" as the "desired outcome" (Graham, 2013, p. 50; Hall, 2010; Miller, 2008). This exploratory case study research occupies the cultural rather than the critical domain as it falls short of the full aim of "critical theory" which "seeks to show the practical, moral and political significance of particular communicative actions" (Johnson & Duberley, 2000, p122) and instead focuses on practical "purposive" (Chia & Robin, 2009, pp. 108-11; Graham, 2013) actionable recommendations to improve the leader-follower relationship in the Irish civil service from the *point of view* of leader-followers within the Irish civil service.

It is possible to employ an "integrative" methodological position between practical and critical action research (McGlinn, 2009, p. 42), especially if in a further action research cycle the political implications were addressed. McNiff and Whitehead (2011) argue that critical theory did not go far enough into the change territory because it "aimed only for understanding, not for action" (p. 47) and so they assert that action research has moved beyond critical theory into what they denote as "living" theory (p. 15). Finally, the interpretative approach

to research[16] which underpins practical action research can also be used in forms of case study research (McNiff and Whitehead 2011; Yin 2009). The "aim" of such an exploratory case study "is to understand … social situations and negotiate meanings" McNiff and Whitehead 2011, p. 46) thus linking it with the historical-hermeneutic knowledge-constitutive interest that underpins practical action research (See Table 3.2 above).

This brief overview, explanation and justification of action research is provided as a means to understand the suggestion that the recommendations for practice contained in this exploratory case study could (and indeed, should) form the basis for a personalised practical action research cycle (Richards & Morse, 2013). This exploratory case study is a pilot study which offers recommendations for practice (Berg, 2009).

Table 3.3 captures the inquiry paradigm that oriented this research. As can be seen this research attempted to bridge several disparate categories of the alternative paradigms. The leader-follower relationship is a social construction and as situational leadership theory stipulates the relationship does not have one ideal platonic manifestation – it can take various appropriate forms and can be diachronically transformed depending on external (and internal) circumstances (Northhouse, 2010).

This dialectical nature of the leader-follower relationship is akin to the dialectical nature of the teacher-learner relationship or the Master/slave dialectic.[17] This research study also respected the importance of dialogue and hermeneutics in both the data collection and data analysis stages. The

---

[16] As distinct from the technical/empirical or the critical/emanciatory approaches.

[17] Hegel's master/slave dialectic is more accurately known as the Lord/bondsman dialectic but its applicability to dialectical power relationship is obvious (Giroux, 2001; Honneth, 2010). Such a recognition makes inclusive, transformational and servant theories of leadership even more relevant to the actual experience of the leader-follower relationship for both the leader and the follower (Hollander, 2008).

recommendations for practice connect it with action research and the critical theory justification for it. The main purpose of this research is to discover recommendations for *phrónēsis* (Winch, 2006). Therefore, although this current research case study relied on critical theory and social constructivism for its justification, and recognised the relative and value-laden nature of perceptions, expectations, and experiences that inform the research findings, yet it maintains these "value-mediated" and "created" findings are historically sensitive and relativistically relevant to the current civil service (Guba & Lincoln, 2008; Brown & Baker, 2007). That is, the recommendations for practice are genuinely actionable and trustworthy as starting points for further research into the leader-follower relationship (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005; Hadfield, 2012). This research study represents an interim or pilot study position and employs an explicitly exploratory approach to the social situation (Berg, 2009; Eden & Huxham, 2002).

Table 3.3: Basic Beliefs (Metaphysics) of Alternative Inquiry Paradigm

Item	*Postivism*	*Postpostivism*	*Critical Theory et al.*	*Constructivism*
Ontology	Naïve realism – "real" reality but apprehendible	Critical realism – "real" reality but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehendible	Historical realism – virtual reality shaped by social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender values; crystallized over time	Relativism – local and specific constructed and co-constructed realities
Epistemology	Dualist/objectivist; findings true	Modified dualist/objectivist; critical tradition/community; findings probably true	Transactional/subjectivist; value-mediated findings	Transactional/subjectivist; created findings
Methodology	Experimental/manipulative; verification of hypotheses; Chiefly quantitative	Modified experimental/manipulative; critical multiplism; falsification of hypotheses; may include qualitative methods	Dialogic/dialectical	Hermeneutical/dialectical

(Guba & Lincoln, 2008, p. 257)

3.7 Research Methods

Qualitative research methods seek to comprehend and elucidate the social, cultural and contextual meanings of particular phenomena, processes or persons (Denzin and Lincoln 2008; Berg 2009; Thomas 2013; Creswell 2014) Exploratory case studies may be used as "pilot" studies (Berg, 2009, p. 327). The current case study employed an exploratory qualitative research methodology that involved the following three research methods:

- Content analysis of the McCarthy et al, (2011) review report for data on the leader-follower relationship from the perspective of particular leader-followers. The primary unit of analysis was PO's.

- Two subsequent semi-structured interviews with PO's to explore the experience and expectations of the leader-follower relationship from their perspective.

- Segmented transcription of interviews (Cousin, 2009) followed by network analysis and theme mapping to generate recommendations for purposive action for the participant researcher.

3.8 Selection of the Research Sample

The selection of two leader-followers was made after analysis of the leadership report research conducted by McCarthy et al. (2011). Two PO's were chosen representing two organisations to provide an opportunity to compare and contrast findings (Saunders, et al., 2009). The individuals chosen as interview samples for the current research study were chosen purposively. The shift away from explicit action research (or a 'change' study) to a case study allowed the research to focus primarily on the leader-follower relationship as experienced by leader-followers within the civil service rather than exploring the researcher's own experience of the leader-follower relationship. Even so the researcher is still the prime research instrument (Creswell, 2014). The research involved less insider research than before (although the researcher was employed in the civil service) (Cousin, 2009), and also permitted greater confidentiality for the data sources (since they were not the researcher's direct leaders) (Nolen & Putten, 2007).

The interviewees were selected because they have extensive experience in the civil service – one was close to retirement and had served in a variety of public sector departments while the other had work in the same department although they have worked in different sections – so each had a thorough exposure to the workings of the civil service in their area. The primary purpose of this research was to discover the experience and expectations of the leader-follower relationship from the perspective of these leader-followers.

3.9 The Research Project Plan

The original research project plan revolved around the intent to engage in action research to explore the relationship between the researcher (as a follower) and the local AGS Chief Superintendent (as the leader) – See Table 3.4

Table 3.4: Original Research Project Plan

Month (2014)	Research Context: AGS
March – April	Further Literature Review
May	Interview: Chief Superintendent
May – June	Action Research (Including critical autobiography, etc.)
July	Re-interview Chief Superintendent
July	Data Analysis
August	Thesis Write-up

Ethical considerations including the difficulty inherent in balancing practical and critical action research in such a workplace environment[18] caused the researcher to reconsider this insider-research project plan (Foreman-Peck & Winch, 2010; Nolen & Putten, 2007). The research methodology, aims and question were reformulated and the project plan was amended to that contained in Table 3.5.

---

[18] Especially in light of the 2014 media treatment of management in AGS.

Table 3.5: Current Research Project Plan

Month (2014)	Data Collection Method	Unit of Analysis
April - June	Literature review	
June	Pilot Interview	An Assistant Principal Officer
June	Two Interviews	Two Principal Officers
July	Segment transcription, Data Analysis & Thematic Mapping	
August	Thesis Write-up	

3.10 Data collection methods

Since the intent of this case study was to capture rich qualitative data a variety of methods had to be used (Thomas 2013). Once the research questions were framed and the unit of analysis was decided upon (leader-followers in the Irish civil service of PO level) it was decided to conduct open-ended semi-structured interviews.[19] These interviews presented data for narrative research (Andrews, et al., 2008), discourse analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) and laddering (Baker, 2002). These methods were appropriate qualitative means of discovering the perspective of the research subjects (Berg, 2009).

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are an essential element of appropriate research design and these evolved over time with the research (Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2014). The original ethical protocol was an outgrowth of the intent to utilise practical/interpretative action research (Craig, 2009) and involved anticipations of ethical issues around the following three areas (Nolen & Putten, 2007, pp. 402-403):

- The informed consent of participants.
- The confidentiality of participants.
- The autonomy of participants.

---

[19] Sample questions can be found in Appendix A

These ethical issues were partly responsible for the change in research focus. Given the discovery aspect of action research it would have been difficult to inform the participants of what findings could have been expected. This risk was further exacerbated by the working relationship between the researcher and the leader-follower which was intended to be the crux of the action research unit of analysis. The autonomy of the relevant participants was also a concern, given that the action research could have resulted in an unwarranted increase in responsibility for the researcher (without any corresponding increase in reward) and this would have been a distortion of the research and indeed of the leader-follower relationship. It was realised that the research data would have to be kept confidential and this would not have been entirely possible in a workplace action research cycle. Therefore, it appeared that the best way to keep the data confidential was to purposively select individuals within the research context (i.e. within the civil service) who do not have an immediate working relationship with the researcher. The importance of this became very evident as the research progressed – it decreased the possibility of the participants changing their minds about allowing their data be included.

It also made the research data more honestly representative as the interviewees had less reasons to idealise their experience of the leader-follower relationship. The promise of complete confidentiality encouraged the participants to fully disclose strengths and shortcomings of the leader-follower relationship in the civil service as they had experienced it. The data was triangulated via the research report provided by McCarthy et al (2011) and the researcher's own retrospective observations on more than a decade exposed to the leader-follower relationship in the Irish civil service.

3.12 Conclusion
This original action research would have provided interesting data about the leader-follower relationship and the important place that the follower provides

in implementing organisational goals. The attempt to model this on the teacher-student relationship, with a focus on the *4-M Learning Process* model of the self-regulated student could provide an improvement for the follower in his attempt to implement professional standards. This represented an extension of the *4-M learning process* model from its educational context into an organisational context. Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* was also extended as a framework to interview the leader-follower and could be utilised as a framework for establishing goals by the follower.

The observation that exploratory case study could be utilised as a pilot study prior to practical action research is both innovative and useful (Berg, 2009; Yin, 2009).[20] The unit of analysis was appropriately chosen after the data extraction from the review report by McCarthy et al, (2011). The data collection methods were appropriate, although the research subjects were not observed in natural work settings (Creswell, 2014). The findings are fairly representative because the sample of PO's was extended due to the use of the McCarthy et al (2011) report.

---

[20] As indeed is the notion that explanatory case studies could precede technical action research and descriptive case studies precede critical action research (McNiff and Whitehead, 2011, p. 46; Berg, 2009, p. 327). Such mixed methodologies are complementary with bridged or crossed paradigms (Guba & Lincoln, 2008; Creswell, 2014).

<center>**Chapter Four – Data Analysis and Findings**</center>

4.1 Introduction

Data analysis is fundamental to social research and numerous techniques have been developed to ensure that researchers respect the full data on the one hand and capture the relevant data on the other (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005; Thomas, 2013). This chapter will delineate the analytic framework used to explore relevant text in relation to the leader-follower relationship, to generate themes for discussion during the interviews, to transcribe and analyse the relevant data collected and finally to present it herein (Warren, 2010). The presentation of the analysis revolves around the following core categories: the leader-follower, leadership, followership, and the leader-follower relationship.

A laddering process was attempted during the interviews (Baker, 2002) so that hermeneutical and existential meanings could be derived (Noddings 2007). The themes for the interview questions were taken from the McCarthy et al's (2011) research and utilised the following theoretical frameworks:

Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model*

Hegel's (1977) *Master/Slave Dialectic*

Vygotsky's (1978) *Zone of Proximal Development*

Further themes emerged under each core category and these were classified (Maylor & Blackmon, 2005) using both network analysis and theme mapping (Thomas, 2013). Excerpts rather than full transcripts of the interviews were produced as repeated listening to the interview recordings aided in the identification of recurrent themes and divergent dialogue (Cousin, 2009).[21] This also permitted the research question and associated conceptual categories to focus the mind on recurrent themes. Divergent data was sought as contradictory evidence permits researcher to explore further (Everington, 2013).

---

[21] These transcripts are not included due to the limitations of space but are available upon request from the researcher.

4.2 Exploration of Text

When exploring text (such as a research report) or carrying on a conversation (such as an interview) a hermeneutic is unavoidable. Hermeneutics "is the elaboration of the insight that in reaching a common understanding with others, we must allow ourselves to be transformed" (Misak 2008:434). Linguistic meanings, therefore, are not static or unchanging, nor purely mentalistic (in the mind alone) or truly monologic (i.e. in the mouth of one person). In practice, a reader's (or listener's) input is *as important as* the writer's (or speakers') in the meaning-making process (Burke 2010). No text is read neutrally: each is read through the filter and lens of the beliefs, assumptions, values and life-histories of the reader (Thomas 2013). Therefore, the analysis of various reports, journal papers, textbooks and interview transcripts offered in this research study is not value free (John and Duberley 2000; Berg 2009). Additionally, when a reader (or researcher) is immersed in a particular community this places limits on the conceivable possibility of meaning (Davidson, 2006; O'Grady, 2002). Meaning inheres in a communal practice. Indeed, "the space of linguistic consciousness – the space in which meanings and reasons exist – is a space that we occupy together" (Korsgaard 1996:145).

"Hermeneutical work enlarges the scope of our vision, suggests new meanings, and encourages further conversations" (Noddings 2007:76). Given the hermeneutical insight that "narrativity precedes narrative" (Davey 2010:706) and that present readings of texts are an interim position between past and potential readings the "meaning" is never fully disclosed and is always "open" to future and further transformations.[22] The meaning spectrum stretches from "the Meaning" at one pole to "meanings" at the other because meaning can be conceived "either as something objectively existing out there in the world, as something existing only in our mind, or as something emerging in the communication, in the conversational space between individuals" (Leontiev, 2013, p. 30).

---

[22]Interestingly, some have asserted that a "narrative" contrasts with a "story" because it is about the person that relates it – it comes from their "point of view" (Brown and Baker 2007:89-90) while as a story can be about someone other than the recounter. In terms of the sharing of stories in the interviews, this suggests that to become "narrative" they must become part of the "point of view" of the listener– the listener must be *transformed* by the recounting in some way, so that it (the story) becomes part of their narrative (Andrews, et al., 2008).

The following themes guided the discussion in the PO interviews:

1. Leadership and risk
2. *Rigidity* of organisartional structure and process
3. *Competing* priorities
4. Culture in the public sector
5. Resources to cope with *demands*
6. Recruitment, selection and promotion *constraints*

One can immediately see the relevance of Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* in this discussion. These themes emerged from McCarthy et al's report (2011) and some have direct connection with the leader-follower relationship. Hegel's (1977) *Master/Slave Dialectic* was used to gain access to the exploration of the leader-follower relationship as it gives insight into the essential binary connection between leader and follower. Hence, insights into the concepts of leadership, followership and leader-follower relationship emerged from the two interviews. [23]

4.3 Network Analysis and Theme Mapping

Network analysis involved exploring connections between a core concept and related themes (Thomas 2013). It treats the core concept as a trunk with the related themes as branches stemming from it. The core concept explored in this research study was the leader-follower, with the three main emergent branches being leadership, relationship and followership. Network analysis aided in placing appropriate themes branching futher off from these main ideological shoots and leads natually to the theme mapping represented by selected quotes from the McCathy et al, (2011) review report and interviewees.

---

[23] As informed by McCarthy et al's (2011) report and as guided by Stewart's (1982) *DCC Management Model* as a theoretical framework to explore the *individual* leader-follower and Hegel's (1977) *Master/Slave Dialectic* and Vygotsky's *ZPD* to explore the leader-follower *relationship*.

Figure 4.1 shows the first level of such a network.
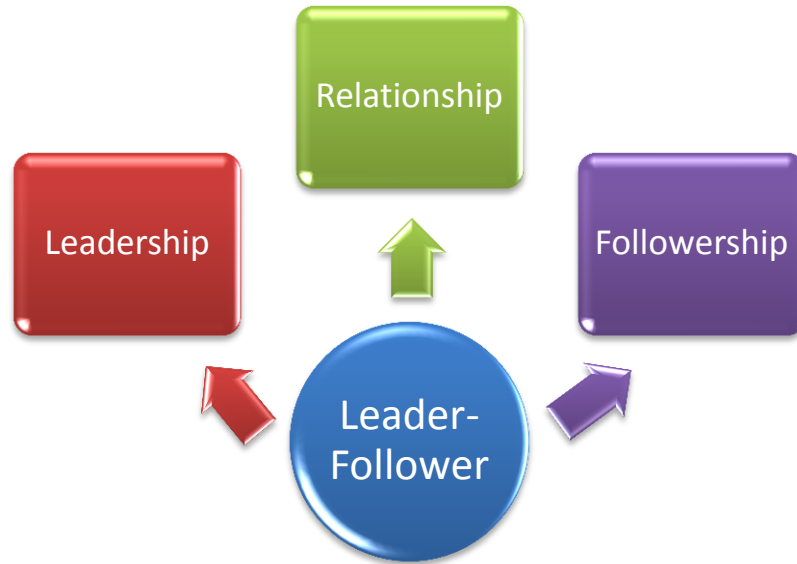
Figure 4.1: Network Analysis – Leader-Follower Relationship

Themes emerged under each of these first level conceptual categories (leadership, relationship, and followership,) and these, in turn, were used to explore the experience and expectations of the leader-follower relationship from the perspective of the leader-follower. The overall themes that emerged are diagrammed in Figure 4.2.

The following designations identify contributors. The use of AP, PO and ASG denote comments from the McCarthy et al (2011) report. The use of PO A and PO B indicate the PO's interviewed by the researcher. Both interviews took place in June 2014. The themes are presented in the following order:

- Leadership
- Followership
- The Leader-Follower Relationship
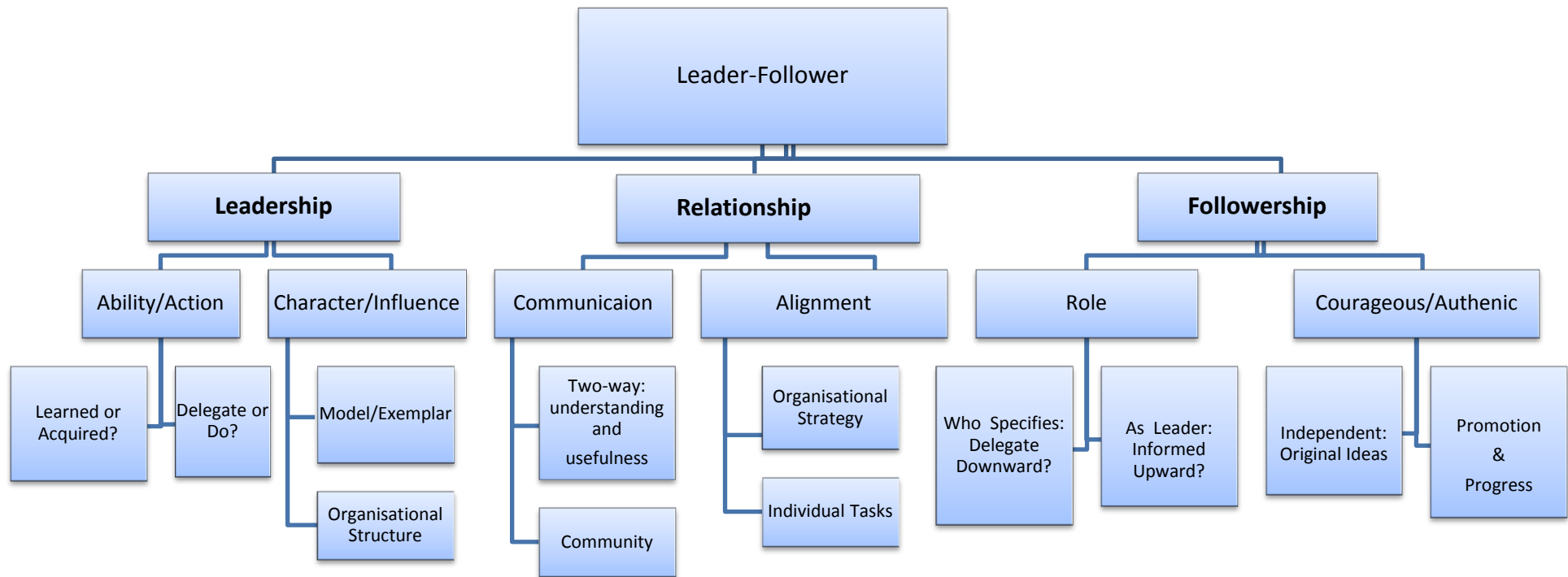
Figure 4.2: Network Analysis – Conceptual Categories and Emergent Themes

4.4 Network Analysis: Leadership

The analysis of leadership is shown in Figure 4.3.
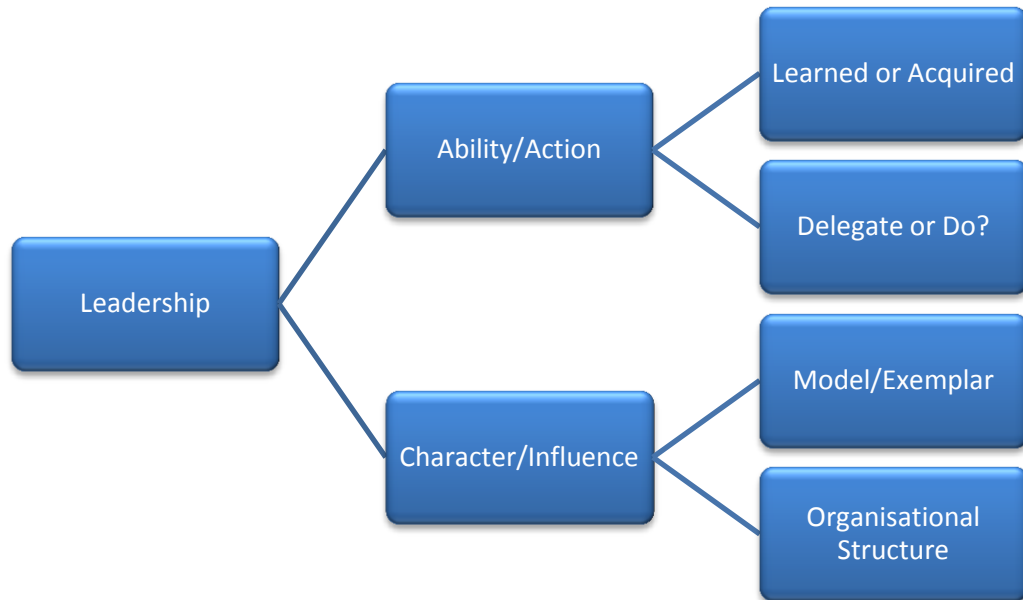
Figure 4.3: Network Analysis: Leadership

There was general agreement that leadership involves ability rather than just actions that are performed. For example:

> *"He has [the] ability to deal with challenging and complex situations"* [AP about PO]

> *"Her ability to remain calm with difficult people and situations and to be in control and show leadership in such situations is a great strength"* [PO about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:34)

> *"She has the ability to be influential and convincing"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:36)

> *"His ability to interact with people, his integrity and his good judgement enables him to build and maintain networks within and outside the organisation"* [PO about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:37)

The interviewees agree that ability in addition to actions is central to leadership:

> *"Leadership is an ability to influence others, an ability to persuade others to do things. It is an ability to see the big picture and to comprehend what needs to be done (usually by others) to accomplish those things"* [PO A 2014].

> *"Leadership is more than what a person does, although a leader clearly has to be able to do certain things. But at its core, leadership is what a person is"* [PO B 2014].

There is also agreement that character is an important element of leadership, especially when confronted with a crisis:

> *"He is compassionate and respected"* [AP about PO]

> *"He is calm and patient"* [ASG about PO]

> *"He is calm in a crisis"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:34)

> *"Leadership is what a person is. It is about character. It is deeper than personality and it is certainly more fundamental than the position a person has in an organisation. It emanates and flows from character – from the kind of person one is"* (PO B 2014).

There was agreement that leadership can be learned (Kouzes and Posner 2007):

> *"Yes, leadership can be learned and is in fact exhibited by most people at least occasionally. It is a skill that one can improve with practice."* (PO B 2014)

> *"I believe that leadership can be developed. The interesting flip side of that idea is that it can be lost too. We all know some people who have lost the ability to lead because they have not been using it."* (PO A 2014).

Character is important because it, rather than merely particular actions, is what it worthy of emulation:

> *"Leadership is aspirational. It is a form of modelling both attitudes and behaviour. It is exemplary – others are encouraged to follow by what they see the leader say and do. It inherently involves relationships with others."* (PO A 2014).

This suggests that a follower has to see a connection between the leader's character and his actions that make him worthy of being followed (Goffee & Jones, 2006). It is something that followers resonate with (Mckee et al, 2008). So, for example:

> *"She sets very high standards for herself and demands very high standards of others and consistently achieves results"* [PO about ASG]

> *"He ... is inspirational in his tireless efforts to achieve targets to the highest possible standard"* [PO about ASG]

> *"She has energy and enthusiasm to get the job done which inspires her colleagues"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:33)

> *"He has highly specialist expertise in his area of competence which inspires confidence in his decision making and leadership"* [PO about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:36)

> *"Effective leaders in the public sector in the future will be the ones who operate from a platform of openness, accountability, empowerment and 'considered self-interest' and work solely from a position of 'leading by example'"* [PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:57)

Two areas of divergence arose under the general discussion of leadership. These were a question of whether leaders should delegate or do and over how much influence a leader has due to organisational structure. Delegation is usually seen as something that leaders need to improve at:

> *"Needs to delegate more and make those who work for her more accountable for timely delivery of quality outputs"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:40)

> *"Delegate more – he does not need to be involved in trivial decisions"* [ASG about PO]

> *"He could delegate more ... he tends to involve himself in work that could be done by his staff particularly attending too many meetings."* [AP about PO]

> *"Delegate and transfer accountability and responsibility to his junior staff"* [PO about ASG]

> *"She tends to "over" manage tasks, getting involved in small matters that really should be delegated"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:41)

But delegation can result in operational distance from the functions of a particular section or unit:

> *"We are told that leaders should delegate rather than do things themselves. Although I agree with that in broad terms several problems arise if everything is delegated. First, the leader becomes overly dependent on others – because he has delegated the task he starts to lose out on some key information – experiential information that cannot be retrieved through upward communicative feedback. His increased ignorance of the delegated function impairs his ability to lead … on the ground, so to speak. Second, those doing the delegated task don't have the authority to make the decisions necessary to proceed with essential processes – they have to await approval from higher up. This slows down the process and sometimes, especially in the civil service, leads to preventable problems becoming inevitable. This is the height of a bureaucratic impasse."* (PO A 2014)

The solution is possibly that they should do more of the common tasks associated with followers:

> *"A possible solution to this problem of operational distance due to delegation is to twofold: continuing close association with the delegated task and team (including occasionally doing the work yourself) and continual communication on operational matters. It is important not to lose touch. So a balance has to be struck between distance and proximity."* (PO A 2014)

> *"I like the notion of the undercover boss. I think it is good to get your hands dirty with the local stuff – to remember what it feels like to be in the lower grades. Not always, obviously, but often enough that you don't forget because then when you delegate something to others you will remember what it is like to do it too. Understanding those who follow you – who do what you ask them to do – is essential to good leadership."* (PO B 2014)

However appropriate qualifying remarks on this would be the following:

> *"He should step back from the 'day to day' work so as to have the opportunity to identify initiatives and opportunities which can contribute to organisational strategy. A key role of senior leaders is*

not alone to implement current policy but also to identify new directions and strategies and to bring forward new ideas" [ASG on PO]

(McCarthy et al, 2011:38)

"He should make greater use of his management team, rather than taking on so much himself, which in turn restricts his time for interaction with the team and the fostering of a team approach within his division. Shorter, more frequent management team meetings might help foster a greater team ethos" [PO about ASG]

(McCarthy et al, 2011:39)

Organisational structural can both ignore and impede certain realities of leadership influence. It can offer challenging constraints but little choice. For example:

"The structure of the organisation has become more rigid and more bureaucratic ... and it limits the scope for an individual to act". [AP]

"it is presumed that public sector leaders have the same level of discretion and autonomy that private sector leaders have; but a key factor to note in public service leadership are the constraints imposed by central edicts and controls".[ASG]

"The diverse nature of the public service and its management structures make it difficult to develop and implement cohesive strategies – a monumental leadership challenge" [ASG]

"Those in leadership roles often have a great deal of responsibility but little or no authority or control. For example, leaders don't have control over their resources, and the procedures and systems can be rigid and inflexible and it is very difficult to get things done or to effect change" [PO].

(McCarthy et al, 2011:55)

The interviewees concur and add an important consideration:

The structure, the legislation, and the limited resources all place constraints on what can be done in the public sector. That is certainly true. These constraints are a challenge and sometimes these constraints don't become obvious till they are transgressed. I'm thinking of legal constraints, for example, that often only come to light through a challenge in the courts. [PO B 2014)

In my experience, there is a positive and negative aspect to the organisational structure and leadership influence. First, there are

limits on what leaders can do and some solutions to problems are non-runners because of legal or data protection issues. And since no one wants to create or even highlight a problem sometimes there is massive risk aversion in the public sector. One the positive side, leadership is dispersed throughout the civil service. There are leaders in the lower grades that sometimes illustrate a creative way to minimise a problem. I have seen that on several occasions. [PO A 2014]

This challenge is underscored by the following comment:

"It is an ongoing challenge to provide effective leadership in a culture that is quite strictly hierarchically and which values conservative rather than transformative approaches to the challenges that face public service providers". [PO]

(McCarthy et al, 2011:58)

The next section considers the importance and understanding of followership from the perspective of leader-followers.

4.5 Network Analysis: Followership
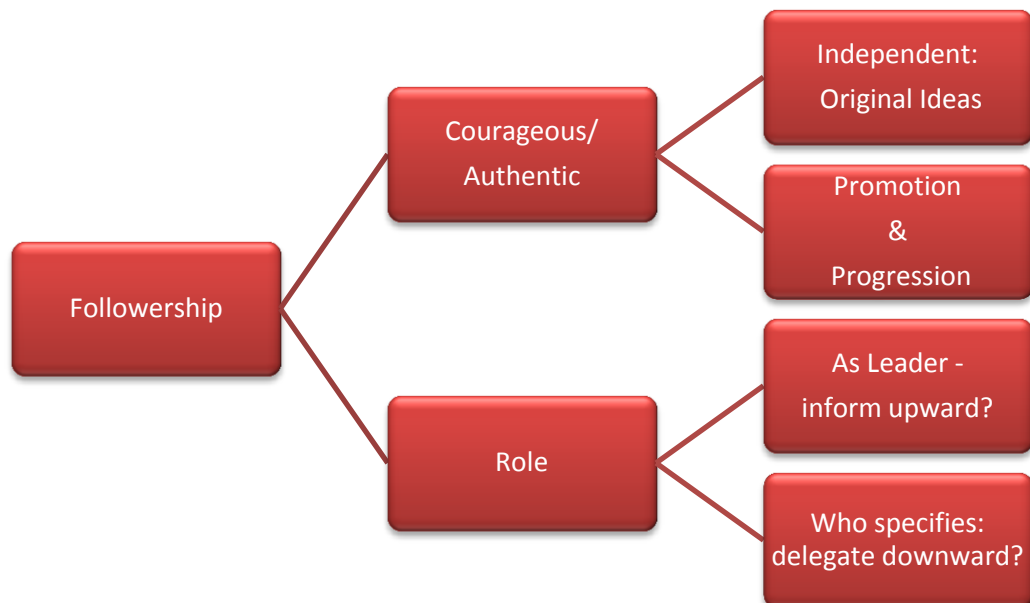The network analysis of followership is shown in Figure 4.4

Figure 4.4: Network analysis - Followership

Courageous/Authentic

The need for a form of courageous or authentic follower is noted in the literature (Goffee and Jones 2006).

Independent: original ideas

The ability to make original contributions is evidence of courageous followers (and open leaders). The following sample comments lend support to that claim:

> *"He focuses on the essentials and is not afraid to raise difficult issues with key decision makers"* [AP about PO]

> *"He is open-minded with regard to new ideas and approaches; openness with regard to honest discussion and critical examination of issues; willingness to allow staff to take ownership of work and develop themselves"* [AP about PO]

> *"She encourages participation from all grades and treats everyone, whether senior or junior, on an equal footing - she has no favourites! She is kind and considerate but is not slow to deal with controversial issues. She is a wonderful teacher and guides her staff while at the same time allowing you to use your own initiative"* [AP about PO]

> (McCarthy et al, 2011:36)

> *"He is seen as both proactive and pragmatic; approachable and open to new ideas; gives the senior management team the space to manage effectively"* [PO about ASG]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:35)

This notion that a leader requires courageous followers was also commented on by the interviewees:

> *"A good leader needs good followers and he knows it. And by a good follower I don't mean someone who will just do whatever you say. A good follower is one who will appropriately challenge your directions – not openly, not abruptly and not for the sake of argument or resistance, obviously – but who challenges them for the right reasons and then suggests alternative solutions to the problem or task. A good follower is a potential replacement and that is why they are sometimes feared but actually they make a big difference."* [PO A 2014]

> *"My view on followership is that it is the other side of leadership. There are no leaders without followers and followers do most of the*

work. The leader gives the vision, the big picture, the final destination and the follower fills in the details and does the work. Of course not all followers are created equal. Some followers can actually give advice and can shape the big picture. They are advisors and confidantes – but such are rare. Most followers say they want freedom to do things but usually they want to be told what to do. The real gem of a follower is the one who has something to add – something to contribute – something to say." [PO B 2014]

Promotion and Progression

Another element to consider is the promotion and progression of followers into explicit leadership roles:

"Many people are promoted to roles where leadership qualities are required yet they do not have the requisite skills in this area" [PO]

"In the selection process, for managerial positions, and in the formative years at management grades, leadership ability is neither sought nor taught. Despite leadership having been a core competency requirement for many years, the reality is that people are chosen for managerial positions on their demonstrable ability to do their current/previous job. Little surprise therefore when many managers gravitate back to the comfort of [a more operational role] rather than accept the less familiar leadership role"

(McCarthy et al, 2011:60)

There seems to be recognition that promotion techniques often miss the best candidates:

"A more appropriate system of selection and promoting personnel needs to be developed. This could involve psychological assessments of a person's values, attitudes, commitment, beliefs, thinking patterns etc. This allied with assessing academic qualifications, achievements, experience etc. would be more likely to identify the 'Leaders of Tomorrow' that are required". [PO]

"Many public sector employees have experience/qualifications that are either not utilised or are underutilised. Leaders need to be able to identify these people and place them in positions where their talents may be used for the benefit of the organisation". [PO]

(McCarthy et al, 2011:60)

The following interviewee agrees:

Followers often have skills that are not catered for in work. Unless they are assigned to specific tasks, such as specialist roles, their talents are unknown to their immediate supervisor. A better inventory of staff talent, skills and abilities could be maintained by personnel. [PO A 2014]

An interesting comment relates to the problem of grade demarcation within the civil service:

"Grade 'demarcation' is problematic – the inability of structure to identify talent in young people and to provide the opportunity for that talent to be exploited. For example, clerical officers and staff officers are effectively debarred from audit work, except as assistants. This is a nonsense in an era where many of the recruits to the civil service have high levels of education and indeed specialist training to do specific jobs but are effectively debarred from those jobs. I have long maintained that many young recruits are 'deprogrammed' within a short time of joining the public service" [AP]

(McCarthy et al, 2011:61)

This clearly indicates that if followers are not given leadership opportunities *in their current roles* they cannot either evidence or develop their leadership skills. A common suggestion to revitalise job roles is the following:

"He should implement a system of staff mobility, particularly for staff who have been working in the same job for a long time" [AP about PO]

(McCarthy et al, 2011:38)

Roles

However, leader may come up against resistance in changing the roles or work conditions of followers:

I remember on one occasion giving a certain member of staff increased responsibilities above and beyond his peers. Interestingly, while he thrived his colleagues were not supportive. They saw it as an incursion into their clearly defined roles. They didn't want any cross-over. They viewed it as contaminating – as a way of upgrading the role and responsibilities but without any corresponding rewards. What they didn't realise it that this was an opportunity to develop the kind of skills, experience and achievements necessary for promotion. That person was later promoted while they were not. [PO B 2014]

Delegate downward?

The role of the follower is not always as clearly defined as one would expect as the following comments indicate:

> *"Clearly define the role of his Assistant Principals on projects. On some occasions his expectations and those of his AP's do not align. Ensure co-ordination of the actions of his AP's. Tendency for the existence of independent republics"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:40)

> *"Provide more continuous feedback to staff ... which will enable them to learn and also show them the areas/skills that they need to improve... sometimes I am unsure of my work or performance level"* [AP about PO]

> *"Try to create innovative ways to engage staff in their area of responsibility".* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:60)

A supporting comment comes from one of the interviewees:

> *"Having worked in several departments and under several leaders I can honestly say that some communicate their expectations of you better than others. Obviously, the role can differ as you move from section to section or on through promotion but sometimes the flexibility of the role is due to the silence of the leader – they literally tell you nothing and you have to find your own feet – access the relevant legislation, ascertain who the key contacts are, and try to figure out what the top priorities are. In some cases this information has not come from my superior but from a subordinate! I think it is good that there is flexibility but there should also be some clearly identified expectations or demands.* [PO A 2014]

Therefore, in answer to the question, 'who specifies the role of the follower – the leader or the follower?' the answer appears to be that it should be a negotiation between both. Some see the leader as primarily responsible for the development of the follower:

> *"She should coach staff to develop their competencies and skills to encourage their career development"* [AP about PO]

> *"She could encourage staff members to engage in training which would benefit the Department and individual career prospects"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:40)

Inform upward?

Related to the fact that the follower's role is not purely specified by downward delegation and that followers should communicate their own training and development needs along with desired opportunities to show their talents and skills is the concept that the role of a follower includes leadership – he can inform his supervisor of new ideas. This was recognised as a need in the civil service:

> *"Listen and be more aware of the strengths of all the staff that he is responsible for and communicate and interact with junior staff and finally be more open to alternative views on issues"* [PO about ASG]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:40)

One interviewee supported this view:

> *"I think it is good that there is flexibility in the relationship between a PO and his AP's. I treat them as experts in their area of competence and expect that they will inform me of any new ideas or problems that I need to be aware of. I don't expect that I have to negotiate every aspect of their role – after all, they are also experienced leaders. I want to be informed but I expect that they will know when to inform me and seek my decision and that they will know when not to. That is the essence of the leader-follower relationship – it is two way."* [PO B 2014]

4.6 Network Analysis: The Leader-Follower Relationship
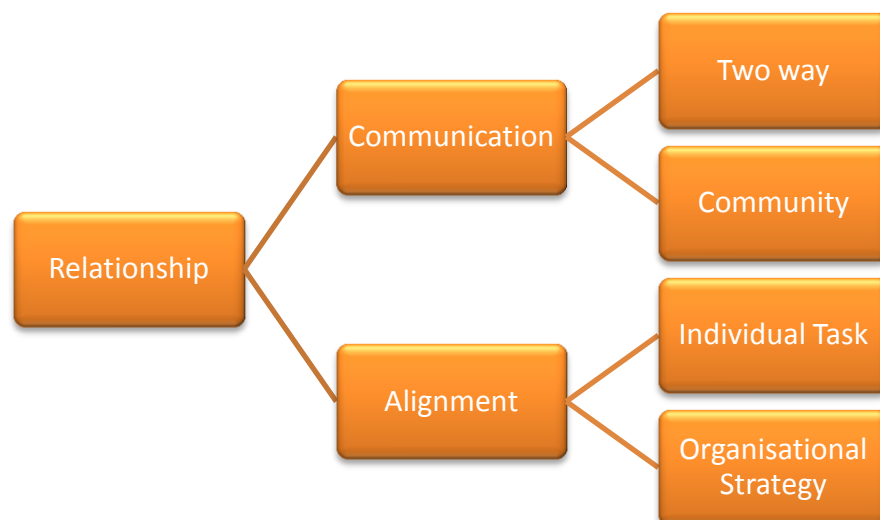
The analysis of leadership is shown in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Network Analysis: The Leader-Follower Relationship

Two main themes emerged from the analysis of the leader-follow relationship. These were communication and alignment. The relationship involves communication, which also implies that it is open, transparent, trusting and honest. The relationship must be aligned – which means that the role of each (leader and follower) fit with each other and with the general organisational strategy. The second is dependent on the first – the appropriate alignment depends on the appropriate communication.

Communication

The centrality of communication in the leader-follower relationship is indicated by the following sample quotes:

> *"He excels at setting strategy and communicating to his staff their role in delivering it"* [AP about PO]

> *"He balances that with excellent interpersonal skills such that he brings people of all grades and backgrounds along with him"* [PO about PO]

> (McCarthy et al, 2011:35)

> *"She has excellent interpersonal skills. She is very good at identifying and articulating important issues and keeping lines of communication with staff open at all times"* [PO about PO]

> *"She is able to communicate effectively in a way all levels of the organisation can understand"* [PO about PO]

> *"He has natural social skills and the ability to communicate with all levels".* [PO about PO]

> *"He has a clear and effective communication style with an eye on key stakeholder needs"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:36)

This communication is clearly meant to be two-way and it fosters an importance sense of community which transcends the leader-follower relationship and creates a truly collective or collaborative ZPD:

> *"She actively listens, has a reliable, collaborative approach, decisive and a good team building and motivational approach".* [PO about PO]

> *"He has a very good rapport with all staff members, provides timely feedback at all times"* [AP about PO]

> *"She has a very persuasive and inclusive style which assists in mentoring staff and making them feel part of the team to achieve the desired business objectives"* [PO about PO]

> *"She has a willingness to mentor and encourage staff and colleagues"* [AP about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:35)

Although a communicative culture is important for all levels of the organisation, it is particularly important at the top:

> *"In my view, the culture of the organisation is the biggest influence on effective leadership and that is usually influenced by the level and nature of communication by the top management team"* [PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:58)

The view that the leader-follower should also pursue this and that it flows from the person's character was also expressed. For example:

> *"He could be a better communicator by articulating more clearly what his requirements are and meet directly with his staff more often"* [PO about ASG]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:40)

> *"He needs to have better communication with staff generally; give more consistent feedback and consult more"* [PO about ASG]

> *"She could improve interpersonal communication and people skills and show more empathy and understanding"* [PO about PO]
>
> (McCarthy et al, 2011:41)

Improved communication between leaders and followers and between leader-followers will also improve the sense of community and lead to improved organisational alignment:

> *"Better information sharing with peer group, better networking to build support for work/projects"* [PO about PO]

> *"For her to become a more effective leader in achieving results depends on her networking ability and to prepare the ground to garner support within the Management Board for resources"* [PO about PO]

> *"More networking to achieve collaboration among co-sponsors and possible champions"* [AP about PO]

<p align="right">(McCarthy et al, 2011:41)</p>

Alignment

The view that alignment between the role of leaders and followers is important has various aspects, including organisational strategy, individual tasks and dealing with underperformance. On organisational strategy, the alignment that comes through appropriate communication is paramount to the successful delivery of the strategy. The following comments confirm this:

> *"He could convey a greater sense of work in the organisation, including the feedback from stakeholders on our Department's service delivery or develop systems for such feedback if they don't already exist".* [PO about ASG]

> *"Prioritise key deliverables and communicate these priorities and the reasons for them, clearly to her team"* [AP about PO]

<p align="right">(McCarthy et al, 2011:37)</p>

This view is further evidenced by the following comment of one of the interviewees:

> *"Organisational vision and strategy, although envisioned and communicated by the most senior levels, require implementation by junior levels – the followers carry the work out that leads to the achievement of the leader's vision. This means that the leader's vision and the follower's implementation need to be aligned. I see the leader-followers as the key agents in ensuring that this happens. They communicate the vision and measure progress holding the relevant people to account for missteps or missed deadlines. This alignment is severely disrupted by 'rogue' followers and/or incommunicative leader-followers"* [PO A 2014].

The institutional level is important but it is twinned with numerous incarnations of individual alignment between local leaders and their followers. The following comment illustrates this 'local' need for individual task alignment.

> *"Clearly define the role of his Assistant Principals on projects. On some occasions his expectations and those of his AP's do not align.*

> *Ensure co-ordination of the actions of his AP's. Tendency for the existence of independent republics"* [AP about PO]

> (McCarthy et al, 2011:37)

Independent republics are examples of rogue followers. Such do not assist in achieving organisational strategy and can in fact seriously hamper it. This leads naturally to the importance of talent management and to the need to deal with recurring underperformance. Some followers comment on the need for leaders to be more demanding of staff, including how they are deployed, developed and, if necessary, disciplined.

For example, on deployment of staff:

> *"He could be more demanding of the Personnel Unit to ensure that ... the right people are in the right place with the right skills"* [AP about PO]

> (McCarthy et al, 2011:41)

On development of staff:

> *"Promote an engagement with under performers… Underperformers are 'written off' and this is a costly 'write of'"* [PO about ASG]

> *"He could focus more on developing under-performing staff ...he can be too understanding of under-performance"* [PO about PO]

> (McCarthy et al, 2011:39)

On disciplining staff:

> *"She should apply compulsory standards to staff discipline and time-keeping"* [AP about PO]

> *"He could be a little less accepting of excuses from some stakeholders, for example to be more firm with some staff to deliver"* [AP about PO]

> *"Learn to understand and manage poor performance among his staff, implement supervisory checks and explain the basis for the requirement to have certain work carried out"* [PO about PO]

> (McCarthy et al, 2011:39)

4.7 Conclusion

Numerous findings emerged from this qualitative case study. Leaders and followers have high expectations of each other and there is an important balancing act required to negotiate these expectations. Divergent data indicates that some relationships are bound to be difficult as the demands expected of the leaders and followers differ. Chapter 5 discusses the most salient points of the findings.

Chapter Five – Discussion of Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter critically reviews the findings in connection with the literature review (Thomas, 2013). The findings indicate, in the view of the researcher, that just as learners usually overestimate the role and responsibility of teachers in their learning (Weimer, 2002), so followers usually overestimate the role and responsibility of leaders in their followership (Garrow & Hirsh, 2009). The solution to this problem is found in followers becoming leaders – leaders of their own learning, their own progression, and their own tasks (Carmichael, et al., 2011).

5.2 Research Findings

The research findings were varied and interesting – Table 5.1 offers a synopsis of the most salient findings.

Table 5.1: Synopsis of the Research Findings

Category	Theme
Leadership	Ability and actions must be aligned
	Character is the core of leadership
Followership	Following involves leadership
	First learn, then teach
Relationship	Communication is reciprocal and recurrent
	Alignment follows communication – involves individual and institutional alignment

As can be seen although leaders need to accept the challenge that self-regulated and self-directed followers inevitably present (Brown, 2003), it is followers themselves who must courageously (Chaleff, 1995; Chaleff, 2003) accept responsibility for their own learning, development and progression (Goffee & Jones, 2006). The leader-follower relationship involves an appropriate balance of closeness and distance, delegation and supervision, demands and choices for both the leader and the follower (De Wit & Meyer, 2010). It is a complex relationship and just as leadership and followership are increasingly realised to be situational and contingent (Northhouse, 2010), so

too, the leader-follower relationship for the leader-follower is situational and contingent (McCallum, 2013). Leaders are followers (Hyatt, 2011), followers are leaders (Pitron, 2008), and the leader-follower is both (Grayson & Speckhart, 2006; Hollander, 2008; Ruiz, et al., 2011).

The same leader-follower may have to manage the relationship differently depending on the circumstance and/or character traits of the other person – whether leader or follower (Gold, et al., 2010; Mello, 2011). Hence, just as a teacher should vary their teaching style depending on the learner's needs (Alexander, 2009) – so too a leader-follower should vary their leading (and/or following) depending on the needs of the follower (and/or leader) they are relating to in that current situation (Executive Coaching and Consulting Associates, n.d.).

The findings on the issue of delegation and the danger of operational distance are good examples of the relevance of Hegel's (1977) *Master/Slave Dialectic*. The leader (master) can become overly dependent and reliant on the follower (slave) and thereby be led astray (Goffee & Jones, 2006). Although upward delegation should be avoided (Brown, 2003), and there is a danger of this if the leader remains as proficient in the task as the follower, downward delegation also has dangers attached. Inter-dependence should be recognised and this means that the leader and follower both do essential tasks or essential elements of the same task.

Another interesting aspect of the findings was the suggestion that leaders need to communicate more. This seemed to indicate that delegation is viewed as the main way, or the main occasion, for the leader to communicate. The problem with this is that a delegated task can effectively end communication. It becomes the responsibility of the delegate to keep the delegator informed – not vice versa. Again, the follower should be willing to take more responsibility. If followers want to accept downward delegation, then they need to accept the responsibility to inform upward. The lines of communication are supposed to be two way. So there is a tension between asking for both more delegation and more communication from the leaders.

For example, if a teacher delegates learning tasks to learners in the classroom, it is the students that are expected to communicate more (Evensen & Hmelo, 2000; Dolmans, et al., 2005). The same interaction should take place with the leader-follower relationship.

The findings support the claim found in the literature review that followers generally feel that leaders need to work more in helping the followers develop into leaders – by offering increased learning, training and promotional opportunities. This view is as mistaken as the traditional view of learning – that the responsibility to teach (and learn) rests with the teacher (Jordan, et al., 2008). The responsibility is shared but the learner has much more power to ask or seek assistance from others,[24] than is sometimes realised (Chaleff, 1995; Moll & Whitmore, 1993; Moos & Ringdal, 2012).

5.3 Research Questions

The findings also address the central research questions of this exploratory case study into the leader-follower relationship (See Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Addressing the Research Questions

Research Question	Addressed by Findings	
Experience/ Expectations	Need for followership development →	Need for leadership development
How Improve?	Two-way Communication of values and vision →	Alignment of individual and institutional work
Which Important?	Depends first on the contextual need →	Depends second on the relationship need

There is a need to develop followership as a precursor to leadership (Hyatt, 2011). The leader-follower needs to understand how to lead by understanding how to follow. This is one reason he needs to know what his followers actually do, what they expect to do, and what they expect the leader to do. Communication is the only way to improve this relationship. Such dialogue is a precursor to the alignment of institutional vision and values, with individual tasks techniques – which is essential if the leader-follower relationship is to

---

[24] Including peers (Jones, et al., 2008).

remain healthy. Finally, for the leader-follower, the most important relationship depends on the situational needs – hence, it can alternate between leaders and followers. Generally, however, the leader-followers placed followers as their number one relationship concern. This is significant because it might be the case that many followers believe that their leaders are more interested in the relationship with superiors rather than subordinates. Further research would be needed to explore this.

5.4 Conclusion

The findings indicate that the leader-follower relationship is subject to various demands, constraints and choices and is extremely complex. It is a balancing act that is even more delicate for a leader-follower. Followers should take more responsibility for their impact in the leader-follower relationship as they have many more leadership opportunities within that relationship than they sometimes realise.

Chapter Six – Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This exploratory case study has provided insights into the leader-follower relationship. This chapter offers recommendations for practice, with the proviso that a leader-follower should research these findings, and using the *4-M Learning Process*, develop recommendations for practice to be explored using a practical action research cycle. Such a leader-follower would be a follower who is acting as a leader. This chapter also presents delimitations of this case study and offers avenues for further research.

6.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are offered:

Leadership:

> Leadership Recommendation 1: *Since ability and actions must be aligned, therefore, a leader should ask "Am I able and willing to do what I ask others to do?"*

> Leadership Recommendation 2: *Since character is the core of leadership, therefore, a leader should ask, "Why should another person follow me?"*

> General Leadership Recommendation: *The leader should remind himself (through self-delegation) of what it is like to be a follower.*

Followership:

> Followership Recommendation 1: *Since the role of the follower involves leadership, therefore the follower should utilise Stewart's (1982)* **DCC Management Model***.*

> Followership Recommendation 2: *Since a follower must present original and independent ideas, therefore, a follower should take responsibility for his own progression by applying the* **4-M Learning Process.**

> Followership Recommendation: *The follower should accept more responsibility for his own role in leadership*

Relationship:

> Relationship Recommendation 1: *Since communication of information flows both way, therefore, just as leaders can "correct" followers, so followers can "correct" leaders.*

> Relationship Recommendation 2: *Since alignment follows from two-way communication, and refers to both institutional and individual alignment, followers should have as much input into institutional alignment as leaders do into individual alignment.*

> General Relationship Recommendation: *Since, Vygotsky's (1978)* **ZPD** *and Hegel's (1977)* **Master/Slave Dialectic**, *work both ways, therefore followers can lead and they can teach, and leaders can learn and they can serve.*

6.3 Delimitations of Study

This small-scale study was limited to a consideration of leader-followers. The research sample could be widened to include other relevant leader-followers in the civil service, (such as EO's, AO's or HEO's), and interview the followers and leaders of these leader-followers. At most, this was an interim research study – or a pilot study. Triangulation was utilised to ensure that the results were valid,[25] although this may have resulted in data saturation (Berg, 2009). It might be possible to utilise this data to discover generalisations and explanations (Partington, 2002; Berg, 2009), although these would need to be tested through further research (Bridges & Smith, 2007; Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

6.4 Avenues for Further Research

Several avenues for further research suggest themselves:

To explore the contribution that a particular leader and a particular follower can make when they share an understanding of the vision, goals, strategy and culture of the organisation on the one hand and also an understanding of the

---

[25] Validity in research follows when the data actually and accurately captures what the research questions sought to know (Berg, 2009; Creswell, 2014). Some commentators argue that validity, like reliability, is less important than trustworthiness in interpretative (i.e. qualitative) research (Bridges & Smith, 2007; Thomas, 2013)

differing roles of leadership and followership on the other, would to be a ripe arena for further research (Marturano & Gosling, 2008). Such a practical/interpretative action research study would be a follow-up of to this current 'pilot' case study (Stringer, 2008).

Additionally, although a tentative *Yes* can be offered to the following further research questions, it would be better to devise research that specifically addressed them

- *Do these expectations and recommendations differ if the leader-follower has served in several organisations?*

- *Do they differ if the leader-follower has been exposed to different leadership or followership relationships (and styles)?*

6.5 Conclusion

Rich qualitative data was obtained in this exploratory case study (Berg, 2009). It shows that the leader-follower relationship is an integral consideration in many aspects of the Irish civil service. Since the main need identified in the McCarthy et al (2011) report was human capital development, the main assertion of this research study is that the leader-follower relationship is the best means of developing followers into future leaders. Followers need to take more responsibility for their development instead of delegating such responsibility to their superiors. The first step in this is to recognise the many ways in which, as followers, they are already acting as leaders.

Appendix A – PO Interview Questions

1. How would you define or describe leadership?
2. How would you define or describe followership?
3. What is the connection between them?
4. When did you first consider yourself a leader?
5. When did you first consider yourself a follower?
6. How would you view the leader-follower relationship:

      i.   With those you lead?

     ii.   With those you follow?

7. What are the most important qualities of a leader-follower?
8. What are the most important qualities of the leader-follower relationship?
9. What are you experiences and expectations of leadership in the civil service?
10. What are you experiences and expectations of followership in the civil service?
11. What are you experiences and expectations of leader-follower relationship in the civil service?
12. How can the leader-follower relationship in the civil service be improved?

References

A, 2014. *Leader-Follower* [Interview] (25 June 2014).

Albanese, M. A. & Mitchell, S., 1992. Problem-based Learning: A Review of Literature on its Outcomes and Implementation Issues. *Academic Medicine,* 68(1), pp. 52-81.

Alexander, R., 2009. *Essays on Pedagogy.* London: Routledge.

Andrews, M., Squire, C. & Tamboukou, M. eds., 2008. *Doing Narrative Research.* London: Sage.

B, 2014. *Leader-Follower* [Interview] (27 June 2014).

Baker, S., 2002. Laddering: Making Sense of Meaning. In: D. Partington, ed. *Essential Skills for Management Research.* London: Sage, pp. 226-253.

Bandura, A., 1986. *Social foundations of Thought and Action.* Englewoods Cliffs(New Jersey): Prentice Hall.

Bennis, G, W. & Thomas, R. J., 2007. *Leading for a Lifetime: How Defining Moments.* Boston: Harvard Business School.

Berg, B., 2009. *Qualitative Research Methods.* 7th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Blundel, R. & Lockett, N., 2011. *Exploring Entrepreneurship: Practices and Perspectives.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bones, C., 2011. *The Cult of the Leader.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bridges, D. & Smith, R. eds., 2007. *Philosophy, Methodology and Educational Research.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Broad, J., 2006. Interpretations of independent learning in further education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* May, 30(2), pp. 119-143.

Brown, A., 2003. The new followership: A Challenge for leaders. *The Futurist,* 37(2), p. 68.

Brown, B. & Baker, S., 2007. *Philosophies of Research into Higher Education.* London: Continuum.

Burke, S., 2010. *The Death and Return of the Author: Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault, and Derrida.* 3rd ed. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Burns, P., 2013. *Corporate Entrepreneurship.* Third ed. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Candy, P. C., 1991. *Self-direction for lifelong learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Carmichael, J., Collins, C., Emsell, P. & Haydon, J., 2011. *Leadership & Management Development.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Carpenter, M. A., 2009. *An Executive's Primer on the Strategy of Social Networks.* New York: Business Expert Press.

Carr, W. & Kemmis, S., 1986. *Becoming Critical: education, knowledge and action research.* London: Falmer Press.

Cassidy, S., 2012. Self-regulated learning in higher education: Identifying key component processes. *Studies in Higher Education,* 37(3), pp. 1-26.

Cetkovic, J. & Zarkovic, M., 2012. Key Challenges of Future Path of Globalisation in Global Economy. *Intellectual Economics,* 6(2 (14)), pp. 7-17.

Chaleff, I., 1995. *The courages follower: standing up to and for our leadners.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Chaleff, I., 2003. *The Courageous Follower.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Chell, E., 2008. *The Entrepreneurial Personality.* Second ed. New York: Routledge.

Chia, R. C. H. & Robin, H., 2009. *Strategy without Design.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, k., 2005. *Research Methods in Education.* Fifth ed. London: RoutledgeFalmer.

Cole, A., 2004. What Hegel's Master/Slave Dialectic Really Means. *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies,* 34(3), pp. 577-610.

Collis, J. & Hussey, R., 2009. *Business Research: A Practical Guide for Undergraduate & Postgraduate Students.* 3rd ed. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Conway, P. F. & Clark, C. M., 2003. The Journey Inward and Outward: A Re-examination of Fuller's concerns-based model of teacher development. *Teaching and Teacher Education,* Volume 19, pp. 465-482.

Coombs, G. & Elden, M., 2004. Introduction to the Special Issue: Problem-based Learning as Social Inquiry-PBL and Management Education. *Journal of Management Education,* October, 28(5), pp. 523-535.

Cousin, G., 2009. *Researching Learning in Higher Education: An Introductin to Contemporary methods and Apporaches.* New York: Routledge.

Craig, D. V., 2009. *Action Research Essentials.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Creswell, J., 2014. *Research Design: Qualitative, Qunatitative, & Mixed Methods Approaches.* 4th ed. London: Sage.

Crick, R. D., Stringher, C. & Ren, K. eds., 2014. *Learning to Learn: International perspectives from theory and practice.* New York: Routledge.

Davey, N., 2010. Twentieth-century hermeneutics. In: *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth Century Philosophy.* New York: Routledge, pp. 693-735.

Davidson, D., 2006. *The Essential Davidson.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Davis, S. G. & Gray, E. S., 2007. Going Beyond Test-Taking Strategies: Buildig Self-Regulated Students and Teachers. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction,* July.1(1).

De Wit, B. & Meyer, R., 2010. *Strategy Synthesis: Resolving Strategy Paradoxes to Create Competitive Advantage.* Third ed. Andover: Cengage Learning.

Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. eds., 2008. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research.* 3rd ed. London: Sage.

Dochy, F., Segers, M., Bossche, P. & Gijbels, D., 2003. Effects of problem-based learning: a meta-analysis. *Learning and Instruction,* 13(5), pp. 533-568.

Dodgson, M. & Gann, D., 2010. *Innovation: A Very Short Introduction.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dolmans, D. H. J. M., De Grave, W., Wolfhagen, I. H. A. P. & van der Vleuten, C. P. M., 2005. Problem-based learning: future challenges for educational practice and research. *Medical Education,* Volume 39, pp. 732-741.

Eaterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. & Jackson, P. R., 2008. *Management Research.* Third ed. London: Sage.

Eden, C. & Huxham, C., 2002. Action Research. In: D. Partington, ed. *Essential Skills for Management Research.* London: Sage, pp. 254-272.

Evans, P., 2010. *The Dynamics of the Leader Follower Relationship.* [Online] Available at: https://www.escholar.manchester.ac.uk/api/datastream?publicationPid=uk-ac-man-scw:110465&datastreamId=FULL-TEXT.PDF
[Accessed 20 January 2014].

Evensen, D. H. & Hmelo, C. E. eds., 2000. *Problem-Based Learning: A Research Perspective on Learning Interactions.* Mahwah(New Jersey): Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Everington, J., 2013. The Interpretive Approach and Bridging the "Theory-Practice Gap": Action Research with Student Teachers of Religious Education in England. *Religion & Education,* Volume 40, pp. 90-106.

Executive Coaching and Consulting Associates, n.d. *The Leader - Follower Partnership: It's a New Day.* [Online] Available at: http://www.exe-coach.com/follower-partnership.htm
[Accessed 25 January 2014].

Ezer, H., 2009. *Self-Study Approaches and the Teacher-Inquirer.* Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

Fish, S., 1980. *Is There a Text in This Class?.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Floysand, A., 1999. *BORA NHH: A Theoretical Framework on how to appraoch globalisation and social practice.* [Online] Available at: http://brage.bibsys.no/nhh/handle/URN:NBN:no-bibsys_brage_23436?mode=full
[Accessed 2 October 2013].

Flyvberg, B., 2001. *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Science Fails and How It Can Succeed Again.* Cambridge: Cambride University Press.

Foreman-Peck, L. & Winch, C., 2010. *Using Educational Research to Inform Practice: A Practical Guide to Practitioner Research in Universities and Colleges.* New York: Routledge.

Foster, P., 2010. Leader-Follower Theory and the Transformational Organization. *LeaderLab,* 1(3), pp. 12-14.

Friedman, S., 2008. *Total Leadership.* Boston: Harvard Business Press.

Frohman, D. & Howard, R., 2008. *Leadership the Hard Way.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Furnham, A., 2003. *Mad, Sad and Bad Management: A Lexicon of Corporate Cock-ups, Coincidences and Confusions.* Cirencester, UK: Management Books 2000 Ltd.

Gallagher, G., 2009. *Corporate Strategy for Irish Companies.* Dublin: Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland.

Gardner, h., 2008. multiple lenses on the mind. In: C. M. Huat & T. Kerry, eds. *International Perspectves on Education.* London: Continuum, pp. 7-27.

Garrow, V. & Hirsh, W., 2009. Talent Management: Issues of Focus and Fit. *Public Personnel Management,* 37(4), pp. 389-402.

Ghauri, P. & Gronhaug, K., 2005. *Research Methods in Business Studies: A Practical Guide.* Third ed. Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education.

Gilbert, J. & Matviuk, S., 2008. The symbiotic nature of the leader-follower relationship and its impact on organizational effectives. *Academic Leadership,* 6(3).

Gill, J., 2008. *A matter of opinion | General | Times Higher Education.* [Online]
Available at: http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/404642.article
[Accessed 25 July 2014].

Giroux, H. A., 2001. *Theory and Resisitance in Education: Towards a Pedagogy for the Opposition.* Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Goffee, R. & Jones, G., 2006. *Why Should Anyone Be Led By You? What it Takes to Be an Authentic Leader.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Gold, J., Thorpe, R. & Mumford, A., 2010. *Leadership and Management Development.* 5th ed. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Graham, E., 2013. Is Practical Theology a form of 'Action Research'?. *International Journal of Practical Theology,* 17(1), pp. 148-178.

Grayson, D. & Speckhart, R., 2006. *The Leader-Follower Relationship: Practitioner   Observations.*   [Online]
Available   at:
http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/lao/issue_6/pdf/grayson_spec khart.pdf
[Accessed February 2014].

Grenham, T. & Kieran, P. eds., 2012. *New Educational Horizons in Contemporary Ireland: Trends and Challenges.* Bern: Peter Lang.

Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. S., 2008. Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences. In: N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln, eds. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research.* 3rd ed. London: Sage, pp. 255-286.

Guerin, S., 2014. *Review of Action Taken by An Garda Siochana Pertaining to Certain   Allegations   made   by   Sgt   M.   McCabe.*   [Online]
Available at: http://www.merrionstreet.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Final-Redacted-Guerin-Report-OCR.pdf
[Accessed May 2014].

Hadfield, M., 2012. Becoming critical again: reconnecting critical social theory with the practice of action research. *Educational Action Research,* Dec, 20(4), pp. 571-585.

Hall, S. S., 2010. *Wisdom: From Philosophy to Neuroscience.* New York: Knopf.

Hamel, G., Parhalad, C. K., Thomas, H. & O'Neal, D. eds., 1998. *Strategic Flexibility: Managing in a Turbulent Environment.* Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Harvard Business Review, 2009. *Harvard Business Review on Developing High-Potential Leaders.* Boston: Harvard Business School.

Harvard Business Review, 2008. *Harvard Business Review on The Persuasive Leader.* Boston: Harvard Business Press.

Hegel, G. W. F., 1977. *The Phenomenology of Spirit.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Hemlo-Silver, C. & Barrows, S., 2006. Goals and Strategies of a problem-based learning facilitator. *The Interdiscplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning,* 1(1), pp. 21-39.

Herbert, A., 2010. *The Pedagogy of Creativity.* Oxon, Uk: Routledge.

Herrmann, P., 2010. Globalisation Revisited. *Society and Economy,* 32(2), pp. 255-275.

Hmelo-Silver, C. E., Duncan, R. G. & Chinn, C. A., 2007. Scaffolding and achievement in problem-based and inquiry learning: A response to Kirschner, Sweller, and Clark (2006). *Educational Pyschologist,* 42(2), pp. 99-107.

Hogan, P., 2010. *The New Significance of Learning: Imagination's heartwork.* New York: Routledge.

Hollander, E. P., 1995. Ethical Challenges in the Leader-Follower Relationship. *Business Ethics Quarterly,* 5(1), pp. 55-65.

Hollander, E. P., 2008. *Inclusive Leadership: The Essential Leader-Follower Relationship.* New York: Routledge.

Honneth, A., 2010. Critical Theory. In: D. Moran, ed. *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth Century Philosophy.* New York: Routledge, pp. 784-813.

Huat, C. M. & Kerry, T. eds., 2008. *International Perspectives on Education.* London: Continuum.

Huczynski, A., 2004. *Influencing within Organizations.* Second ed. London: Routledge.

Hyatt, M., 2011. *Why the Best Leaders are Great Followers.* [Online] Available at: http://michaelhyatt.com/why-the-best-leaders-are-great-followers.html
[Accessed May 2014].

Jacobs, G., Aili, W., Xishuang, L. & Yongye, X., 2008. Making thinking audible and visble via cooperative learning. In: C. Huat & T. Kerry, eds. *International Perspectives on Education.* London: Continuum, pp. 103-117.

Jacquette, D., ed., 2004. *The Cambridge Companion to Brentano.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jankowicz, A. D., 2005. *Business Research Projects.* Fourth ed. Andover, Hampshire: Cengage Learning.

Jaques, D. & Salmon, G., 2007. *Learning in Groups: A Handbook for face-to-face and online environments.* 4th ed. London: Routledge.

Jarvela, S. & Jarvenoja, H., 2011. Socially Constructed Self-Regulated Learning and Motivation Regulation in Collaborative Learning Groups. *Teachers College Record,* February, 113(2), pp. 350-374.

Jarvis, P., ed., 2006. *The Teory and Practice or Teaching.* 2nd ed. Abingdon: Routledge.

Jarvis, P., 2012. *Teaching, Learning and Education in Late Modernity.* New York: Routledge.

Jarvis, P. & Parker, S. eds., 2005. *Human Learning: An Holistic Approach.* Abingdon: Routledge.

Johnson, G., Yip, G. S. & Hensmans, M., 2012. Achieving Successful Strategic Transformation. *MIT Sloan Management Review,* 53(3), pp. 25-32.

Johnson, P. & Duberley, 2000. *Understanding Management Research.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Jones, M. H., Estell, D. B. & Alexander, J. M., 2008. Friends, classmates, and self-regulated learning: discussions with peers inside and outside the classroom. *Metacognition Learning,* Volume 3, pp. 1-15.

Jordan, A., Carlile, O. & Stack, A., 2008. *Approaches to Learning: A Guide for Teachers.* Berkshire: McGraw-Hill Open University Press.

Kerdeman, D., 2003. Pulled Up Short: Challenging Self-Understadning as a Focus of Teaching and Learning. *Journal of Philosophy of Education,* Volume 37, pp. 293-308.

Kerry, T., 2008. The art and science of effective teaching. In: C. Huat & T. Kerry, eds. *International Perspectives on Education.* London: Continuum, pp. 77-102.

Kincheloe, L, J. & McLaren, P., 2008. Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research. In: N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln, eds. *The Landscape of Qualitative Research.* 3rd ed. London: Sage, pp. 403-455.

Kirschner, P. A., Sweller, J. & Clark, R. E., 2006. Why minimal guidance during instruction does not work: An analysis of the failure of constructivist, discovery, problem-based, experiential, and inquiry-based teaching. *Educational Psychologist,* 41(2), pp. 75-86.

Knowles, M., 1975. *Self-directed learning: a guide for learners and teachers.* Chicago: Follett Publishing Company.

Korsgaard, K., 1996. *The Sources of Normativity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kouzes, J. M. & Posner, B. Z., 2007. *The Leadership Challenge.* 4th ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kovbasyuk, O. & Blessinger, P. eds., 2013. *Meaning-Centered Education: International Perspectives and Explorations in Higher Education.* New York: Routledge.

Kuhn, D., 2007. Is direct instruction an answer to the right question?. *Educational Psychologist,* 42(2), pp. 109-113.

Kuratko, D. F., 2009. *Introduction to Entrepreneurship.* Eighth ed. s.l.:South Western.

Lazar, G., 1193. *Literature and Language Teaching: A guide for teachers and trainers.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leahy, T., 2012. *Management in 10 words.* London: Randon House Business Books.

Leary, H., 2012. *Self-Directed Learning in Problem-Based Learning Versus Traditional Lecture-Based Learning: A Meta-Analysis.* s.l.:Utah State University.

Lee, V. S., 2013. Supporting Students' Search for a Meaningful Life Through Inquiry-Guided Learning. In: O. Kovbasyuk & P. Blessinger, eds. *Meaning Centered Education.* London: Routledge, pp. 154-167.

Leontiev, D., 2013. Emerging Contexts and Meanings of Human Education. In: O. Kovbasyuk & P. Blessinger, eds. *Meaning-Centered Education: International Perspectives and Explorations in Higher Education.* New York: Routledge, pp. 24-34.

Lepore, E. & Smith, B. C. eds., 2008. *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Langauge.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Levitt, T., 1960. Marketing Myopia. *Harvard Business Review,* 38(July-August), pp. 24-47.

Lyons, W., 2001. *Matters of the Mind.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Madison, G. B., 1999. Hermeneutics: Gadamer and Ricoeur. In: R. H. Popkin, ed. *The Pimlico History of Western Philosophy.* London: Pimlico, pp. 705-711.

Martin, R., 2007. *The opposable Mind: How Successful Leaders Win Through Integrative Thinking.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Marturano, A. & Gosling, J. eds., 2008. *Leadership: The key Concepts.* New York: Routledge.

Maylor, H. & Blackmon, K., 2005. *Researching Business and Management.* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

McAteer, M., 2013. *Action Research in Education.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

McCallum, J. S., 2013. *Followership: The other side of Leadership.* [Online] Available at: http://iveybusinessjournal.com/topics/leadership/followership-the-other-side-of-leadership#.U-_-bPldVqU
[Accessed May 2014].

McCarthy, A., Grady, G. & Dooley, G., 2011. *Leadership in the Irish Civil Service: A 360* Review of Senior Management Capability,* Galway: National College of Ireland.

McDermott, A. & Flood, P. C., 2010. *Leadership in Ireland: Insights from Contemporary Irish leaders.* Dublin: Blackhall Publishing.

McGlinn, M., 2009. Action Research: Exploring the Theoretical Divide between Practical and Critical Approaches. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction,* 3(1), pp. 32-46.

McKee, A., Boyatzis, R. & Johnston, F., 2008. *Becoming a Resonant Leader.* Boston: Harvard Business Press.

McNiff, J., 2013. *Action Research: Principles and practice.* 3rd ed. London: Routledge.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J., 2010. *You and Your Action Research Project.* 3rd ed. New York: Routledge.

McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J., 2011. *All you need to know about Action Research.* 2nd ed. London: Sage.

Mello, J. A., 2011. *Strategic Management of Human Resources.* International ed. s.l.:South-Western Cengage Learrning.

Melser, D., 2004. *The Act of Thinking.* Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Mendonca, M. & Kanungo, R. N., 2007. *Ethical Leadership.* Maidenhead, Berkshire: Open University Press, McGraw-Hill Educaation.

Miller, J., 2008. The thinking heart: educating for wisdom and compassion. In: C. Huat & K. T, eds. *International Perspectives on Education.* London: Continuum, pp. 62-74.

Mintzberg, H., 1973. *The Nature of Managerial Work.* New York: Harper and Row.

Mintzberg, H., 1990. The managers Job: Folklore and Fact. *Harvard Business Review,* Volume March-April, pp. 163-176.

Misak, C., ed., 2008. *The Oxford Handbook of American Philosophy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Moll, L. C. & Whitmore, K. F., 1993. Vygotsky in Classroom Practie: Moving from Individual transmission to Social transaction. In: E. A. Forman, N. Minick & C. A. Stone, eds. *Contexts for Learning: Sociociltural Dynamics in Children's Development.* New York: Oxford Univeristy Press, pp. 19-42.

Montalvo, F. T. & Torres, M. C. G., 2004. Self-Regulated Learning: Current and Future Directions. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology,* 2(1), pp. 1-34.

Moos, D. C. & Ringdal, A., 2012. Self-Regulated Learning in the Classroom: A Literature Reiew on the Teacher's Role. *Education Research International.*

Noddings, N., 2007. *Philosophy of Education.* Second ed. Cambridge, MA: Westview Press.

Nolen, A. L. & Putten, J. V., 2007. Action Research in Education: Addressing Gaps in Ethical Principles and Practices. *Educationall researcher,* 36(7), pp. 401-407.

Norris, C., 1987. *Derrida.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Norris, C., 2007. *Fiction, Philosophy and Literary Theory: Will the Real Saul Kripke Please Stand Up?*. London: Continuum.

Northhouse, P., 2010. *Leadership Theory and Practice.* 5th ed. Wester Michigan University: Sage Publications.

Novak, D., 2012. *Taking people with you: The only way to make BIG things happen.* London: Penguin Group.

O'Grady, P., 2002. *Relativism.* Chesham: Acumen.

Olson, M. H. & Hergenhahn, B. R., 2013. *An Introduction to Theories of Learning.* Ninth ed. Upper Saddle River(New Jersey): Pearson Education.

Partington, D., ed., 2002. *Essential Skills for Management Research.* London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Patterson, S., 2010. Philosophy of Mind. In: D. Moran, ed. *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth century Philosophy.* London: Routledge, pp. 525-582.

Pinkard, T., 2010. Hegelianism in the twentieth century. In: D. Moran, ed. *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth Century Philosophy.* New York: Routledge, pp. 118-148.

Pintrich, P. R., 1999. The role of motivation in promoting and sustaining self-regulated learning. *International Journal of Educational Research,* Volume 31, pp. 459-470.

Pintrich, P. R. & Schunk, D. H., 2002. *Motivation in Education: Theory, Research, and Applications.* 2nd ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education.

Pitron, J., 2008. *Followership is Leadership: The Leadership_Exemplarty Followership Exhcnage Model.* [Online] Available at: http://knol.google.com/k/dr-john-pitron/followership-isleadership/12nb17zejmb1w/2.
[Accessed June 2014].

Powell, J., 2006. *Jacques Derrida: A Biography.* London: Continuum.

Quine, W. V. O., 1960. *Word and Object.* Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Raelin, J., 2003. *Creating leaderful organisations: How to bring out leadership in everyone.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers inc.

Richards, L. & Morse, J. M., 2013. *Qualitative Methods.* LA: Sage.

Riley, M. et al., 2000. *Researching and Writing Dissertations in Business and Management.* London: Thomson Learning.

Rowbottom, D. & Aiston, S., 2007. The Myth of 'Scientific Method' in Contemporary Educational Research. In: D. Bridges & R. Smith, eds. *Philosophy, Methodology and Educational Research.* Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 11-30.

Ruiz, P., Ruiz, C. & Marínez, R., 2011. Improving the "Leader-Follower" Relationship: Top Manager or Supervisor? The Ethical Leadership Trickle-down Effect on Follower Job Response. *Journal of Business Ethics,* 99(4), pp. 587-608.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A., 2009. *Research methods for Business Students.* Fifth ed. Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Schmidt, H., 1993. Foundations of problem based learning: Some explanatory notes. *Medical Education,* Volume 27, pp. 422-432.

Schmidt, H. G., Loyens, S., van Gog, T. & Paas, F., 2007. Problem-based learning is compatible with human cognitive architecture: commentary on Kirschner, Sweller and Clarke (2006). *Educational Psychologist,* 42(2), pp. 91-97.

Schuler, R. S., Jackson, S. E. & Tarique, I., 2011. Global Talent Management and Global Talent Challenges: Stragetic Opportunities for IHRM. *Journal of World Business,* Volume 46, pp. 506-516.

Schunk, D., 2000. *Learning Theories: An Educational Perspective.* New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Schunk, D. H., 2008. Metacognition, self-regulation, and self-regulated learning: Research recommendations. *Educational Psycology Review,* 20(4), pp. 463-467.

Sefton-Green, J., Thomson, P., Jones, K. & Bresler, L. eds., 2011. *The Routledge International Handbook of Creative Learning.* Oxon: Routledge.

Sekaran, U. & Bougie, R., 2010. *Research Methods for Business: A Skill Building Approach.* Fifth ed. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.

Shane, S., 2003. *A General Theory of Entrepreneurship: The Individual-Opportunity Nexus.* Cheltenham, Uk: Edward Elgar.

Silva, M., ed., 1996. *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

Smith, B., ed., 2003. *John Searle.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Steup, M., 2010. Epistemology in the twentieth century. In: D. Moran, ed. *The Routledge Companion to Twentieth century Philosophy.* London: Routledge, pp. 469-522.

Stewart, D., Shamdasani, P. & Rook, D., 2007. *Focus groups: Theory and Practice.* 2nd ed. London: Sage.

Stewart, R., 1982. A Model for Understanding Managerial Jobs and Behaviour. *Academy of Management Review,* 7(1), pp. 7-13.

Storey, J., ed., 2004. *Leadership in Organizations: Current Issues and Key Trends.* London: Routledge.

Stringer, E., 2008. *Action Research in Education.* 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

Thomas, G., 2013. *How to do your Research Project: A Guide for Students in Education and Applied Social Sciences.* London: Sage.

Toland, K., 2014. *Report of the Independent Review Group on the Department of Justice and Equality,* Dublin: Department of Justice and Equality.

Tsohatzidis, S. L. ed., 2007. *John Searle's Philosophy of Language: Force, Meaning and Mind.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Turak, A., 2012. *The 11 Leadership Secrets You've never heard about.* [Online]
Available at: http://www.forbes.com/sites/augustturak/2012/07/17/the-11-leadership-secrets-you-never-heard-about/
[Accessed May 2014].

Ulrich, D., 1997. *Human Resource Champions.* Boston: Harvard Business School.

Ulrich, D., Smallwood, N. & Sweetman, K., 2008. *The Leadership Code: Five rules to lead by.* Boston: Harvard Business Press.

Van Dick, R., Hirst, G., Grojean, M. W. & Wieseke, J., 2007. Relationships between leader and follower organizational identification and implications for folloer attitudes and behaviour. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology,* Volume 80, pp. 133-150.

van Inwagen, P., 2009. *Metaphysics.* Third ed. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

van Inwagen, P. & Zimmerman, D. eds., 2007. *Persons: Human and Divine.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

van Meerhaeghe, M. A. G., 2012. Globalisation: concept, outcome, future-a continental view. *Eur J Law Econ,* Volume 33, pp. 239-306.

Van Wart, M., 2003. Public-Sector Leadership Theory: An Assessement. *Public Administration Review,* 63(2), pp. 214-228.

Vasconcellos e Sá, J. A., Olao, F. & Pereira, M., 2011. From Levitt to the global age: one more time, how do we define our business?. *Management Decision,* 49(1), pp. 99-115.

Vygotsky, L. S., 1978. *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Pyschological Processes.* Boston: Harvard University Press.

Wageman, R., Nunes, D. A., Burruss, J. A. & Hackman, J. R., 2008. *Senior Leadership Teams: What it takes to make them great.* Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Wahlgren, A., 2003. Choices, Constraints, and Demands: Stewar's Model for Understanding Managerial Work and Behavior. *The Leadership Quarterly*, pp. 229-234.

Walker, A. & Leary, H., 2009. A Problem Based Learning Meta Analysis: Differences across problem types, implementation types, discplines, and assessment levels. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-based Learning,* 3(1), pp. 12-43.

Warren, C., 2010. *Discovering Qualitative Methods: Field research, interviews, and analysis.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Weimer, M., 2002. *Learner-Centered Teaching: Five Key Chnages to Practice.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Winch, C., 2006. *Education, Autonomy and Critical Thinking.* London: Routledge.

Winne, P. H., 2010. Bootstrapping learner's self-regulated learning. *Psychological Test and Assessment Modeling,* 52(4), pp. 472-490.

Wittgenstein, L., 2000. *Philosophical Investigations.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Yin, R., 2009. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods.* 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Zanardi, W. J., 2003. Fabricating Facts: How Exegesis Presupposes Eisegesis. *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis,* Volume 3, pp. 250-263.

Zimmerman, B. J., 1998. Developing self-fulfilling cycles of academic regulation: An analysis of exemplary instructional models. In: D. H. Schunk & B. J. Zimmerman, eds. *Self-regulated learning: From teaching to self-reflective practice.* New York: Guilford Publications, pp. 1-19.

Zimmerman, B. J., 2002. Becoming a Self-Regulated Learner: An Overview. *Theory into Practice,* 41(2), pp. 64-70.

Zimmerman, B. J., 2008. Investigating Self-Regulation and Motivation: Historical Background, Mehodological Developments, and Future Prospects. *American Educational Research Journal,* 45(1), pp. 166-183.

Zimmerman, B. J. & Schunk, D. H. eds., 1989. *Self-Regulated Learning and Academic Achievement: Theory, Research, and Practice.* New York: Springer-Verlag.