I know that I am a leader: Interactions, catalysts, barriers, and control of the leader identity construction process

Evelyn Lanka

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Sheffield
Faculty of Social Science
Sheffield University Management School

Submission Date

**November 2018**

Acknowledgments

This thesis represents the culmination of many of my dreams, and yet this is just the start of what I hope will be a long and successful academic career. I am deeply grateful to so many people who have come into my life over the years. Their love, support, and faith in me is something by which I am continually amazed. Although I have worked very hard to reach the place where I am today, I could never have achieved any of this without their support. Therefore, more than anything, I would like to thank the following people for helping me to get to this point.

I would like to start by expressing my deep gratitude to the individuals who supported and encouraged me to seek higher education before I ever started my doctoral studies. There are many people who come to mind as a source of support: you know who you are, and I thank you. I would also like to thank all of the wonderful individuals who participated in my research. I am eternally grateful and humbled by the invaluable contributions you made. To say that I could not have done it without you is an understatement. I would also like to thank the individuals at Sheffield University Management School who helped and supported me by introducing me to possible participants or who helped me to carry out the technical details of the data collection and thesis writing process.

I would like to thank my colleagues at Sheffield University Management School, not only because they provided me with the financial means to undertake my PhD, but also because time after time they have listened to presentations, given feedback on ideas or otherwise supported me and my research.

My gratitude also goes out to my supervisors Dr. Anna Topakas and Dr. Malcolm Patterson. Thank you for having faith in me and allowing me to walk my own path. Without the freedom you gave me, I would not have been able to do this. The help and support you gave me over the last three years has truly helped me to develop as an independent researcher.

Finally, I would like to thank those closest to me for all the love and unfailing support they have given me. It is because of you that I sacrifice, and because of you that this sacrifice is worth it. I would like to thank my parents Vorris and Brenda for their support. My respect and gratitude goes to my mother-in-law Dr. Sunita Lanka for her never-ending love, support, and guidance; thanks Amma. My deepest gratitude and love goes to my husband Dr. Sanjay Lanka. Jannu, thank you for being my teacher, best friend, third PhD supervisor, and never-ending wellspring of love, hope, joy, and knowledge. The future is bright, with you by my side.

# Publications and Presentations Arising from this Thesis

Organizational Reports

Lanka, E. (2017). We are all leaders: A research report.

Conferences and other presentations

Lanka, E. (2018). "My Job Title Says I am a Leader: The Role of Organizations in the Leader Identity Construction Process", paper presented to Sheffield University Management School PGR conference, Sheffield University Management School, Sheffield, UK, September 2018.

Lanka, E., Topakas, A. & Patterson, M. (2018). "My Job Title Says I am a Leader: The Role of Organizations in the Leader Identity Construction Process", paper presented to the Institute of Work Psychology International Conference, Sheffield University Management School, Sheffield, UK, June 2018.

Lanka, E. (2017). "Becoming a Leader: Catalyst and barriers to leader identity construction" paper presented to Sheffield University Management School PGR conference, Sheffield University Management School, Sheffield, UK, September 2017.

Lanka, E., Topakas, A. & Patterson, M., (2017). "Constructing Identities: Issues of direction of influence in the leadership identity construction process", paper presented to the Interdisciplinary Perspective on Leadership Symposium, Agios Ioannis Diakoftis (Mykonos), Greece, May 2017.

Lanka, E., Topakas, A. & Patterson, M. (2017). "Constructing Identities: Issues of direction of influence in the leadership identity endorsement process", paper presented to White Rose Doctoral Training Center Conference, University of York, York, UK, May 2017.

Lanka, E. (2016). "Leadership Identity Construction Through Reciprocal Identity Claims: A Relational Leadership Perspective", paper presented to British Academy of Management, PhD Symposium, Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, August 2016.

# Contents

## List of tables

## List of figures



## List of Images

# Abstract

This thesis provides a qualitative investigation of the leader identity construction process, within the context of organizations. It takes a social constructionist approach to investigate this process and utilizes leadership identity construction theory (LICT), as proposed by DeRue and Ashford (2010), as a theoretical framework to inform the interpretation of the data.

The thesis is comprised of three analytical chapters. The first chapter employed video methods to capture the real time identity claiming and granting process of teams and utilized interaction analysis to analyse how the individuals in the teams negotiated their leader and follower identities. The second analytical chapter consisted of 50 semi-structured interviews that focused on factors found to either help or hinder the leader identity construction process. The third analytical chapter further draws from the interview data and provides insights into the perceptions of organizational control over the leader identity construction process.

The value of this thesis is that it provides both a micro and meso level analysis of the leader identity construction process by drawing on the behavioural components of the process while also addressing organizational level issues. Additionally, by engaging with data across the adult life span from university age students all the way to individuals at the cusp of retirement, this thesis provides a timely temporal look at leader identity construction.

This thesis makes several contributions. It does so by providing key insights into how one's self-conception as a leader is shaped by interactions with others, and by demonstrating what types of relationship contribute to the leader identity construction process, and the manner in which they do so. This thesis also provides vital insights into how organizational structures control leader identity, while also bringing to light the challenges individuals face in constructing a leader identity.

# Chapter 1: Introduction to the thesis

## 1.1. Introduction

When commencing my doctoral studies, I was struck by the fact that even the most basic review of the academic and practitioner focused literature on leadership framed leadership as a highly critical aspect of the organization, rather than simply just another component of the larger organizational picture. As some researchers have noted, leadership maintains a special status within the literature, perhaps due to its perceived importance to almost every aspect of human life (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003; Gill, 2011. This privileging of leadership, whether warranted or not, continues to perpetuate the long history of leadership research, which has focused on attempting to discover what exactly leadership is (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009; Day & Harrison, 2007; Eberly, Johnson, Hernandez & Avolio, 2013; Hernandez, Eberly, Avolio & Johnson, 2011). This quest to unlock the secrets of leadership often precipitates a focus on the role of leaders in leadership (Collinson, 2006; Kean, Haycock-Stuart, Baggaley & Carson, 2011; Meindl, 1995).

With the goal of providing further insight into leadership by turning the spotlight on to leaders as the key drivers of leadership, traditional studies of leadership have often attempted to predict how individuals come to be leaders by focusing on the unique aspects of the individual through the investigation of links between leadership and leader traits, personality types, and leadership styles to name but a few (Bass, 1985; Day & Harrison, 2007; Grint, 2001; Lord, De Vader & Alliger, 1986; Mumford, Antes, Caughron & Friedrich, 2008; Northouse, 2009; Yukl, 2013). These types of study, which attempt to uncover the causal links between individual traits, skills, and so on, and leader emergence and leaders more broadly, have shed light on many aspects of leadership and have contributed greatly to both leadership theory and practice. These types of quantitatively driven studies have dominated the leadership literature for decades. However, a growing area of leadership research has taken a different path to the investigation of leaders, mainly by turning the lens of analysis away from the strictly quantitative and predictive paradigms in favour of a qualitative approach. This shift to more qualitatively minded research has opened the door for new ways of thinking about and investigating leadership. One such new area of focus is that of leader identity (Lord & Hall, 2005; Ibarra, Wittman, Petriglieri & Day, 2014).

This move towards a focus on identity in the leadership literature is perhaps partly the result of arguments long expressed in the leadership, management, and other literatures, for the need to find ways of developing leaders (Kean et al., 2011; Morris & Seeman, 1950; Morrisette & Schraeder, 2010; Yeager & Callahan, 2016) and also partly due to a recognition that the traditional avenues through which one becomes a leader, such as holding a position of leadership or completing a leadership training programme, do not always result in being seen as or seeing oneself as a leader (Day & Dragoni, 2015; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Marchiondo, Myers & Kopelman, 2015). It has been argued that as organizations become more globalized and job roles become more defused, identities that were previously made salient through these roles are also becoming more malleable, which in turn introduces the need for new ways of understanding and investigating how individuals construct the identities necessary for them to successfully navigate their job and organizational roles (Day & Dragoni, 2015; Ibarra et al., 2014). Van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer & Hogg (2004) identified that there is a clear need to understand the link between identity and leadership, but argue that not enough is known about the role of identity in leadership. Specifically, they argue that we do not yet know enough about how leaders and followers come to see themselves as such, especially in regard to how these identities are formed in relationship to each other.

In a more recent investigation of leadership and identity, Day and Dragoni (2015) suggest that identity may play a role in leadership development, and yet they point out that the relationship remains underexplored. Ibarra, Snook and Guillén Ramo (2010) also identified leader identity as a growing area in the leadership literature, which might provide new avenues for understanding the leadership process (for example, why some individuals emerge as leaders and others as followers). They suggest that investigating identity within a leadership context can address a vital gap in our understanding of the "being" of leadership rather than only focusing on the "doing" (Ibarra et al., 2010, p.659). Yet, this need to gain insight into leader identity is not just at the individual level. Lord and Hall (2005) propose that there may be an organizational need for leaders to construct a leader identity. They argue that in order "to sustain interest for the months and years required to develop and practice complex leadership skills, it is also likely that the leadership role needs to become part of one's self-identity" (p. 592).

Thus, it would appear that there is a well-established need to investigate how individuals construct a leader identity (Karp & Helgø, 2009; Komives, Longerbeam, Mainella, Osteen, Owen & Wagner, 2009; Lührmann & Eberl, 2007). However, it may also be the case that knowing who one is may be only one side of the coin. There are some who argue that knowing who one is not is just as important (Carroll & Levy, 2010). It is therefore argued that establishing the parameters around which one defines oneself as a leader is an important means of understanding identity construction (Alvesson, Ashcraft & Thomas, 2008; Carroll & Levy, 2010).

Although identity as an area of research is not new, it has only come into the spotlight in the leadership literature in recent years (Carroll & Levy, 2010; Ibarra et al., 2014). However, of the studies that have attempted to investigate leadership through identity, many of them have taken a leader-centric focus, or, in the case of a small but growing area of research, a follower-centric approach (Collinson, 2006; Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao & Chang, 2012; Lord & Brown, 2004; Miscenko & Day, 2016; Miscenko, Günter & Day, 2017). However, there is a growing awareness within the leadership literature that looking at this issue from this position may not fully address how individuals come to be recognized as leaders, and may also fail to fully address the role that other organizational members who act as followers and individuals identifying as leaders share in constructing identities in relationship to each other (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm & McKee, 2014; Dinh, Lord, Gardner, Meuser, Liden & Hu, 2014; Humphreys, Novicevic, Smothers, Pane Haden, Hayek, Williams Jr, Oyler & Clayton, 2015; Ibarra, Kilduff & Tsai, 2005; Johnson et al., 2012; Junker & van Dick, 2014; Lord, Brown & Freiberg, 1999, Uhl-Bien, 2006; Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe & Carsten, 2014).

Thus, it is argued in this thesis that separating followers from the study of leader identity construction leads to a loss of research potential and may ultimately result in an inability to capture and account for the complex interactions between individuals, which likely have an important role in the identity construction process (Day & Harrison, 2007; Marchiondo et al., 2015; Thomas, Martin, Epitropaki, Guillaume & Lee, 2013; Uhl-Bien, 2006; van Knippenberg at al., 2004). This thesis will therefore endeavour to approach the study of leadership by incorporating multiple stakeholders in the study of the identity construction process.

Addressing identity within the context of leadership in a way that can account for the role that all organizational members have in the leadership process has decidedly relational implications for its study. According to Sluss and Ashforth (2007), identity is about relationships. They argue that how leaders come to see themselves as such and how followers come to also see themselves as such, result from a social and relational process carried out through the relationship between leaders and followers. This argument was first put forth by

Uhl-Bien (2006), who conceptualized leadership as a relational process, meaning that leadership is not about the individual traits of a leader, but is a process of relationship building in which individuals come to understand the roles that each plays in order for the leadership process to be established and take place (Thomas, Martin & Riggio, 2013). Lord et al. (1999) also note that leadership is a relational process and that past leadership research has neglected the role that other organizational members have in the identity process. However, taking this argument and putting it into practice requires the adoption of a certain approach to leadership. It could be argued that viewing leadership from a social constructionist perspective allows for the study of leadership in a way which can account for the role of the relationships between leaders and followers and how these relationships establish leader and follower identities (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Fairhurst & Grant, 2010; Meindl, 1995).

In addition to conceptualizing leadership and the leader identity construction process as relational in nature, there is also a growing understanding of the need to understand the process of identity construction rather than simply focusing on the identity (Ainsworth & Grant, 2012; Day & Dragoni, 2015; Day & Harrison, 2007; Epitropaki, Kark, Mainemelis & Lord, 2017; McInnes & Corlett, 2012; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). This means placing the analytical focus on the temporal nature of identity construction in order to understand how identity changes and grows over time. Taking these arguments into consideration, the focus of this research is to investigate how individuals come to construct a leader identity. Within the setting of this research, a leader identity is thought to be constructed through a relational and reciprocal process (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). The identity construction process can be defined as “the process through which actors come to define who they are” (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016, p.113). Furthermore, according to Ashforth and Schinoff (2016), “the key outcome of identity construction at the individual level is identification, the extent to which one internalizes a given identity as a (partial) definition of self” (p.113). Within the context of this research, this would mean an individual identifying themselves at least in part as a leader. Furthermore, this research is predicated upon an assumption that leader identities are vital to our understanding of the leadership process, and that understanding how these identities are formed relationally and reciprocally may prove useful to our understanding of how individuals come to be recognized as leaders and followers.

However, in addition to understanding leader identity as taking place through relational and reciprocal process, this thesis is also contextually oriented, such that it places leader identity within the context of organizations. Although leader identity could arguably be constructed across domains (Hammond, Clapp-Smith & Palanski, 2017), I argue that organizations are the site of much of one's leader identity construction and therefore should be the context in which leader identity is investigated. However, I will discuss this argument further in the coming sections of this chapter.

## 1.2. Motivation for the research

While teaching a module on the social psychology of gender at a university in California in 2015, I was intrigued by how the issues and concepts covered in the module textbook regarding issues faced by female leaders were so closely mirrored in the current national news. For example, in 2014/15, the news in the US carried several prominent stories of female CEOs being brought in during the lowest points of an organization's performance only to be used later on as an explanation for why the organization was failing. Furthermore, because this point in time also corresponded to the run up to the 2016 US presidential elections, I also took notice of the rhetoric used against prominent female political leaders and how their lives and life choices were always questioned in relation to their leadership, while their male counterparts faced limited, if any scrutiny in these same areas. These examples brought into stark focus the bias and prejudice that female leaders specifically, but more generally non-white, non-male leaders, continue to face. With every lecture I gave on the phenomenon of glass ceilings and glass cliffs, I began to feel that there were certain issues regarding leadership that were not being discussed or were in some way missing from the leadership textbooks and Harvard reviews I was reading. I had questions about leadership that I was not able to answer. At the time, I found myself thinking that although there was no doubt that female leaders of all races and creeds faced issues and problems that many white male leaders did not, I could not help but look at examples of successful female leaders and ask myself what did they do, or what resources did they have at their disposal that allowed them to succeed? I began doing my own research on female leaders in the hope that I might be able to gain some insight into what they did or were doing that allowed them not only to lead successfully, but also to manage their perceptions as a leader. I was especially drawn to Indra Nooyi, the CEO of PepsiCo. I began reading about her and how she came into the role. More than once I found myself navigating to the PepsiCo webpage, which outlined the organizational leadership structure of PepsiCo worldwide. On the page were clearly outlined organizational roles and structures with photographs and names of each person. At the top of the page (and the hierarchy) was a picture of Indra Nooyi, and below her smiling image, in cascading photo blocks, were the people who supported her and helped her run the organization. These photos and names represented her larger organizational leadership team, but they also represented the individuals who support her in her role as CEO. As I looked at the photos and names, taking note of such things as gender, ethnic background, and other aspects thought to be associated with being a leader, I thought about the role these individuals had in the bigger picture of the organization's leadership as well as their role in Ms. Nooyi's leadership.

Although at the time I was more interested in understanding female leadership and the issues female leaders face, looking back, I now realize that the thoughts I had about the roles the PepsiCo presidents, vice presidents and regional leads had in Ms. Nooyi's leadership were in fact helping me to formulate some of the ideas that would actually end up informing my PhD research, mainly that leadership is not just about the leader. During the long car rides home from the university were my husband and I both taught at the time, I would discuss my growing interest in leadership, formulating my research ideas, discussing how to carry out the research, and what my research questions would be. On more than one occasion I told my husband how interesting it would be to turn these ideas into a PhD thesis topic. My husband, who was also undertaking doctoral studies at the time, encouraged me to take this interest to the next level and start looking for PhD programmes that would allow me the freedom to conduct the research I was interested in. I began researching programmes and finally settled on one at the Sheffield University Management School. Six months later, I started my doctoral studies at the University of Sheffield.

At the start of my doctoral studies, my initial focus was to understand female leadership with the hope that I might perhaps conduct research that would help to show the value of female leaders. I saw many problems with leadership as it currently exists and aimed to conduct research that I hoped would lead to more opportunities for female leaders. However, over the course of my first year of doctoral studies, I read further and dug deeper into the leadership literature and began to build new ideas about what leadership is and how leaders come to be. As my research progressed, I began to adopt a broader view of the issue, and taking a step back I began to question what role identity had in leadership. I turned to identity for two reasons.

Firstly, I had a long-held interest in identity and had chosen to incorporate it into both my senior thesis for my Bachelor's degree in psychology and my Master's degree in the same subject. Secondly, I began to believe, based upon my reading, that identity played a fundamental role in leadership. After a difficult process of reading, thinking, reflecting on my own research interests, and reading some more, I finally decided that I wanted to research leadership and identity in the hope that understanding how leaders construct a leader identity might help us better understand leadership and might help provide insights into why some individuals emerge as leaders and others do not, and why some individuals succeed as leaders and others do not. However, as time went on and I read more widely across the leadership literature, I began to think more broadly about leadership in general. Slowly, thoughts began to materialize and from and I began to think that if I wanted to understand leadership and identity, I also needed to take into consideration the role of others in general in this process. After all, I thought, what is a leader without supporters and followers? From this point, I began a new wave of discovery, as I started reading about followership and the role of followers in leadership. However, what I noticed as I read through this literature (which was predominantly from a psychology perspective and positivist in nature) was that there was a significant trend towards viewing followers as passive entities who were acted upon by leaders rather than as important participants in the leadership process. I began to move away from reading this type of literature because I felt that it underestimated the role that other people have in the leadership process and created an accepted understanding of leadership in which only leaders were seen as having agency in the processes of leadership and identity. I therefore began to look at issues of followership in the belief that one's leader identity was in fact directly tied to and in part, a product of the role of others in the leadership process.

At the end of this challenging process, I decided to shift the focus of my research away from using positivist and exclusively psychology-based methodologies, to more qualitative and constructionist methodologies. This change occurred due to the fact that while I was reading and reflecting on my research topic, I underwent something of an ontological and epistemological change. In some ways, I fundamentally changed as a researcher in terms of how I approached research because of this process, perhaps in part because I had not previously been exposed to many of these ideas in my previous education, and I now had the opportunity to explore and experiment with them in my research. In fact, it was almost as if I had shed my old skin and emerged as a new person – a person who thought of the world in a new way and was no longer satisfied to carry on conducting research in the way I had before. Perhaps this change is the most fundamental outcome of my PhD journey. Although I am sure I will some day go back to conducting positivist psychology-based research for various reasons, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to grow and expand as a researcher and learn new ways of conducting research, and to have acquired a new perspective on the nature of reality.

This is my motivation for the topic of my doctoral studies, for conducting the research that I did, and for the way I did it. For me, my motivation for carrying out my PhD research has been in part the somewhat self-centred reason of wanting, wishing, hoping, to satisfy my own personal curiosity. In some ways it has also been driven by the perhaps naïve hope that my research and the findings it has produced might in some way lead to creating a positive change in how leadership is viewed, understood, and implemented. It was also in part motivated by my goal to obtain a PhD so that I could continue in academia in a role that would allow me to continue doing the things I love most as a professional academic: teaching and researching. Ultimately, though, I know that my research is just a small teardrop in a large ocean of research. However, I hope that the work held within these pages will help me not only to achieve my goals but may also serve to help others. I can only hope and strive as much as possible for this research to be a positive resource in some way to someone.

## 1.3. Research questions

### 1.3.1. Research question one

Although many studies have attempted to understand how individuals come to be seen as and see themselves as leaders, there remain unanswered questions regarding the means through which leader identities are constructed as well as other surrounding contextual issues that may be interrelated to the identity construction process. Significantly, a number of previous studies on leader identity suggest that leader identity may be constructed in part through relational means (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Ely, Ibarra & Kolb, 2011; Hammond, Clapp-Smith & Palanski, 2017; Ibarra, Kilduff & Tsai, 2005; Marchiondo et al., 2015; Uhl-Bien, 2006). For example, Kouzes and Posner (2003) are clear in their argument that leadership is relational and that any discussion of leadership must address the dynamics of this. However, the nature and content of the relationships and interactions that play a role in leader identity construction remain underexplored, and as such there remains a significant gap in our understanding of how these relationships contribute to identity construction and subsequently link back to leadership resulting in individuals coming to see themselves, and coming to be seen as leaders within organizations (Day & Dragoni, 2015; Day & Harrison, 2007; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Epitropaki et al., 2017; Ibarra, Snook & Guillén Ramo, 2010; Lord & Hall, 2005; Sluss & Ashforth, 2007; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). DeRue and Ashford (2010) also argue that leader and follower identities are constructed in part through relational and reciprocal processes.

Taken together, these arguments could bring to question whether certain relationships or certain individuals might be important drivers of the identity construction process. For example, Epitropaki et al. (2017) argue that we need to understand how leaders “define themselves, as well as understanding the complex ways in which these self-definitions develop, change, and are influenced by leader-follower interactions and contexts” (p.104). This would indicate that certain types of relationship are especially important to the establishment of leader and follower identities.

Further, as outlined in the previous paragraph, because the leadership process takes place through interaction, there is a need to address the role of interaction in the study of leader identity (Lührmann & Eberl, 2007; Sanchez-Hucles & Davis, 2010; Watson & Scribner, 2008). This may also be especially necessary given that there are relatively few studies taking as their analytic focus the interactions that facilitate the leadership and identity construction processes (Larsson, 2016). Additionally, it is recognized that our life experiences shape who we are, and the same can be said of leadership. One's leadership experiences are important in shaping not only how one leads but how one views oneself as a leader (Boshyk, 2002; Daresh & Male, 2000; Day, Harrison & Halpin, 2012; Harung, Heato & Alexander, 1995; Klenke, 2007; Kobe, Reiter-Palmon & Rickers, 2001; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010; Wright, 2008). Yet, this brings to question what experience or experiences might matter or might be perceived as more significant to one's identity when considering the leader identity construction process (Carroll & Levy, 2010). Therefore, understanding the experiences that are facilitative of the identity construction process may provide better framing and contextual understanding of how and when, and in what way leadership and identity construction processes become salient or impactful. These arguments lead to the following research question:

- **What kind of experiences, relationships, and interactions contribute to the construction of a leader identity?**

1.3.2. Research question two

Additionally, it is argued that it is important to understand who is constructing an identity within organizations and who is influencing this construction process (Alvesson, Ashcroft & Thomas, 2008; Ainsworth & Grant, 2012; Lord & Hall, 2005; McInnes & Corlett, 2012; van Knippenberg at al., 2004). In fact, Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) argue that it is now "widely accepted that leadership cannot be fully understood without considering the role of followers in the leadership process" (p. 89). This argument would therefore prioritize the inclusion of followers in any study of leadership. However, considering that individuals can be both leaders and followers (Jaser, 2017), this would necessitate that the study of leadership expand its focus beyond just a focus on a leader and their followers, to a focus on all individuals engaged in the leadership process. Furthermore, DeRue and Ashford (2010) theorize around the credibility, clarity and visibility of claims and grants, but they provide limited insight into whether or not individuals might perceive differences in the quality of claims and grants from others. Therefore, it would appear that there is room for further investigation of whether or not certain individuals contribute differently to the identity construction process. These arguments lead to the formulation of the following research question:

- **What are the implications for leader identity construction in terms of who supports or does not support one's leader identity?**

1.3.3. Research question three

In consideration of the context in which this thesis has set the leader identity construction process, it is important to also consider the role of the organization. For many leaders, the organization is the site of much of their leader identity construction. This makes sense given the amount of time we spend in organizations across our life span (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003; Van Maanen, 2010). Alvesson and Willmott (2002) argue that organizations control the identity construction process of employees and that there are significant incentives for them doing so. For example, it can increase commitment to the organization, employee alignment with organizational values, and identification with the organization, to name but a few. Mechanisms such as hierarchies, grades, rewards, division of labour, job roles and so on, work to control the identity construction process of individuals in organizations (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Ouchi, 1979). Given that organizations have some level of control over the identity construction process, it brings to question the role that organizational control might have in the leader identity construction process. Control of leader identity construction has received much less attention in the literature, so it appears that there is room for further investigation (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Alvesson, Ashcroft & Thomas, 2008; Collinson, 2003; Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006; Pezé, 2013). Understanding the role of organizational control in the leader identity construction process may provide an insight into the barriers individuals face in constructing a leader identity and may help to inform how organizations approach leader development. These arguments lead to the formulation of the following research question:

- **What role do individuals perceive their organization as having in their leader identity construction process?**

## 1.4. Scope of the research

In order to explore how individuals construct a leader identity in organizations, I conducted two studies. The first was a field study that employed video methods to document the identity construction process of individuals working in teams. The data from this study was analysed using interaction analysis. The second study was conducted using semi-structured interviews with 50 organizational members from across the UK and the US. I adopted a qualitative and indictive approach to the analysis of this data using thematic analysis. The data collection and analysis for these two studies took place over an eighteen-month period (see table 1), during which time there were revolving periods of data collection, data analysis, writing, further analysis and reflection in order to produce the final thesis outputs and findings.

*Table 1: Timeline of data collection and data analysis*

| **Study 1 data collection timeline** | **Study 1 data analysis timeline** |
|---|---|
| October 2016-December 2016 | October 2016-July 2017 |
| **Study 2 data collection timeline** | **Study 2 data analysis timeline** |
| April 2017-September 2017 | October 2017-May 2018 |

The two studies outlined above connect in two very important ways. Firstly, both studies provide a valuable temporal perspective to the leader identity construction process. Study one provides insights into the leader identity construction process, as it takes place in student teams and as such provides data that focuses on the leadership and identity construction processes at a critical point when many young people are starting to work to construct more professional identities as they transition from adolescence into adulthood. Study two, on the other hand, draws on the accounts of individuals working as employees of organizations. This sample was drawn from adult individuals with often quite established careers, and in doing so provided the opportunity to gather data that spanned across the individuals' life experiences. This perspective allowed me to gain an insight into how identities grow and change over time, providing something of a longitudinal account of the leader identity construction process. In this way, these two studies provide insights about the leader identity construction process, from different points in time, which when merged together provide complementary perspectives.

Secondly, the two studies outlined in this thesis complement each other methodologically. Study one employed a novel method through the use of video data and interaction analysis, and in doing so provided a real time account of how individuals in teams negotiate their leader and follower identities at the micro level. Study two provides a more meso level analysis by looking at the wider social and organizational context in which the leader identity construction process takes place. In this way, the two studies provide an interesting telescopic perspective of the leader identity construction process, by providing both a fine-grained analysis of identities as they are negotiated in real time, and a broader life span organizational context perspective.

From these two studies, I have identified several key findings, which I will outline briefly here, but which will be described in much greater detail in the findings and discussion chapters of this thesis. Firstly, study one provides valuable insights into the micro level details of the identity negotiation process in teams, for example by highlighting how some individuals' actions blocked others' leader identity. This study also revealed broader contextual social issues which may play a significant role in how leader identities are constructed, for example by highlighting the role that constructions of gender had in the leader identity negotiation process. Study two provides valuable insights into the types of relationship and interaction that the study participants found either supported or challenged their leader identity construction process. Study two also provides key insights into the role study participants perceived their organizations as having in their leader identity construction. The following section of this chapter will also provide further details regarding the contributions that these findings make to theory, methodology and practice.

## 1.5. Contributions of thesis

### 1.5.1. Contributions to theory

The following section of this chapter will briefly outline the theoretical and methodological contributions of this thesis. These topics will be elaborated upon in greater detail in chapter nine of the thesis. This thesis makes several theoretical contributions. The first proposed contribution is that it extends theorizing on role models in the leader identity construction process (Ibarra, 1999; Gibson, 2004). According to Ibarra (1999), role models may serve as sources of identity information for individuals who are attempting to make an identity transition by allowing these individuals to observe and learn from these role models during their identity construction process. Role models may demonstrate to new or developing leaders what it means to be a leader, and what is possible in terms of leadership role attainment and execution (Gibson, 2003; Ibarra, 1999; Sealy & Singh, 2010; Singh, Vinnicombe & James, 2006). It is becoming increasingly accepted by researchers that individuals learn from both positive and negative aspects of role models and that role models may not always be sources of positive behaviours (Gibson, 2004). Role models may also serve as models of negative behaviours to be avoided (Bucher & Stelling, 1977; Gibson, 2004; Ibarra, 1999), thus conceptualizing the concept of a negative role model. The concept of a negative role model is one in which individuals observe role models in order to learn what behaviours or attitudes to avoid (Bucher & Stelling, 1977; Gibson, 2004). Findings from the research conducted for this thesis suggest that individuals learned about their own identity as a leader by observing and interacting with individuals they viewed as being a "bad" or negative leader. Identifying these target individuals as sources of bad or negative leadership and then actively attempting to not model these same behaviours is what makes these individuals negative role models. What makes these negative role models useful to the construction of a leader identity is that they provided individuals with information regarding what signified and represented a "bad" or negative leader to them and to others around them. This information then provided them with self-defining information regarding the type of leader they wanted to be in terms of avoiding these same negative behaviours, or not to be in terms of adopting behaviours that were in opposition to those of the negative role model.

This in turn subsequently motivated them to engage in behaviours that would help them to make claims for the type of leader identity they viewed as a “good” leader identity or as the identity they felt was most authentic to them and less like their negative role model. There has been much less attention paid to the role of negative role models in the leadership literature, and even less attention to the role that these individuals may have in the identity construction process. Therefore, the findings on the role of negative role models provide a significant new area of research.

This thesis makes a further theoretical contribution by providing insights into the concept of identity rejection. There are two separate conceptions of identity rejection resulting from the research. The first conception is that of the rejection of a leader identity by an individual. In this case, the individual rejects identifying themselves as a leader, actively seeks to construct an alternative identity such as that of a follower, and projects themselves as such. Due to the dominant discourses surrounding leadership, it is generally accepted that individuals, given the opportunity, would wish to construct a leader identity due to the value placed on this identity and the perceived rewards that might be secured from identifying oneself as a leader, especially in an organizational setting (DeRue, Ashford & Cotton, 2009). There has been little attention paid to the concept of rejecting a leader identity and the concept that an individual might actually wish not to be a leader has very rarely been addressed. This thesis explores this concept and outlines the reasons individuals rejected a leader identity even when they might otherwise have easily made claims for one or been identified by others as being a leader.

The second conceptualization of identity rejection identified from the findings in this thesis has to do with having one’s identity as a leader rejected by others. The research findings suggest that having one’s claims for leader identity rejected may have a significant effect on one’s ability to construct a leader identity. However, the findings go beyond simply suggesting that having one’s identity rejected will impair one’s ability to construct a leader identity. The findings suggest that *who* is rejecting an individual’s identity claims makes a significant difference in whether or not the individual’s identity construction process is impacted. Specifically, it was found that having one’s identity rejected by individuals with less perceived organizational status, for example a direct report or someone further down the hierarchy, has less of an impact than identity rejections from people higher up in the hierarchy. For example, findings suggest that identity rejection from one’s boss or supervisor may have more of a negative impact on one’s identity construction. It was also found that having one’s identity rejected at the organizational level also had a significant impact on one’s identity construction process, thus indicating that individuals discriminate between the sources of their identity support or rejection.

Lastly, this thesis makes a contribution to LICT by first bringing to light the fact that individuals discriminate between sources of identity grants or identity rejections and then, by outlining how this takes place. Specifically, it was found that individuals value grants of a leader identity from certain individuals more than they do from others, meaning that they discriminate between sources of the identity grants. Taken together with the above findings that individuals discriminate between the sources of identity rejection, both of these findings suggest that not all grants or rejections of an identity are perceived as having the same value. The implication of this for the leader identity construction process is that it matters who is granting or rejecting an identity claim. This could suggest an evaluation process whereby individuals discriminate between sources of social information and evaluate this information, which may have negative or positive implications for their identity construction, and that it matters who is involved in the identity construction process.

### 1.5.2. Contribution to methodology and methods

This thesis makes a significant contribution to methods through the use and incorporation of video for the purpose of investigating the leader identity construction process. It is important to point out that there is a significant area of research in the leadership literature that has utilized audio methods in order to study leadership and how it takes place (Clifton, 2006; Clifton, 2012; Clifton, 2014). There is also a long history of the use of video and audio methods in the identity literature (Bates, 2014; Gauntlett, 2008). However, video methods in the study of leadership remain rare (see the following as exceptions: Crenshaw, 2012; Hoogeboom & Wilderom, 2015; Gerpott, Lehmann-Willenbrock, Voelpel & van Vugt, 2018). By adapting and adopting methods that have been utilized to study leadership and identity separately and bringing these together, this research breaks ground in new areas, which has allowed me to study the micro level details of the leader identity construction process as it took place in a natural setting.

The second contribution to methods that this thesis makes is through the use of interaction analysis as a method of analysis (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). Research attempting to investigate leader identity through both verbal and non-verbal behaviours, although not a common method, does present researchers with exciting and new possibilities for understanding new and emerging areas of leadership (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012). Therefore, by demonstrating how interaction analysis can be used to investigate the leader identity construction process, this thesis provides a framework for the integration of both verbal and non-verbal modes of communication to be used in the study of the leader identity construction process and may provide an avenue for further applications of the method for the broader study of leadership and identity-related research agendas.

### 1.5.3. Practical contributions

This these makes two main practical contributions. Firstly, the findings of this thesis suggest that mentors and role models had a positive impact on the leader identity construction process. This would suggest that organizations or individuals who wish to promote the leader identity construction process could create or engage in formal or informal mentorship programmes in order to facilitate the leader identity construction process. It may also be the case that helping new or developing leaders to identify appropriate role models could also be beneficial. Organizations, department heads, and line managers could all facilitate access to role models and therefore play an active role in aiding the leader identity construction process.

The second practical contribution that this thesis makes is through the organizational level analysis of the issues that facilitate and hinder the leader identity construction process. It may be the case that if organizations are able to identify and address the organizational level issues that may impair leader identity construction, it may be possible to enact organizational level change to mitigate these issues. It may be critically important to address the individual level and organisational level social constructions of leadership to ensure that there are no incongruencies between the two that might lead to organizational level leader identity rejection. This is said with the understanding that such changes would likely be quite challenging to implement. However, if leader identity construction is an issue that organizations take seriously and wish to facilitate as part of their wider organizational leadership development, then working to address these issues could be part of a larger change programme to steer the organization towards creating a culture of leader identity.

## 1.6. Outline of the Thesis

This thesis consists of nine chapters. The current chapter provides an introduction to the topics of leadership and identity and provides the reader with information such as the motivation and contributions of the research as well as outlining the research questions and contributions of this thesis. Chapter two will be broken down into four main sections. The first section of chapter two will provide the reader with an introduction to and outline of leadership. This will be followed by a review of the meaningful perspectives that have been used historically to define and study leadership. The current perspective and definitions of leadership that apply to the research in this thesis will then be presented in order to provide the reader with information regarding how leadership is conceptualized in this thesis. The chapter will then move on to a review of the identity literature. The first part of section two will provide an introduction to identity.

This will be followed by a review of the major perspectives used to study identity within the context of leadership. The chapter will end with a brief summary and conclusion. Section three of this chapter will provide a basic outline of the research that integrates these two areas of research. The final section will provide an outline of the necessary organizational literature in order to provide a contextual understanding of the setting of this research. Chapter three is the theoretical framework chapter. In this chapter I will outline in detail the theoretical underpinnings of the research, which is leadership identity construction theory as proposed by DeRue and Ashford (2010). I will explain in detail how identities are constructed according to this theory and will also explain other relevant details related to this theory as they apply to the research in this thesis.

Chapter four of the thesis will focus on the methodology and research methods used in the research. In this chapter I will discuss the methodological groundings of the research, as well as the methods I utilized for the two studies I conducted. Specifically, I will provide background literature that will help to explain the methods I used to carry out my research. I will also discuss in detail the background of the methods I utilized to carry out the research. This will include a detailed discussion of the use and application of video methods and semi-structured interviews. I will then provide a detailed outline of the analytical tools I utilized in order to analyse my data. Here I provide a literature review of the use and application of interaction analysis, which was used to analyse the video data. I will then provide a review of the literature on thematic analysis, which was utilized for the analysis of the interview data. There will also be a discussion of the trustworthiness of the data and reflexivity and how I used this to guide my research and help me move through the research process. The chapter will be brought to a close with a brief conclusion.

Chapter five will be the first findings chapter and will contain the data from the video study. In this chapter, I will outline the main findings by presenting multiple data extracts for each team along with accompanying video image captures. This chapter will outline the micro level identity construction that took place in the teams as they negotiated their roles to carry out a team project. Chapter six will be the second findings chapter and will cover data from the semi-structured interviews. In this chapter, I will outline the issues participants identified that contributed or challenged their leader identity construction processes. This chapter will be broken up into three sections, with two main sections outlining the findings. Chapter seven will be the final findings chapter. This chapter will outline the role of the organization in the leader identity construction process, based on findings from the semi-structured interviews. This chapter is divided into three main sections. In the first section, I will provide some background on organizational identity control to provide some context, after which I will outline how organizations contribute to or hinder leader identity construction. Chapter eight will be the discussion chapter and consists of four sections. Section one will provide the discussion for the data in chapter five. Section two will provide the discussion for the data in chapter six. Section three will provide a discussion of the findings from chapter seven. Section four will provide an integration of how the findings from the video study and the semi-structured interviews fit together and help to explain the leader identity construction process. Chapter nine will be the conclusion of the thesis. In this chapter I will provide the final arguments, which will bring together the findings of the thesis, including the contributions made from a theoretical, methodological and practical perspective. The chapter will also provide details of the avenues that have been opened up to future research as a result of this thesis and will outline the limitations of the research. The thesis will end with my closing thoughts and a summary of the overall thesis contributions.

## 1.7. Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided an introduction of the topics that make up the focus of this thesis. I have also provided the framing arguments and the motivation behind the research as well as the research questions this thesis aims to answer. In addition, I have also provided the reader with the contributions this thesis makes to the leadership and identity literatures in terms of theory, methods and practice. I have also provided the reader with an outline of how the thesis will be structured in order to guide them through its chapters and pages. Overall, this chapter was meant to help orient the reader and introduce them to the thesis topics and the author. The next chapter of this thesis will be the review of the leadership and identity literatures.

# Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

## 2.1. Introduction: A review of the literature on leadership and identity

The goal of this chapter is to provide a review of the relevant literature in order to provide the reader with the necessary information so that they might gain a better understanding of leadership and identity, within the context of organizations as they relate to the research undertaken for this thesis. In order to achieve this goal, this chapter is divided into three sections. Section one will first focus on the relevant literature on leadership. The first part of section one will attempt to tackle the task of defining leadership. Next, the chapter will move on to outlining the contemporary perspectives and approaches to leadership and will conclude with a review of the leadership approach that informs this thesis. The second section will outline the identity literature by first defining identity. The next part of this section will then provide an outline of the contemporary perspectives on identity that apply to the study of leadership in organizations. Section three will then provide a synthesis of the leadership and identity literature in order to show the reader how these two topics fit together and provide the necessary information regarding the gaps in the literature and the justification for this research.

## 2.2. Defining leadership

As with all studies, it is important to define the terms being used. However, unlike most other areas of research, defining leadership is not as easy as looking up a definition in the dictionary or at the back of a text book. What constitutes leadership is conceptualized differently from study to study and from text to text and is therefore somewhat ambiguous. Furthermore, due to the ambiguity in defining leadership, defining what is meant by the term *leader* is also similarly difficult. Many of the historical studies of leadership have attempted to define leadership through its structure, proposing that leadership is most often viewed as a single leader with a group of followers striving to achieve a common goal (Cooper & Locke, 2000). Some researchers have argued that leadership can be defined through what it aims to achieve. Such a perspective would view leaders as individuals who concern themselves more with developing people than managing people (Cooper & Locke, 2000). Some researchers have attempted to define leadership by highlighting both what it is and what it is not.

A major cross-cultural study known as the GLOBE study (House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, Dorfman, Javidan, Dickson, Gupta & Koopman, 1999; House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman & Gupta, 2004), suggests that the best explanation of leadership is that leaders inspire followers and motivate them to work towards organizational goals. In contrast, they argue that managers primarily have the task of implementing the leader's vison (House et al., 1999). Some authors have offered definitions of leadership in which leaders are defined by the context they are in rather than their traits or behaviours, proposing a definition of leadership that is contextualized according to the situation in which it occurs, rather than as a broad concept (Cooper & Locke, 2000, Lord, de Vader & Alliger, 1986). Another perspective defines leadership by delineating it from management. Katz and Khan (1978) consider the essence of organizational leadership "to be the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with routine directives of the organization" (p. 528). In other words, leadership goes above and beyond simply getting people to follow organizational rules and protocols, and influences these people in some way, whereas management is the use of authority. From this perspective, leadership could be viewed as the difference between inspiring someone to do something rather than telling them to do something. Some authors view leadership as a function of management.

According to Fiedler (1996), leadership is a part of management that involves the supervision of others. An alternative but significant area of leadership research approaches the topic of definition though deconstructing the various constructs and organizing them into models, for example through the use of leader-focused models, dyadic models, relational, strategic, global and dynamic models, and so on (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009), each with corresponding definitions and research foci. However, many definitions can also be classified together based upon how they conceptualize the direction of influence (Ehrlich, 1998; Northouse, 2009). Some definitions are more leader-centric in their approach (Bass & Bass, 2008) and view leaders from an individual perspective in which leadership is a combination of traits or characteristics possessed by the leader (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Colbert, Judge, Choi & Wang, 2012; Kenny & Zaccaro, 1983; Kirkpatick & Locke, 1991). Others have attempted to define leadership though the behaviours leaders exhibit (Arnold, Arad, Rhoades & Drasgow, 2000; Bass & Bass, 2008; Burke, Stagl, Klein, Goodwin, Salas & Halpin, 2006; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman & Fetter, 1990). Still others take an approach whereby the focus is placed on the skills and knowledge of the leader. Perhaps the most commonly used definition frames leadership as a process of influence (Bass & Bass, 2008; Farris & Lim Jr, 1969; Haslam, Reicher & Platow, 2010).

However, leadership has also been defined through patterns of interactions, relationships, roles and administrative positions, meaning that it is viewed as being contextually bound (Bass & Bass, 2008; Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011; Day, 2014; Uhl-Bien, 2011). The mostly widely used definitions of leadership, which are predicated upon the assumption that leadership involves some form of influence, still differ widely in terms of how they conceptualize influence and who is doing the influencing (Alvesson & Spicer, 2014; Yukl, 2013). Lord and Brown (2001) propose that leadership could be defined in terms of the role leaders have with regard to follower behaviour. They argue that a leader is someone who influences followers' tasks and behaviours in some shape or form (Lord & Brown, 2001). Still others propose that leadership is a social process and involves one individual exerting influence over others in a group (Jung & Sosik, 2002; Yukl, 1989, 2008). Haslam and Platow (2001) take this definition and flesh it out by suggesting that leadership "is the process of influencing others in a manner that enhances their contribution to the realization of group goals. This process is widely seen to involve the positive impact of one person on the behaviour of many others." (p.58). This definition seems to frame leadership in a positive light and suggests that leaders are a source of agency and action in the support of others. Rauch and Behling (1984) propose that leadership could be defined as "the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement" (p.46). Rost (1995) suggests that "leadership is an influence relationship wherein leaders and collaborators influence one another about real changes that reflects their mutual purposes" (p.134). This definition moves away from the more traditional leader-follower dichotomy while also framing leadership as a positive and active force. House et al. (1999) define leadership as "the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of the organization…".

In many of the definitions of leadership, it is viewed as a product of the agency of the leader, in which leadership is a top-down process of influence, whereby leaders influence followers. This perspective presents leaders as holding the power to act, while other leadership actors are acted upon. In these situations, the leader is a privileged position, while being a follower is viewed as an unfavourable position to be in due to the perceived lack of agency that these top-down processes imply. However, some definitions have chosen to remove the terms *leader* and *follower* in favour of the use of the term *individual*, as seen in the House et al. (1999) quote. The use of "individual" rather than leader takes the focus away from the direction of influence, thus opening up the possibility that influence can be a multidirectional force rather than a top-down process, as it is conceptualized by many other definitions. This conceptualization reflects the move by some researchers to view leadership as distributed (Harris, 2008; Spillane, 2005). The diversity and variation in what constitutes a leader and how leadership is thought to take place, as can be seen from these definitions, is indicative of the difficulty of narrowing down and defining succinctly what leadership is.

Another area of controversy in defining leadership is whether leadership should be thought of as a specialized role held by a single individual. According to the leader as specialized role view, role specialization is necessary in order for groups to function and carry out their tasks (Dansereau, Graen & Haga, 1975; Yukl, 2008). In this capacity, there is a need for a designated leader who carries out specific and well-defined tasks, while others provide support through their role as followers. In this view, the leader is the individual who is in a designated leadership role (Vanderslice, 1988; Yukl, 2008). Studying leadership as a specialized role places the focus on the attributes and typical behaviours of the leader in order to understand leadership. On the other hand, it has been proposed that there is an alternative dichotomy to the leader as a specialized role perspective. There are some who view leadership as an influence process that occurs naturally within social systems and is diffused among members (Gronn, 2002; Uhl-Bien, 2011). From this perspective, leadership can be studied as a pattern of relationships rather than as a specialized role.

These various examples of different attempts at defining and classifying leadership help to highlight why leadership is notoriously difficult to pin down in terms of what exactly it is. However, this difficulty in defining leadership is not a problem faced solely by researchers. Ask anyone, academic and non-academic alike, what they believe the definition of leadership to be and you will likely get a different answer from each person (Alvesson & Spicer, 2014; Stogdill, 1974). These same people will also likely differ on whether they believe leadership to be innate or a skill to be learned, or whether they believe someone is born a leader or not. However, this difficulty with agreeing upon a singular definition of leadership does not mean that we cannot or should not devote our research attention to understanding the topic of leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008). In fact, as Day (2014) pointed out, leadership is still worth researching even if we cannot settle on a single definition. He also argues that it is because of the sustained interest and relevance of leadership to the modern organization that we should continue our scholarly pursuit of researching it. In order to overcome the challenge of multiple definitions of leadership, many researchers argue that the definition of leadership one adopts should reflect how one intends to go about researching it (Bass & Bass, 2008; Day, 2014). My preferred understanding of leadership follows the lead of Fairhurst and Grant (2010), who propose that "leadership is co-constructed, a product of… collective meaning making, and negotiated on an ongoing basis through a complex interplay among leadership actors, be they designated or emergent leaders, managers, and/or followers" (p. 172). However, for the purposes of defining what leadership is, I defer to a common understanding of leadership, which is that "leadership is the process of exercising influence through special skills or resources that meet the needs of other people" (French, Rayner, Rees & Rumbles, 2011, p.445).

These conceptualizations of leadership follow in a more informal and socially constructed direction, whereby leadership is viewed as being co-constructed between those who lead and those who are led. Moreover, this conceptualization rejects a leader-centred focus in favour of a perspective that proposes the idea that both leaders and the led are participants in the construction of leadership, and the realities that enable leadership to take place. This framing of leadership as co-constructed in nature brings with it certain assumptions regarding how leadership should be researched (Foti, Knee Jr & Backert, 2008). These assumptions and the corresponding research focus will be discussed in further detail in a later section of this chapter.

## 2.3. Current perspectives on leadership

There are a number of sources one can turn to when attempting to gain a better understanding of the long history of leadership within the context of management. Some of the most widely cited are the regularly updated texts by Bass and Stogdill, and the Bass handbook of leadership (Bass & Bass, 2008; Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Bass, 1981), as well as the more recent text by Antonakis and Day (2017). There are also other authors who have produced well-written but slightly less dense leadership texts, such as Yukl (2008) and Northouse (2019). In addition, there are other authors who take a slightly more critical approach to the study of leadership, such as Grint (1997) and Gill (2011). Because of the depth and detail that these texts provide to the topic, it is from these texts that the majority of this portion of the literature review, devoted to the study of leadership, will be drawn. According to Northouse (2019), there have been 65 different ways of conceptualizing leadership in the past 60 years. However, according to Yukl (2008), the dominant approaches to leadership can be roughly classed into five different approaches. These include the trait approach, skills approach(es), behaviour approach, the power and influence approach, and the contingency approach. However, these approaches do not represent the entirety of how leadership is conceptualized and studied. Unfortunately, due to space constraints, this review cannot cover all possible conceptualizations of leadership. However, this section of the chapter will include other conceptualizations of leadership, such as the critical approach and the social constructionist approach.

### 2.3.1. Trait approaches

The view of leadership as an inborn and innate trait is tied to the so-called “great man” theories (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). These theories, commonly referred to as trait theories, focus on identifying the personal traits of leaders such as personality, intelligence, values, or skills, to name but a few (Bass & Bass, 2008; Cooper & Locke, 2000; Hong, Catano & Liao, 2011; Lord, de Vader & Alliger, 1986; Yukl, 2008). The goal of trait-based theories is to understand what makes a "great" leader through the association of leadership with the individual traits of a leader. Research conducted from this perspective investigates what traits effective leaders have in common, with the goal of being able to generate a clear and consistent list or set of leader traits (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Schafer, 2010; Zaccaro, 2007). This approach is considered a leader-centric approach, whereby the focus is placed solely on the role of the individual traits of a leader. Although there are many researchers in the management field who have pointed out the lack of correlation between traits and leadership ability, it is worth noting that difficulties in replicating and correlating traits with leadership ability have not stopped researchers in several fields, such as psychology, management and sociology, from continuing to investigate leader traits (House & Aditya, 1997; Lord & Brown, 2001; Paunova, 2015).

The trait approach has been and continues to be a significant area of leadership research. As a result, a considerable list of traits and characteristics believed to be associated with leadership has been compiled over the years (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Lord, de Vader & Alliger, 1986; Mann, 1959; Stogdill, 1948; Stogdill, 1974; Zaccaro, Kemp & Bader, 2004). Although the list of associated traits would be far too long to present here, a few of the major traits found to be associated with leadership are intelligence, integrity, sociability, self-confidence and determination (Ensari, Riggio, Christian & Carslaw, 2011; Judge, Bono, Ilies & Gerhardt, 2002; Judge, Colbert & Ilies, 2004; Tunçdoğan, Acar & Stam, 2017; Zaccaro, 2012).

The value of adopting this approach to the study of leadership is that if specific traits are identified as being associated with effective leadership or with being a leader, then this would theoretically allow leaders with these traits to be able to lead in any given situation.

The assumption is that leadership traits can be applied to different leadership situations to produce the same results; however, this area of the research has also moved on to incorporate aspects of the complexity of the interactions between leaders and followers. This approach has over a century of research and data to back it up and continues to be widely applied through a variety of leadership theories, one such example being implicit leadership theory (Epitropaki, Sy, Martin, Tram-Quon & Topakas, 2013; Offermann, Kennedy Jr & Wirtz, 1994; Schyns & Riggio, 2016). However, one criticism of this approach, as noted previously, is that although there is a significant list of traits that have been found to be associated with being a leader, a clear and consistent list of traits has yet to be compiled that can be applied to all leaders in all situations. The second and perhaps most valid criticism is that the trait approach provides little in the way of guidance and support for leader development and may even be used as a tool for controlling access to leadership positions.

### 2.3.2. Skills approaches

The skills approach, in contrast to the traits approach, attempts to move away from innate characteristics, to conceptualize leadership as skill-based (Connelly, Gilbert, Zaccaro, Threlfall, Marks & Mumford, 2000;, 2005; Gentry, Griggs, Deal, Mondore & Cox, 2011; Jokinen, 2005; Lord & Hall, 2005; Riggio & Tan, 2013). Katz (1955) argued that skills are what a leader can achieve, while traits are what a leader is. The current trend in leader and leadership development takes on this approach, with the goal of helping leaders to nurture their existing leadership skills and learn new ones (Day & Dragoni, 2015; Lord & Hall, 2005). Much of the research on leadership skills has identified several typologies of skills a leader may need at different levels of leadership, or in different contexts and situations (Mumford, Zaccaro, Harding, Jacobs & Fleishman, 2000). Katz (1955) developed the three-skills approach in which effective leadership depends upon three basic personal skills (technical, human and conceptual). Depending upon one’s level within the organization (i.e.

top management vs. supervisor), it is thought that one needs to employ these three skills in varying degrees.

The skills model is yet another research area focused on leadership skills (Mumford et al., 2000). In this model, there are three basic components (individual attributes of the leader (i.e. personality, motivation, cognitive ability, etc.), competencies (i.e. problem-solving skills, knowledge, etc.), and leadership outcomes (i.e. effective problem solving, etc.) (Mumford et al., 2000). The strength of this approach is that it frames leadership as something that can be learned and worked at. Unlike the trait approach where you either have the traits of a leader or you do not, the skills approach opens up leadership to a wider range of individuals, theoretically providing for anyone to be a leader given that they take the time and put in the effort to learn and develop their leadership skills. One criticism of this approach however is that although it claims not to be a trait approach, much of the components of the skills models are trait-like. For example, in the skills model by Mumford et al. (2000), a number of the necessary components such as personality do not seem far off from being traits or at least trait-like (Northouse, 2009). Furthermore, this approach is also leader-centric in nature, providing little in the way of guidance or understanding of the role of followers in the leadership process.

### 2.3.3. Behaviours Approaches

In contrast to the trait approach, the behaviour approach attempts to understand leadership by looking at the behaviours of leaders (Bass & Bass, 2008). This perspective moved away from attempting to study the traits of a leader and instead placed the focus of investigation on what leaders actually do (Bass & Bass, 2008; Cooper & Locke, 2000; Yukl, 2008). The aim of studying leader behaviours is to be able to identify through observation what behaviours leaders display that produce effective leadership and facilitate the leadership process (Burke et al., 2006; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Kerr, Schriesheim, Murphy & Stogdill, 1974; Kim & Yukl, 1995). Research conducted from this perspective aims to produce leader behaviour taxonomies and has resulted in a vast number of behaviours thought to be associated with leadership (Fleishman, Mumford, Zaccaro, Levin, Korotkin & Hein, 1991). However, there is no list of “right” leadership behaviours, and this is problematic when attempting to apply this perspective to all leaders in all situations (Yukl, 2013). Regardless, there are several major types of leadership behaviours that continue to be recognized and applied to the study of leadership. Two categories of leadership behaviours are the task-oriented and relation-oriented behaviours (Derue, Nahrgang, Wellman & Humphrey, 2011; Yukl, Gordon & Taber, 2002). These leadership behaviours represent an early attempt at classifying leadership, the data for which was derived from research conducted on military cadets.

Task-oriented leader behaviours are primarily concerned with initiating structure and emphasizing goals and work facilitation. Relation-oriented leader behaviours are primarily concerned with doing personal favours for subordinates, finding time to interact and listen to them, and establishing positive relationships with them. Another early conceptualization of leader behaviour is the change-oriented behaviour category, although this category was not initially considered a category in and of itself, until the 1980s (Yukl, 1997; Yukl et al., 2002). Change-oriented leader behaviours are primarily concerned with understanding the environment, finding innovative ways to adapt to it and implementing change strategies or processes (Yukl, 2013). Relational-, task-, and change-oriented behaviours are sometimes classified under the functional leadership label of leader behaviours (Lord, 1977).

Participative leadership is another category of leader behaviour. However, the focus of this category is on the behaviours leaders use to allow others, such as subordinates, to have some degree of influence in the leadership process, rather than on placing the focus on behaviours that facilitate the leadership process more broadly (Somech, 2005). This category is also known as empowering leadership due to its emphasis on bringing in others to the leadership process. Transformational leadership is another aspect of the leader behaviour approach that was developed in the 1980s and has since received varying levels of attention from researchers (Mason, Griffin & Parker, 2014; Niessen, Mäder, Stride & Jimmieson, 2017). According to Northouse (2009), in this approach to leadership, “leaders engage with others to create a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and follower” (p.176). Leaders who are transformational are attentive to the needs of their followers and attempt to help their followers reach their fullest potential (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The benefit of adopting a behavioural approach to leadership is that is views leadership as a set of behaviours that can be applied and utilized by anyone. This perspective arguably opens up the possibility that anyone can be a leader provided that they display the right behaviours. This is because behaviours can be learned, unlike traits, which are thought to be an enduring component of an individual. However, this approach is still leader-centric in that the focus is placed on understanding the behaviours of leaders.

### 2.3.4. Power and influence approaches

Influence is necessary for an effective leader in order to get people to carry out tasks and requests, and implement decisions (Gordon, 2011; Hollander, 1985; Haslam, Reicher & Platow, 2010; Hollander & Offermann, 1990). Yukl (2013) argues that influence is the essence of leadership. However, there is no influence if there is no power, because power is thought to be the source of influence. Power is defined as the “capacity or potential to influence” (Northouse, 2009, p.7). People are thought to have power when they have the ability to influence other people’s behaviours, attitudes, beliefs and course of action

(Northouse, 2009). French Jr and Raven (1959) are often credited with producing the most comprehensive taxonomy of sources of power. According to their classification system, there are five types of power (expert power, referent power, legitimate power, reward power and coercive power), and these five types are also at times further classified into personal power and positional power, depending on how the power is derived, either through the position the individual occupies or from the attributes of the individual (Pierro, Raven, Amato & Bélanger, 2013; Yukl, 2013).

In terms of understanding influence in leadership, Kelman (1958) proposed that there are three different types of influence process. The first type is known as instrumental compliance and is thought to take place when an individual carries out a request by another in order to avoid punishment or to receive some kind of reward. In contrast, internalization occurs when the individual becomes committed to supporting and implementing something that has been proposed because the proposal is in line with the individual's values or beliefs. The final type of influence process is personal identification.

In terms of leadership and power, it remains unclear how much power and what combination of power sources are necessary for leadership to be successful (Yukl, 2013). It is possible that different leadership situations and contexts will require different forms and amounts of power, with some situations requiring more power than others (Yukl, 2013). In situations where leadership is thought to take place though the use of influence and this influence is thought to occur between individuals rather than only as a top down or bottom up process, it is likely that more dynamic configurations of power will take place. For example, in a mutual influence process, it is likely that individuals will capitalize on different power sources rather than drawing from a single source. Furthermore, it is entirely likely that in situations of mutual influence, individuals may be more likely to draw on personal power than positional power, especially in situations in which leadership is distributed or shared or in situations where there is little or no assigned leadership. According to Yukl (2013), one of the best ways to ensure that leaders remain receptive to followers is to encourage and promote reciprocal influence among leaders and followers. This implies that the use of power and influence may have some potential for equalizing the leader-follower relationship.

The power and influence approach to leadership, although leader-centric for the most part, does leave space for the possibility that influence can be exercised by non-leaders. However, this is dependent upon whether or not the source of power enabling the influence process to take place is personal or positional in nature. Positional forms of power are controlled by organizational structures and therefore limit who has access to exercising these forms of power. Alternatively, personal forms of power can be exercised regardless of position or status, as long as the individual is able to effectively communicate their source of power to others.

2.3.5. Contingency theories approach

The final dominant approach to leadership that will be reviewed is the contingency theories approach (Miner, 2005; Fiedler, 2006; Hughes, Ginnett & Curphy, 1998; Korman, 1973). A number of prominent leadership theories, including path-goal theory, situational leadership theory, substitutes for leadership theory, and cognitive resources theory can all be classed together under the larger term of contingency approaches to leadership (Fiedler, 1995; House, 1971; House, 1996; Kerr & Jermier, 1978; Vecchio, 1987). Other theories and models might also be considered to fit into the contingency approach. However, due to space limitations, these will not be covered in this review. All of the theories classed under the contingency approach are in some way predicated upon the assumption that a leader needs to change or adapt their leadership style in response to either the situation/context in which they are leading or to those they are leading. Many of these theories were born out of the realization that much of the previous research on leadership did not always yield the same results across situations and contexts (Yukl, 2013). Therefore, some researchers set out to develop models and theories that could account for situational facts that might play a role in the effectiveness of leaders (Northouse, 2019; Yukl, 2013). As there are several theories to be covered in this approach, only a brief outline of each will be provided.

Path-goal theory was developed in order to explain how a leader's task-oriented behaviour (instrumental leadership) and relationship-oriented behaviour (supportive leadership) combined to influence subordinate satisfaction and performance across situations (Evans, 1970; House, 1971; Indvik, 1986; Stinson & Johnson, 1975). This theory proposes that leaders can motivate their subordinates by influencing the perceptions they hold regarding the consequences of different levels of effort they put into carrying out a task. Further, according to this theory, subordinates will have better levels of performance when they have clear role expectations along with a perception that high levels of effort are necessary to reach their task goals. The role of the leader in path-goal theory is to act in a motivational fashion to subordinates, providing them with payoffs for their work-goal attainment and to provide them with guidance and support in their efforts towards these payoffs, through increasing opportunities and removing or reducing roadblocks to these payoffs (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974).

However, the effectiveness of leaders to influence subordinate satisfaction and effort is dependent upon certain aspects of the situation, such as the characteristics of the task and of the subordinates. These situational factors may have a role in determining both the potential for increased motivation in subordinates as well as the manner in which the leader must act to improve subordinate motivation (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974). Lastly, two key propositions of this theory are that task-oriented behaviours have a greater effect on subordinate performance when task clarity is low and the task is also complex and difficult.

Conversely, when the task is tedious or stressful, supportive leadership behaviours will increase subordinate satisfaction and effort. In this way, the role of the situation becomes clear in terms of how leaders must shape and apply their leadership styles in order to increase both the effort and satisfaction of their subordinates (House, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974). This theory is useful to leaders who may wish to tailor their leadership to different contextual factors. However, this theory, like many of the leadership theories, continues to place the bulk of agency on the leader, while those who are led continue to be presented as lacking in agency, and as capable only of being acted upon by the leader.

The second theory in this approach is the substitutes for leadership theory, which in its first conceptualization, attempted to explain why or when instrumental or supportive leadership may be redundant or ineffective when exercised by a designated leader (Kerr & Jermier, 1978; Manz & Sims Jr, 1980). Other researchers subsequently added other concepts and behaviours to this theory, resulting in something of a shift in its focus (Howell, Bowen, Dorfmand, Keer & Podsakoff, 1990). However, at its core, this theory remains focused on attempting to explain how and when certain types of leadership become redundant. More specifically, it is theorized that instrumental leadership can be substituted in situations where subordinates have highly structured and repetitive tasks, extensive rules, standard procedures, and extensive prior training and experience (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). Further, supportive leadership is thought to be substituted when subordinates have a cohesive work group who are supportive of each other and a non-stressful and intrinsically satisfying task. There is also the additional concept of neutralizers, which are situational variables, and which prevent leaders from being able to effect change on subordinate satisfaction (Howell et al., 1990). These neutralizers must also be taken into consideration by leaders and managed accordingly.

The next theory to be reviewed is situational leadership theory. This theory is predicated upon the supposition that not all leadership styles will be appropriate for all situations and types of follower, and that in order to be effective, leaders must recognize the needs of their employees and act accordingly to meet these needs. This theory is based upon the idea that leaders must match their leadership style to their subordinates' developmental levels. Within this theory, a model has been developed to explain its various components. Blanchared et al. (1985) are credited with refining and further developing the situational leadership model, which was first conceptualized by Hersey and Blanchard (1969). Hersey and Blanchard (1977) also provided significant further development of their original thinking on the concept of situational leadership theory. One of the strengths of this approach is that it offers leaders a clearly articulated model for applying and shaping their leadership to their employees, rather than taking a one-size-fits-all leadership style approach (Graeff, 1983; Graeff, 1997). This model is also well suited for leadership training on how to be an effective leader.

However, one of the criticisms of this approach is that there remains room for further academic investigation of the model (Graeff, 1983; Graeff, 1997; Yukl, 2008). Some components of the model remain underexplored and underdeveloped due to insufficient academic attention to them. There are also concerns surrounding the conceptualization and articulation of the subordinate developmental levels (Graeff, 1983; Graeff, 1997). As the model stands, it is not clear how commitment contributes to the development level of employees and how this in turn translates into the distinct levels of development (Graeff, 1983; Graeff, 1997). This approach is a step away from the more leader-centric approaches. It acknowledges that those who are being led have different needs and different skills and that leaders need to be receptive to these in how they shape and apply their leadership styles.

The final theory to be reviewed in this approach is cognitive resources theory (Fiedler, 1986). This theory proposes that under certain circumstances, some cognitive resources such as intelligence and experience of the leader are positively related to group performance

(Fiedler, 1986; Fiedler & Garcia, 1987). According to this theory, group performance is determined by a complex interaction between a leader’s intelligence and experience and their use of directive leadership behaviours (Fiedler, McGuire & Richardson, 1989; Yukl, 2013). This theory also proposes that there may be a moderating effect of interpersonal stress on the relationship between leader intelligence and subordinate performance. The theory proposes that stress can come from a verity of sources and may have varying effects on performance based upon the degree to which it is experienced (Potter III & Fiedler, 1981; Yukl, 2013). A critique of this theory is that like many other dominate theories, it is leader-centric. A limitation of this theory is that it has somewhat limited application. Certainly, it is possible that it is necessary to understand certain cognitive components of leadership and leader-follower relationships in order to understand the leadership process. However, reducing the complexities of interpersonal relationships and the leadership process to just a few cognitive structures seems narrow in scope.

### 2.3.6. Relational leadership approach

Relational leadership is a fairly recent term and has been applied in different ways across the leadership literature (Brower, Schoorman & Tan, 2000; Cunliffe & Eriksen, 2011; Uhl-Bien, 2011). An early usage was to describe individuals or leaders who enjoy being around others and who thrive in workplace settings that allow for frequent and meaningful relationships with other people (Lipman-Blumen, 1996). Currently, research that takes a relational view of leadership most often takes the position that leadership is not the result of specific traits or behaviours that only certain individuals possess; rather, it is the result of individuals coming together in meaningful ways to produce leadership outcomes through social interaction (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012). However, in her seminal paper on the topic, Uhl-Bien (2011) differentiates between two distinct conceptions of relational leadership; the entity perspective and the relational perspective. More specifically, she clarified the first predominant use of the term as “an entity perspective that focuses on identifying attributes of individuals as they engage in interpersonal relationships” (p.654). The second usage is “a relational perspective that views leadership as a process of social construction through which certain understandings of leadership come about and are given privileged ontology” (p.654). There are several theories that could be classified under the relational leadership umbrella due to their understanding of leadership as either fully or partly relational in nature. For example, leader member exchange (LMX) could be classed under the entity perspective of relational leadership due to the fact that according to LMX, leadership occurs when leaders and followers develop a good relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Other theories and approaches include, but are not limited to, the social network approach to leadership (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006), charismatic leadership (Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993), and Hollander’s relational theory to leadership (Hollander, 1993). However, because several theories and approaches to leadership that encompass relational aspects have already been addressed in previous sections of this chapter, these will not be covered again in this section of the chapter.

In addition to the entity approach, the relational approach, as noted above, encompasses a social constructionist approach to understanding leadership, which stresses a relational ontology. Relational leadership, according to Uhl-Bien (2011), is focused on understanding the social processes that give rise to leadership, rather than focusing on the individual traits and attributes of a leader. The social constructionist perspective to leadership will be covered in further detail in a coming section of this thesis, and it is therefore unnecessary to go into further detail regarding this approach in this section. However, perhaps the main contribution to the relational leadership approach is relational leadership theory as proposed by Uhl-Bien (2011). This theory focuses on understanding the relational processes in which leadership is produced and enabled. This thesis draws on and from certain aspects of relational leadership. However, due to the fact that this thesis is focused on leader identity rather than on leadership processes explicitly, relational leadership theory does not necessarily fit the analytic needs of this this thesis and has therefore not been utilized as the primary theoretical approach. Additionally, due to the broad nature of this approach, it could be argued that any leadership perspective would in some way incorporate a relational approach, and therefore it may be that this approach is not an independent approach but more of a recognition of an important element of the leadership process. I would therefore argue that any leadership research would benefit from drawing at least in part from a relational leadership approach.

### 2.3.7. Critical leadership studies approach

In addition to the decidedly more mainstream paradigm and traditional approaches to leadership that have formed the bulk of this review, there is an alternative approach known as critical leadership studies (CLS) (Collinson, 2011). According to Collinson (2011), CLS is the term used to describe the "broad, diverse and heterogeneous perspectives that share a concern to critique the power relations and identity constructions through which leadership dynamics are often reproduced, frequently rationalized, sometimes resisted and occasionally transformed" (p. 181). The aim of CLS to provide a social critique of leadership rather than to concern itself with understanding leader effectiveness or managerial outcomes in part highlights CLS's dialectical position with regard to mainstream leadership studies (Alvesson & Spicer, 2014; Gunter, 2009; Zoller & Fairhurst, 2007). It also positions CLS more so as an approach of change and perhaps less so as an approach of understanding the mechanics of leadership (Learmonth & Morrell, 2017).

There are very few mainstream texts dedicated to providing a systematic and comprehensive review of leadership that also include critical approaches to the study of leadership. This is both a reflection of the early stage of development of this approach as well as the fact that critical approaches in management overall tend to receive much less attention (Gunter, 2009; Zoller & Fairhurst, 2007). CLS is in part drawn from the larger critical management studies (CMS) field which itself is focused on "seeking to open up new ways of thinking and alternative forms of management and organization, [with a] focus on the critique of rhetoric, tradition, authority and objectivity" (Collinson, 2011, p. 181). The intellectual traditions forming the basis of CLS are drawn from a variety of perspectives and it can be argued that one of the goals of CLS is to directly challenge the existing orthodoxy of leadership by exploring what is neglected, deficient or missing from the leadership literature (Collinson, 2005; Collinson, 2011).

Although there is no one research focus in CLS, some of the common research themes that focus on and around leadership and leadership issues are: power structures in the leader-follower relationship, gender issues, consent, dissent, control, and resistance, to name but a few (Alvesson & Spicer, 2014; Collinson, 2011; Fairhurst, 2008; Zoller & Fairhurst, 2007). In contrast to the view held by mainstream leadership researchers, leadership to many CLS researchers is not something that can exist within a person or a relationship. Rather, it represents "a kind of epiphenomenon that organizes and determines our experience of social reality and our experience of ourselves" (Kelly, 2014, p. 908). CLS is still in its infancy as a research approach and requires much more attention and dedication from a wider range of researchers in order for it to continue to grow and thrive. However, this does not imply that CLS has not made significant contributions to the leadership field. A number of highly influential and dedicated scholars have contributed greatly to CLS, as evidenced by the existing CLS research corpus. For example, Collinson has written many useful reviews of CLS as well as providing several thought-provoking pieces attempting to rethink leadership, followership, work identities, and gender to name but a few (Collinson & Hearn, 1996;

Collinson, 2005; Collinson, 2006; Collinson, 2010; Collinson, 2011). Alvesson and his co-authors have also contributed significantly to CLS through both his journal publications and book writing (Alvesson, 2000; Alvesson & Willmott, 1992; Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Alvesson & Willmott, 2012; Alvesson & Deetz, 1999).

Other researchers such as Fairhurst have also made a significant contribution to CLS (Fairhurst, 2001; Fairhurst, 2008; Fairhurst, 2009). However, due to its relatively recent appearance in the leadership literature as well as its focus on unpacking the challenges of leadership, this theory does not lend itself well to the purposes of this thesis. However, it is my personal opinion that much can be drawn from CLS in terms of conducting research challengeing the inequalities that have long been noted in leadership, such as the under-representation of woman, people of colour and other minorities.

### 2.3.8. Social Constructionist approach

The final approach to leadership that will be reviewed in this chapter is the social constructionist approach. The social constructionist approach to leadership is in many ways a sharp departure from the mainstream functionalist paradigm used for the majority of leadership research, not least of which is due to the markedly different ontological and epistemological approaches taken by these two paradigms. However, the discussion of ontology, epistemology and other related topics will be taken up in greater detail in chapter four of this thesis. This review will only focus on providing an understanding of social construction as it applies to the study of leadership and will also outline why this approach is best suited for this thesis.

The main argument of this perspective is that leadership is not an innate characteristic of the leader. This perspective views leadership as a co-constructed reality and like many other “taken-for-granted realities” it is produced from interactions among and between social actors (Fairhurst, 2009; Hacking, 1999). According to Gergen (1999), "social constructionist inquiry is principally concerned with explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world (including themselves) in which they live" (p. 266). From this perspective, the ability of leadership actors (both leaders and followers) to make sense of their organizational roles is an important part of the process of constructing reality. This implies that the lay theories, discourse, and sensemaking used by individuals to explain and understand leadership serve an important purpose in aiding these individuals to construct their reality of what leadership is (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010). The social constructionist perspective argues that individuals create and interpret reality as they interact with their environment and each other. Individuals construct their reality of leadership around their understanding of it, and it is this argument that becomes a critical focal point of understanding the social constructionist approach to leadership (Burger & Luckmann, 1967; Carsten, Uhl-Bien, West, Patera & McGregor, 2010).

Furthermore, from this approach, "what counts as the 'appropriate' way of leading are interpretive and contestable issues, which cannot be decided by "objective criteria"" (Grint, 2001, p. 3). Therefore, social constructionist researchers are likely to reject an essentialist view of leadership as an innate trait of the individual, in favour of a more "eye of the beholder" perspective (Fairhurst, 2009; Meindl, 1995). Leadership researchers who adopt this perspective tend to conduct their research in the context in which leadership takes place (e.g. organizations). This specific organizational context allows the researcher to gain critical contextual insights and understandings regarding the role of the organization and the location of leadership actors in the organization in shaping their leadership and their perceptions and constructions of their organizational realities around leadership (Hall, 2011).

Social construction more broadly, and within the context of leadership more specifically, has been heavily critiqued (Allen, 2005; Cromby & Nightingale,1999; Fairhurst

& Grant, 2010). Many of these critiques stem from the contested antirealist perspective so commonly associated with social construction, with the main argument being that leadership is based upon a foundation of objective reality and that social construction automatically takes a relativist/antirealist position in which reality is subjective. However, many of these critiques focus too much on the “strong” version of social construction. As Allen (2005) notes, most social science research (leadership research included) stems from a “mild” or “weak” approach that does not adopt the hard relativist perspective, and therefore instead focuses on the social realities and their implications, while also acknowledging and giving place to the role of psychological functions (Allen, 2005).

This thesis takes this position and argument to be true and locates itself within the weak social constructionist approach, whereby leadership is acknowledged as a product of social interaction, while also adopting the perspective that this social interaction, which results in the collective meaning making and reality construction, is the product of knowing and thinking beings who are capable of perceiving their social world and reacting to it accordingly. What makes social construction a relevant approach within the context of this thesis is in part the fact that it encourages research focused on routine social practices and interactions and makes these the analytical focus in the context of leadership (Allen, 2005; Fairhurst & Grant, 2010).

Because the focus of this thesis is to understand how individuals construct their identities as leaders through social interaction and in relation to other organizational actors, none of the previously outlined theories and perspectives can help to achieve this goal in the same way a social constructionist position can. Many of the previously outlined functionalist theories are predominantly leader-focused, with little if any theoretical space given to the role of followers and other organizational actors. Further, because of the argued fluid nature of identity construction, as will be outlined in the coming sections of this thesis, the social constructionist perspective better lends itself to the investigative focus of this thesis, more so than any of the other perspectives. However, as noted above, this argument will be made clearer as the chapter moves into the discussion of identity in the coming sections.

### 2.3.9. Conclusion

To conclude this section of the literature review, it should be noted that this review of the leadership literature is meant to provide both orientation and some level of familiarity with the topic. However, this thesis has a dual focus of leadership and identity, and as a result, space must be given to the review of both leadership and identity. As such, this chapter is limited as to how much depth it can provide on the topic of leadership, which is why I have chosen to structure the review on leadership in the way I have. In the next section of this chapter, I will move on to the review of the identity literature by first providing a definition of identity before moving to a review of the identity literature relating to leadership.

## 2.4. Identity within the context of leadership

This section of the literature review will focus on identity within the context of leadership. Firstly, the various definition of identity will be outlined before moving on to the definition of identity used within the context of this research. The review will then move to the discussion of the major perspectives that have informed the majority of identity-focused leadership research. These perspectives include identity theory, social identity theory, social identity leadership theory, and social construction and identity work. The third section of this review will focus on the concept of a leader identity and how it has been conceptualized. The final portion of this section will provide an integration of the leadership and identity literatures and will outline the gap in the literature and the justification for researching leader identity.

### 2.4.1. Identity defined

Identity is a dynamic concept that provides meaning through the orientation of the self to the larger world around us. Like leadership, there is a long history of investigation on the topic of identity. In fact, identity has been a fundamental concern of religion and philosophy for over 3,000 years (Brown, 2018). Although this long history has likely produced a significant amount of insight on the topic, much of our current thinking on identity can be traced back to the writings of historical and noteworthy thinkers, such as those of Locke and Descartes, as well as to the more contemporary thinking of Freud, Foucault, Mead and Giddens, to name but a few (Brown, 2015; Brown, 2018). Identity as a research focus in the social sciences spans many disciplines (Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston & McDermott, 2009), resulting in a wide range of ideas on how identity is conceptualized as well as from where it is thought to originate (Kreiner, Hollensbe & Sheep, 2006; Oyserman, Elmore & Smith, 2012).

However, some clarity is found in the frequently cited work of Gecas (1982), which provides a clear distinction between self and self-concept and in doing so helps to provide elucidation of the source of one’s identity. According to Gecas (1982), the self is “the process of reflexivity which emanates from the dialectic between the “I” and “Me”” (p.3). Gecas (1982) argues that the self is not accessible to empirical investigation, and as such research on identity should instead look to the self-concept as a tool for investigation. Gecas (1982) defines the self-concept as “the concept the individual has of himself as a physical, social, and spiritual or moral being” (p.3) and goes on to clarify that the self-concept is an organizational structure comprising our “identities and attributes, and their evaluations, developed out of the individual’s reflexive, social, and symbolic activities” (p.4). Oyserman et al. (2012) also argue that there is a difference between self and identity. They too propose that identity is one part of the self-concept. Therefore, a distinction should be made between the use of the term self and the self-concept in understanding the source of our identity or identities. Now that it is understood where our identities reside, the issue of defining identity can be addressed.

Identity, like leadership, has a wide range of definitions. Day, Harrison and Halpin (2012) propose that “identity is the culmination of an individual’s personal attributes, values, knowledge, experience, and self-perceptions” (p.298). Johnson et al. (2012) define identity as “the ways in which people define themselves relative to others” (p.1263). According to Oyserman et al. (2012), “identities are the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group memberships that define who one is” (p.69). This definition attempts to encompass a number of conceptual ideas at once, but in doing so perhaps unknowingly creates a boundary around which identities one can have.

From this definition, one is only able to take on the identities that one’s innate characteristics, social groups and roles allow. This limits the agency of an individual to take on identities of their choosing rather than the identities dictated to them through the control of social groups and roles. Social identity theorists propose that identity is the part of one’s self-concept that is the product of one’s knowledge of one’s social group membership along with the emotional attachment one has for these groups (Tejfel, 1978). This definition is also somewhat problematic due to its focus on social groups as the source of identity. After all, one may be classed by others as a member of a social group but may not consider oneself to be a member of said social group. Identity theorists would argue that identity is constituted by the “parts of a self composed of the meanings that persons attach to the multiple roles they typically play in highly differentiated contemporary societies” (Stryker & Burke, 2000, p.284). This definition relies upon one’s social role to help define one’s identity. This definition is also somewhat problematic in that it limits one’s identity only to the roles that one can occupy, thus limiting the possible identities one can take on. However, these critiques of definitions of identity as originating from one's social or role membership should not be understood to imply that groups, roles and society do not have an important role to play in identity.

On the contrary, these things are very important to identity, but they should not be used as the sole drivers of identity formation. Doing so creates the danger of limiting the types of identity one can assume, creating a set list of identities based upon one's roles or the groups of which one is a member. There might even be consequences for agency and motivation when viewing identity from a strictly social group membership/role perspective, whereby individuals may not feel able to take on certain identities they feel are out of reach to them because of the perceived barriers to joining a certain group or assuming a certain social role. As a result, some individuals may feel unmotivated to strive to take on a new identity if they perceive that there might be socially imposed barriers to doing so. For example, an individual may feel unable to take on the identity of a leader if they do not have an organizational leadership title to validate their social role/group membership as a leader. Therefore, a definition of identity is needed that can account for the role of society and social interaction, while at the same time preserving individual agency while simultaneously helping to answer the question of "who am I?". McAdams (1999) defines identity as "the internalized and evolving story that results from a person's selective appropriation of past, present, and future" (p.486). Ramarajan (2014) provides a useful definition of identity, stating that it is "the subjective knowledge, meanings, and experiences that are self-defining" (p.593).

Integrating McAdams' definition with Ramarajan's is perhaps the definition that would be most fitting for this thesis, and therefore, the following definition of identity is proposed: identity is the internalized subjective knowledge, meaning, and experiences of one's past, present, and future, that are self-defining. This definition of identity embodies the dynamic nature of identity construction and agency that I argue is so necessary for the construction of identity. It also captures the stabilizing potential of identity internalization, suggesting that identities, although fluid, can also be integrated as part of the self. It also incorporates a temporal component into identity, which is important given that identities evolve over time, as will be discussed further in the following section.

### 2.4.2. The dynamic nature of identity

Identities are useful in part because they aid us in answering the question of “who am I?” and “who do others know me to be?” (Alvesson, Ashcraft & Thomas, 2008; Goffman, 1959). Further, according to Pittaway, Rivera and Murphy (2005), individuals are motivated to know themselves and have a relatively clear sense of the self, and as such would arguably be motived to engage in identity construction when presented with identities that need to be defined. Additionally, it should be understood that identities are not static. Identities evolve over time through experience and meaningful social feedback that allow people to learn about who they are (Lord & Hall, 2005). It is also argued that identities can represent the self at different points in time. Identities can represent what we used to be in the past, what we are in the present, and what we hope to become or not to become in the future (Ibarra, 1999; Markus & Nurius, 1986). Moreover, identities are seen as being constructed through social processes in which they are claimed and granted (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Finally, it is understood that individuals can have more than one identity, and in fact, it is generally accepted that any given individual will have many identities, with each identity having more or less importance to their self-definition (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; McCall & Simmons, 1978).

### 2.4.3. Identity within the context of leadership

As noted previously, identity as a concept has a long history, yet within the context of leadership, identity has received attention only recently (Ibarra et al., 2014). As more and more research is devoted to the investigation of leadership through an identity lens, some researchers have also begun to argue that more than just using an identity perspective to understand the “doing” of leadership, we also need to start applying identity as a tool for gaining a better understanding of the “being” of leadership (Ibarra, Snook & Guillén Ramo, 2010, p.659). This perspective is one that calls for research of leader identity construction in a way that can account for not just how leaders act or behave, but how they come to see themselves as leaders while also explicating the role of follower identity construction. To this end, Ibarra et al. (2014) suggest that there are three major streams of identity theorizing relevant to the topic of leadership (identity theory, social identity theory, and social construction through identity work). Each of these will be reviewed in the following three sections.

### 2.4.4. Identity Theory

According to Burke and Stets (2009), identity theory has two different directions of research, the first being a structural perspective as proposed and influenced by Stryker (1968) and his fellow researchers, which emphasizes the role of social structure in identity, and the second perspective being that of Burke (1980), who emphasises internal dynamics within the self that influence behaviour. Due to space constraints, only the structural component will be outlined here, as this is the most commonly utilized perspective in the literature. The structural perspective argues that as society is structured and organized, so too is the self, and that from this structure come our different identities. One such classification or type of identity is the role identity (McCall & Simmons, 1978; Stets & Burke 2000; Stryker & Burke, 2000). Role identities, as conceptualized by McCall and Simmons (1978), are defined as “the character and role that an individual devises for himself as an occupant of a particular social position” (p.65). It is one’s “imaginative view of himself as he likes to see himself being and acting as an occupant of that role” (p.65).

Role identities, as per McCall and Simmons (1978), are open to interpretation by the individual. In reference to the identity of leader, this means that each individual will have their own conception of what it means to be a leader, what society expects of a leader, and how to enact the role of leader. For example, for one individual, being a leader may mean monitoring group members to stay on task, and to another it may mean fostering self-efficacy in group members to enable self-monitoring of work. Burke (1980) points out that from the perspective of role identities, the interaction between roles and counter roles is key. McCall and Simmons (1978) argue that role identities are enacted in reference to other role identities, for example mother and child, or leader and follower. Through our interaction with these complementary role identities, we learn about our own role identities. In this way, individuals learn about themselves not only from their own self-perceptions, but also through interaction with others. Identity theory gives us a useful perspective on understanding how identities are formed and changed over time. However, according to identity theory, the process through which new identities are formed or changed is viewed as being a fairly long, cognitively intensive and individual process. This process is also conceptualized as quite structured, which may have implications for individual agency in constructing new identities.

In terms of using identity theory to understand leader identity, this perspective presents the identity of leader as one that is in most cases strictly social in nature, one defined and created by formal social structures, for example through the structures of the organization. Taking on a leader identity from this perspective occurs through the conferment of a formal organizational title, thus allowing identity transitions to take place through recognized and clear channels. The implication of this theory for the study of identity is that individuals have a clear source of identity information regarding the role identity of leader and also often have clearly defined routes and opportunities for taking on this identity. However, they may also be held back in being able to access this identity if the formal social structures giving rise to said identity do not create clear pathways to the identity or in other ways control access to this role. Thus, it could be argued that this theory limits the agency of the individual to choose an identity to take on. Furthermore, although this theory does incorporate the role of other people into the construction of identity, it does so fairly dualistically and therefore might not fully account for the role of others in the identity construction process.

### 2.4.5. Social Identity Theory

According to social identity theory (SIT), people derive at least part of their identity from their social memberships (Hogg, 2006). SIT was originally conceptualized as an explanation for patterns of discrimination towards out-group members, rather than as an explanation of how new identities are formed (Haslam, Reicher & Platow, 2010), although in its current form it has been extended to account for how individuals come to form new identities relating to group membership (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Identity formation, as proposed by social identity theory, is achieved through what is known as self-categorization. Self-categorization occurs when an individual perceives similarity between the self and in-group members to such a degree that one comes to categorize oneself as being a member of the in-group as well. According to categorization theories, individuals form cognitively-based in-group/out-group categories that they use to evaluate themselves and others. According to Hogg and Terry (2000), self-categorization results in what is known as depersonalization, which is a process in which an individual is no longer seen as an individual, but as the embodiment of the prototype (i.e. the ideal group member).

Hogg (2001) has made significant efforts to extend SIT to leadership and can be credited with making contributions to a perspective known as the social identity theory of leadership (SITL). From the SITL perspective, the key to effective leadership lies in the leader's ability to induce followers to see them as prototypical of the group, or as Ellemers, de Gilder and Haslam (2004) put it, "the secret of successful leadership lies in the capacity of the leader to induce followers to perceive him or her as the embodiment of a positive social identity that they have in common and that distinguishes them from others" (p.469). The focus of SITL is on the group level and social categorizations that allow individuals and others to define themselves and others based on the groups to which they belong (Hogg, 2003). How leaders come to emerge or come to be seen by others as a leader, occurs through a process of gaining influence through prototypicality and the embodiment of group characteristics (Hogg, 2001). Hogg and Terry (2000) propose that leaders are motivated to construct a group's identity in such a way as to maintain their prototypicality, and thus their status as the group leader, thus indicating a significant identity crafting component to this process, whereby leaders have agency in how they choose to craft their identity, as long as it maintains and reinforces their group prototypicality.

However, there remain several unresolved issues with applying a SIT or SITL approach to the topic of leader identity. First of all, these theories cannot account for the emergence of non-prototypical leaders. Additionally, further clarity is needed on how individuals evaluate prototypicality and therefore come to identify a leader. Given that there are commonly held stereotypes of leaders as male, white, heterosexual, etc. (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009), it could be argued that prototypical may simply mean stereotypical. Further, placing a focus on the group level aspects of identity and leadership addresses some, but not all, aspects of leader identity. SIT and SITL view identity as something of a depersonalized and impersonal template of the self that can simply be stepped into at any time, assuming there is some sort of prototypicality or group level similarity occurring. This cannot and does not allow the highly personal and negotiated individualized meaning of the self to emerge. For these reasons, this theory is not an appropriate fit for the context of this thesis for the investigation of leader identity.

## 2.4.6. Social Construction: Identity Work Perspective

The final approach to identity that will be reviewed is the social constructionist perspective. According to this perspective, identities are co-constructed and have something of an eye of the beholder perspective in which what constitutes a leader or follower identity is open to debate and negotiation among individuals engaging in social interaction. From this approach, identities are not strictly social roles to be taken on, but rather are claimed and granted in social interaction. This perspective views identity as a social construction, constructed in part through a process known as identity work. Identity work is defined as a process of "forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a precarious sense of coherence and distinctiveness" (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002, p.626). Therefore, any action taken up with the purpose of constructing an identity can be classified as a form of identity work. For example, making a claim for an identity by saying "I am a leader" would be a form of identity work. Ibarra et al. (2014) note that the identity work perspective is increasingly being used to understand the social process of becoming a leader. This perspective views followers and leaders as working together in the construction of identities. According to DeRue and Ashford (2010), it is through identity work that leaders and followers make claims for a leader identity.

From this perspective, identities are seen as becoming internalized through relational and social processes in which individuals come to see themselves and be seen as leaders. According to Ashforth and Shinoff (2016), a "key outcome of identity construction… is the extent to which one internalizes a given identity as a (partial) definition of self (e.g., "I am a salesperson")" (pp.113-114). Internalizing a leader identity may play a key role in helping to sustain the motivation and interest needed to seek out the leadership development opportunities required to master the complex leadership skills necessary to be successful in advanced leadership roles (Day et al., 2009; Ibarra et al., 2014; Lord & Hall, 2005). Identity work within the organizational context sees leaders working to develop their identity in ways that feel most authentic to them, but which also involve the role of followers in helping them to craft their senses of self. This process is not just about developing a leader and their unique skills, but is more of a collaboration in which both leaders and followers work together through the identity construction process, with the end result being an agreement of identities that aids in facilitating the leadership process. According to Ibarra et al. (2014), viewing leadership as “acquired and sustained through constant social interactions shifts power away from leaders and transfers it to the relationship between leaders and followers” (p.290). As noted before, this thesis aims to take a social constructionist perspective to the study of leader identity, and as such, it is through this perspective on how leaders construct their identity that this topic will be investigated.

### 2.4.7. Leader Identity: definitions and implications

It is clear from the review of the literature that the topics of leadership and identity are not new. However, as Ibarra, Snook and Guillén Ramo (2010) note, in recent years a new perspective linking leadership and identity has emerged. This new perspective is one that calls for research on the investigation of leader identity as a specific identity, which has yet to be fully understood (DeRue, Ashford & Cotton, 2009). Day and Harrison (2007) propose that “a leader identity refers the sub-component of one's identity that relates to being a leader or how one thinks of oneself as a leader” (p. 365). Day, Harrison and Halpin (2012) define leader identity as “how one thinks of oneself as a leader; the subcomponents of one’s identity or self-concept related to being a leader” (p.299).

Many researchers have attempted to elucidate upon the implications and theorized outcomes of taking on a leader identity. Day and Harrison (2007) point out that “coming to think of oneself as a leader helps to build leadership self-efficacy and also motivates a leader to seek out additional developmental opportunities" (p.368). Lord and Hall (2005) suggest that one's self-concept as a leader is linked with one's leadership skills and knowledge. Furthermore, according to Zheng and Muir (2015), one's leader identity is critically linked to leader development. They go on to argue that it is not enough to simply engage with leader development if leader identity is not also engaged (Zheng & Muir, 2015).

Additionally, Lord and Hall (2005) suggest that "to further leadership skills, one needs both identification with the role and sufficient self-confidence to attempt developmental leadership activities. In turn, these activities need to be met with both social acceptance and task success to produce increases in skills and in one's self-view as a leader" (p.594). This argument would link identity with the developmental components of leader development. It has also been suggested that leader identity is important as a predictor of effective leadership and career development (Day & Harrison, 2007; Day & Dragoni, 2015; DeRue, Ashford & Cotton, 2009). Day and Dragoni (2015) found that businesses from across the globe have identified the need for leader development across all organizational levels and that this is a top priority, "with 86% of respondents reporting this need as "urgent" or "important"" (p.134).

The implication of these findings is that if leader identity is linked to leader development, and leader development is needed at all organizational levels, then there is a need to address leader identity at all levels of organizational leadership, not just top management or CEOs. Further, DeRue, Ashford and Cotton (2009) suggest that the "internalization of a leader identity is thought to be a positive, generative, process that empowers people to assume the mantle of leadership and thereby more effectively engage in leadership processes that facilitate the accomplishment of organizational goals" (p.4). They go on to propose that "individuals have an interest in developing their leadership capabilities and organizations often see the development of leaders within their ranks as key to their vitality and success” (DeRue et al., 2009, p.4). From this brief review, it appears that there is a recognition within the leadership literatures of the need to gain a better understating of the implications of leader identity, due to the associated and theorized links that have been established between leadership outcomes and having a leader identity.

## 2.5. Organizational definition and context

This thesis situates itself within the context of organizations, and as such envisions the organization as the site of identity construction for individuals. The research must therefore account for the role of the organization in the identity construction process and the limitations or boundaries that these contexts will likely place on identities and the identity construction process. It is also possible that there may be other contextual factors that may be unique to the intersections of leadership, identity and organizations that have an important role in the construction of a leader identity.

According to Sims and Gioia (1986), organizations are conceptualized or defined as being “the product of thought and action of [their] members” (p.1). Hogg and Terry (2000) define organizations as “internally structured groups that are located in complex networks of intergroup relations characterized by power, status, and prestige differentials” (p.121). Weick (1979) suggests that organizations can be defined as “the body of thought, though by organizational thinkers” (p.2). Benson (1977) proposes that organizations come to be through the interactions of organizational members and through these “interactions with each other social patterns are gradually built and eventually a set of institutional arrangements are established” (p.3). Further, through these interactions, relationships are built, roles are constructed, and organizations are built as people encounter and interact with each other in their daily lives (Benson, 1977). This framing of organizations would suggest that they are brought into being through interaction between social actors rather than being pre-existing entities, which is a perspective very much in line with social constructionist thinking and would suggest that organisational individuals are both the product of and the producers of the organisation and its structures.

Further, the investigation of leader identity construction in an organizational context implies firstly that there is some degree of latitude for identity construction to take place in the organization, and secondly that the organization is likely exercising some degree of control over the identities of its members, but that this control is not all-encompassing. Taking a social constructionist perspective to the construction of leader identities places organizational actors in a position whereby they are subjects taking action towards the construction of the identities of their choosing (Carroll & Levy, 2010; Epitopaki, Kark, Mainemelis & Lord, 2017; Ibarra, 2009). However, at the same time that there is a recognition of the agency of social actors to construct their leader identity in the context of their organization, there is also the acknowledgment that organizations take action towards the control or shaping of the identities of their employees; a process commonly referred to as identity regulation (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Carroll & Levy, 2010). Identity regulation is defined as the “more or less intentional effects of social practices upon processes of identity construction and reconstruction” (Pezé, 2013, p.314). Therefore, as Virtaharju and Liiri (2017) suggest, although social constructionist perspectives on identity would argue that individuals construct their identities through their own agency, there may also be other factors at play in this process, such as organisational structures. In this sense, a leader identity could not therefore be attributed to individual agency alone but would also be the product of external forces acting upon the individual. Therefore, it could be argued that there may exist some degree of individual agency in constructing identities in organizations, while at the same time understanding that organizations exert some control in the identity construction process due in part to the fact that organizations provide some degree of structure, which in turn translates into the regulation of identities (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002).

Thus, given that individuals may have some latitude for identity construction while also recognizing that organizations may knowingly or unknowingly place restrictions upon the identities of their employees, it could be argued that there would appear to be some tension between individual agency in the construction of one's leader identity and the role of the organization in regulating employees' identities (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Knights & Willmott, 1989). There is also the understanding that the tensions existing between agency and control can shift over time, in line with the changes and shifts that occur over the course of the identity construction process (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003).

This discussion of the agency versus structure debate in the leader identity construction process also brings to light important issues around power and control. As noted above, control is perhaps a central feature of organizational structures, with special attention given to the control of behaviour and performance outcomes of employees (Fleming & Sturdy, 2011). These normative control structures, which are informed by the shared culture, beliefs, values and norms of the organization, function to exert control over the identity construction process of the organizational member in such a way that organizational members are controlled in their actions (i.e. behaviours) and their thoughts (i.e. cognitions) (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Benson, 1977; Schien, 2010). Benson (1977) argues that "people produce a social world which stands over them, constrains their actions. The production of social structure, then occurs within a social structure. There are also powerful forces which tend to occasion the reproduction of existing social structure. These include as prominent elements, the interests of particular groups of people and their power to defend their interests within an established order" (p.3).

The implications of these arguments are that organizations have a significant level of control over organizational members, even outside of the formal and perhaps more obvious organizational structures such as leadership titles or roles, such that the culture and norms of an organization work to control who is or is not perceived as a leader and who has access to these identity construction processes. Further, this normative control may mask or inaccurately implicate power or influence over these processes. The normative control that organizations may exert over organizational members may lead to the perception that certain individuals have more power over the leader identity construction process than others. This reification is critical to our understanding of power in organizations in the leader identity construction process. This is because the nature of the socially-constructed realities of organizations can create subjective means for typified ways of doing things, which take on an objective character that then acts on the producers of these meanings (Burger & Luckmann, 1966; Downing, 2005). This may lead to situations where individuals perceive that they lack the necessary organizational influence to engage in leader identity construction because they and their fellow organizational members have lost sight of the ways that the social order of their organization is a human production rather than an inherent reality (Downing, 2005; Gergen & Thatchenkery, 2004).

Placing the leader identity construction process in an organizational context requires that the tensions between agency and structure be addressed and taken into consideration in addition to the consideration of the contextual factors across organizations, and the issues of normative control and power. This also requires that we understand and acknowledge the embedded nature of organizational members as both producers and products of organizations and that these issues play an important role in understanding how identities are constructed and controlled. These issues as discussed here are meant to set the scene for future discussion in relation to the data and will be addressed again in relation to the data in chapters seven and eight of this thesis.

## 2.6. Conclusion

This chapter has presented a review of the literature on leadership and identity while also delivering a synthesis of the topics, in order to provide the necessary grounding for the thesis. The leadership theories outlined in the first half of this chapter were meant to provide a basic understanding of how leadership is conceptualised, and also to draw out the strengths and limitations of each theory in order to offer some justification as to why this thesis has adopted a social constructionist perspective to leadership and leader identity. This chapter also provided the necessary background literature on identity in order to give context to and a definition of what exactly an identity is and more specifically, what a leader identity is. The final sections of this chapter provided an integration and overview of the implications of having a leader identity. This is an important point to make given that identities are not just important individual identifiers but are also importantly linked to behavioural outcomes. Although there are many possible avenues by means of which to investigate the leader identity construction process, this chapter has presented the various arguments regarding why the chosen perspective of social construction is a more appropriate choice given that this perspective applies to both leadership and identity. The next chapter of this thesis will revisit these topics as they relate to the theoretical framework of this thesis.

# Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

## 3.1. Introduction: The process of leader identity construction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the theoretical framework that informs this thesis. As noted previously in chapter one, the aim of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of the process through which individuals come to construct a leader identity within the context of organizations. Therefore, the theory chosen to inform this thesis is leadership identity construction theory (LICT) (DeRue et al., 2009; DeRue & Ashford, 2010). The groundwork for this theory was laid in 2009, when the first tentative outline of the theory was proposed by DeRue et al. (2009). However, the following year, DeRue and Ashford (2010) took the theory forward by developing it further and providing a more advanced version. Perhaps the most notable development in the 2010 paper is the conceptualization of the identity internalization model, which is clearly articulated and visualized as a reciprocal and mutually reinforcing process that takes place between social actors.

At its core, LICT is a theory specifically targeted towards explaining how individuals construct an identity as a leader (or follower), while also attempting to account for the role that other organizational members have in this process, as well as taking into account the role that social interaction plays in the construction of identities. In this way, LICT is somewhat of a departure from other areas of theorizing on leadership and identity, which have focused on leadership as a top-down process with little emphasis being put on conceptualizing and articulating the role that other people in an organization have in the process of constructing leader identities. Furthermore, this theory is a move away from other identity theories that have often attempted to understand how individuals come to construct a leader identity through a focus on the purely cognitive aspects of the process (Burke & Stets, 2009) or by attempting to explain leader identity as a function of group prototypicality (e.g. Hogg, 2003).

DeRue and Ashford (2010) divide their theory up between the process of constructing a leader or follower identity (i.e. the work of constructing an identity), the reciprocal nature of identity construction, and other features that may lead to claiming and granting. It is the work of constructing a leader identity and the reciprocal nature of identity construction that this thesis draws from and with which it is primarily concerned. This is due to the fact that this thesis is concerned with understanding the process through which individuals construct a leader identity. It is outside the scope of this thesis to engage with certain predictive aspects of the theory such as implicit theories of leadership, due to the fact that this thesis was concerned with the relational and interactional components of leader identity and would therefore not have a need to engage with this aspect of the theory. However, in addition to outlining the process of identity construction and the reciprocal nature of the identity construction process, the additional features proposed by DeRue and Ashford (2010) that may lead individuals to claim or grant an identity will also be outlined and discussed. Therefore, this chapter will first outline the necessary elements of LICT before moving on to the discussion of these previously noted additional elements. This chapter will also outline the necessary previous background literature informing LICT and will also present an outline of previous research that has incorporated or utilized LICT.

## 3.2. The work of identity construction

### 3.2.1. Leadership identity construction theory

Leadership identity construction theory (LICT) (DeRue & Ashford, 2010) outlines the process through which individuals are thought to come to see themselves and be seen by others as leaders (and followers) and in doing so, over time, come to construct a leader (or follower) identity. LICT views leadership as a relationship "that is composed of reciprocal and mutually reinforcing identities as leaders and followers, is endorsed and reinforced within a broader organizational context and is dynamic over time" (p.627). Furthermore, this theory is further based upon an understanding of leadership independent of formal organizational hierarchy or role structures, and in which any member within a given social structure can engage.

LICT draws from and is rooted in the identity work literature (Pratt, Rockmann & Kaufmann, 2006; Snow & Anderson, 1987). As noted in chapter two, identity work refers to "people being engaged in forming, repairing, maintain, strengthening, or revising" their identities (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003, p. 1165). In this sense, constructing a leader identity would be a form of identity work. However, LICT moves beyond a simple identity work perspective by proposing a social conception of identity construction that accounts for the identity work of the individual as they work to construct a leader or follower identity, while also incorporating the identity work of other individuals who are also engaged in the reciprocal identity construction process (Bartel & Dutton, 2001; Hatch & Schultz, 2002). Thus, according to LICT, this form of identity work is achieved through the reciprocal claiming and granting of identities, rather than placing the analytical lens on the unidirectional aspects of identity, as is the case with the definition of identity work proposed above by Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003).

Furthermore, according to LICT, the identity of "leader" is socially constructed when an individual makes claims for a leader identity and has their claims granted by others. However, this is just the start of the process. In order for the identity construction process to continue, the individual must then reciprocally follow this leader identity grant with a grant of a follower identity to the other individuals. LICT proposes that without the reciprocal component of the claiming and granting process, leader and follower identities may not be clearly outlined and understood within the given social context. This lack of clarity may lead to a breakdown in the claiming and granting process, and it is unlikely that any of the involved individuals would be able to construct an identity at this point. The reciprocal nature of the identity construction process brings clarity to the questions of who is a leader and who is following, thus enabling individuals to continue on through the construction process, ideally leading to the internalization of the leader identity over time. According to LICT, the identity of a leader is not necessarily theorized as being constructed as a result of having an organizational leadership title, although the theory does not rule out the possibility that having an organizational leadership title might aid in the construction process. Thus, leader identities are not simply constructed by having a leadership role. LICT also acknowledges that leader and follower identities are cognitions residing in the self-concept, but goes beyond a cognitive explanation of leader identity by arguing for a socially constructed and relational account of leadership and leader identity construction. In this way, the theory moves beyond an explanation of identity as a strictly cognitive process, thus opening the door to other explanations and possibilities as to how and why individuals come to think of themselves as leaders.

This theory also does not view leader and follower identities as static, meaning that identities can shift and change over time, such that an individual may think of themselves as a leader in one context or at one point in time, but that this identity may, for various reasons, no longer be a meaningful identity for the individual and may therefore be discarded. This is an important aspect of this theory as leader identity, like many other identities, is thought to be fluid and open to change over time (Gioia, Schultz & Corley, 2000; Nyberg & Sveningsson, 2014).

Similarly, according to this theory, the identity of a follower is thought to be constructed through the same reciprocal identity claiming and granting process that gives rise to leader identities. LICT also does not imply that a follower is an individual in a subordinate position to the individual making claims for a leader identity. This theory also does not imply at all that a follower is in a subordinate position within the organization. Rather, a follower is anyone who chooses to grant another individual's leader identity claims, and in doing so supports this individual and facilitates the leadership process. In this way, although the terms *leader* and *follower* are being applied to two different categories of individual in the theory and in this thesis (i.e. leader = individual making claims for a leader identity, follower = individual/s granting a leader identity), these terms are not being used or conceptualized in the traditional sense of the words as they have been commonly applied in much of the previous leadership literature, such that leaders are viewed as individuals with organizational leadership roles and followers are viewed as individuals in subordinate roles. Rather, it should be understood that these terms are used for the purpose of distinguishing one identity from the other, without implied power relationships necessarily being tied to these identities.

Another vital concept of LICT is that leader and follower identities can shift between and among organizational members at different times and in different situations, such that any one individual within an organization, regardless of hierarchical or organizational standing, can be a leader or a follower, by making claims for a leader or follower identity or by having said identity granted to them. The implications of this are that even managers or formal leaders can forgo leader identity claims, instead opting for a follower identity, if that is the identity they wish to adopt in a given situation. Similarly, this would also imply that even individuals in non-leadership positions can make claims for a leader identity or a follower identity if they so desire. This theoretically allows for the leader identity construction process to be applied to a wide range of individuals rather than those already occupying a leadership role within an organizational setting. This is an important consideration in light of the fact that both leaders and followers can have influence in terms of organizational decision making, and that holding a leadership position is not a guarantee of being seen as a leader or thinking of oneself as a leader (DeRue, 2011; DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Additionally, there may even be situations in which viewing leaders from a hierarchical perspective may limit our ability to understand how leadership comes about; for example, in the case of leaderless groups or cross-functional teams (DeRue, 2011). Thus, LICT attempts to reframe the identities of leader and follower not as identities based upon power structures, but as identities constructed through social interaction, which are situated in context, mutually reinforcing, and fluid, and which ultimately enable leadership to take place.

LICT reframes leadership by conceptualizing as more than just an influence process. Rather, leadership within the context of LICT is reframed such that what facilitates the leadership process is the claiming and granting of leader and follower identities and the subsequent clarity that this process brings to individuals' roles in a given situation. This is a more dynamic conceptualization of leadership as fundamentally an identity construction process that takes place over time and across situations in which identities are diffuse, distributed, and co-constructed through social interaction (Carroll & Levy, 2010; Collinson, 2005; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Gronn, 2002; Marchiondo et al., 2015; Humphreys et al., 2015). Furthermore, this conceptualization of leadership as a social process suggests that there is some degree of social construction to leadership and to the construction of leader and follower identities (Carroll & Levy, 2010; Fairhurst & Grant, 2010).

Finally, according to LICT, leader and follower identities are thought to be claimed and granted in a reciprocal fashion, such that claiming one identity leads to the claiming of the complementary identity. Making a claim for a leader identity in and of itself will not lead to the construction of a leader identity. According to LICT, individuals must also have their claims for a leader identity granted by others. Therefore, in order for an identity to be negotiated effectively, it is theorized that individuals will likely need to make a number of claims for a leader identity. However, in order for the claiming and granting process to continue and in order to sufficiently negotiate who is making claims for a leader identity and who is acting as a follower, individuals granting a leader identity must also be granted a follower identity.

In this way, making a grant of a leader identity also serves as a claim for a follower identity. This back and forth of claiming and granting of leader and follower identity is how the reciprocal nature of the leader identity construction process takes place. For example, in a given situation, if an individual makes a claim for a leader identity and is granted this claim by another teammate, this teammate is not just granting a leader identity claim, they are also making a claim for a follower identity. In order for the process to continue, the individual who made the initial claim for a leader identity must now grant their teammate's claim for a follower identity. In this way, leader and follower identities are mutually reinforcing. Importantly, this reinforcing and reciprocal process helps to bring clarity and greater acceptance of the right of an individual who is constructed as a leader to exert influence over other individuals who are constructed as followers (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). This section has outlined the basic underlying assumptions of LICT. The next two sections will outline in greater detail the identity claiming and granting process according to LICT, before moving on to the discussion of the additional elements of the theory.

### 3.2.2. Identity claims

According to LICT, leader and follower identities are constructed, in part, through what is known as an identity claim. The concept of identity claims has been present in the identity and management literatures for some time and has been applied in a variety of ways (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Ashforth & Mael, 1996; Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Glynn, 2000). The fact that identity claims are a well-established means of identity construction brings some measure of grounding of LICT into the identity literature. However, LICT is perhaps one of the best theories in terms of actually incorporating this component successfully as a means of understanding how individuals construct a leader identity. As outlined by DeRue and Ashford (2010), “claiming refers to the actions people take to assert their identity as either a leader or a follower” (p.631). Claiming is thought to take place through verbal and/or nonverbal acts and through either direct and/or indirect means or some combination thereof. Examples of making a direct verbal claim for a leader identity could be making statements such as “I am a leader”, or “I can take the lead on this project” or other statements consistent with being a leader. Examples of indirect nonverbal claims for leader identity could be sitting at the head of a table or dressing in a way that is consistent with other organizational leaders. An example of making a direct verbal claim for a follower identity could be verbally agreeing to follow someone’s suggested course of action. An example of an indirect nonverbal claim for a follower identity could be not engaging in the decision making of the team by sitting quietly during team discussions.

Additionally, according to LICT, the claiming process will likely need to take place across multiple claims and during multiple interactions. Although it is possible that an individual could make a claim and have their claim granted in the first instance, it is much more likely that individuals will need to make more than one claim and will perhaps need to make these multiple claims across different interactions with the same individuals or same group of individuals. Therefore, the claiming process has a temporal element. Grants of an identity can come before any claims are made, and in fact, claims can be initiated as a result of a grant occurring first.

### 3.2.3. Identity grants

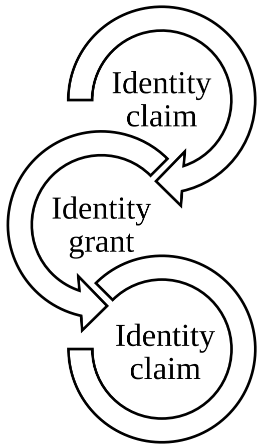
In addition to making claims for an identity, in order for the identity construction process to occur and continue, individuals need to have their claims granted by others. As outlined by DeRue and Ashford (2010). “granting refers to actions that a person takes to bestow a leader or follower identity to another person” (p.631). Furthermore, just as claims for an identity can be made through verbal and nonverbal means and through direct and indirect means, so too can grants. An example of a direct verbal grant could be an individual making statements affirming a leader identity, such as “you take control of this project” or “you can lead on this one new phase of the project”. An example of an indirect grant of a leader identity could be an individual deferring to another, to make decisions on behalf of a group. Another example of an indirect grant could be allowing another individual to talk more during group interactions or allowing others to make suggestions and holding back from making one’s own suggestions on what one thinks the group should do.

As noted in the previous section, grants can come before claims and therefore could initiate the identity construction process. For example, during a group meeting, an individual could say to another group member that they remember that the other person has some expertise in a specific area and should therefore take the lead on the project. In this case, the first individual has granted the other person a leader identity without a claim for a leader identity having to be made first. Furthermore, in this particular example, granting another person a leader identity in the first instance is also an indirect claim for a follower identity, because the individual is offering to follow the lead of the other person, and therefore acting as a follower in this instance. Granting may even come from non-group members. For example, a non-group member asking for clarification or instructions from a specific individual they view as a leader, rather than making an open question to the group as a whole. Granting can even occur at the level of the organization. For example, an organization giving one of their employees an award for leadership could be understood as a grant of a leader identity by the organization.

### 3.2.4. Positive identity spirals

Due to the reciprocal and mutually reinforcing nature of the leader identity construction process, spirals of identity claiming and granting are likely to occur. In a positive identity spiral, an individual makes claims for an identity and receives grants of this identity from others. This same individual then continues to make further claims because their initial claim was rewarded with a grant. In this way, claims that are granted are likely to lead to further claiming and granting cycles. These cycles of claiming and granting help propel the individual through their leader identity construction process such that over time, they begin to think of themselves as a leader (DeRue & Ashford, 2010).

*Figure 1: Positive identity spiral*




Previous work by Day and Sin (2011) and Day, Harrison and Halpin (2012) proposes that leader development may work in cyclical patterns, such that successful development may enable the individual to continue to work towards their leader development. Identity spirals are thought to work in a similar way to the development spirals proposed by Day and Sin (2011) and Day, Harrison and Halpin (2012), such that success in claiming an identity will spur the individual on to make further claims and likely receive further grants, resulting in identity construction.

### 3.2.5. Negative identity spirals

Negative identity spirals are thought to occur when one's claims for an identity are not granted, or granted inconsistently, resulting in the individual ceasing to make further identity claims. For example, if an individual makes a claim for a leader identity, and their claim is rejected, they may be less likely to make further claims in an effort to continue the identity construction process. However, if further claims continue not to be granted, it is possible, if not likely that they will stop making claims. In this scenario, it is possible for an individual to make a claim for a leader identity, have this claim rejected and end their claiming at this point. Negative identity spirals may prevent an individual from constructing a leader identity, because they effectively end the process before it can result in the internalization of an identity. However, it is unclear what the final outcome would be in this regard. It remains unexplained by LICT what consequences an individual can expect if their identity claims are not granted, other than to say that individuals will likely stop making claims. However, there are other considerations in regard to the claiming and granting process.

### 3.2.6. Individual internalization, relational recognition and collective endorsement

LICT proposes a conception of leadership identity (e.g. leader identity, follower identity) that spans across levels of self-construal. According to Brewer and Gardner (1996), there are three levels of self-conception: personal, relational and collective. They propose that identities can be conceptualized across any of these three levels. Chang and Johnson (2010) argue that the current focus in the identity literature is to view identity from only one level, mostly the collective level. They argue that the two other levels (personal and relational) have not received the same level of research interest. LICT conceptualizes the leader identity construction process as incorporating all three levels of identity, thus taking a multi-level approach to identity construction. However, the terms they use differ from those of Brewer and Gardner (1996). LICT proposes three elements to the identity construction process: individual internalization, relational recognition and collective endorsement.

Individual internalization involves the creation of new aspects of the self that relate to the leader sub-identity (Hall, 2004). It is argued that the designation of these personal attributes related to being a leader are not simply the result of cognitive intra-individual assessments, but are in fact embedded in the specific context in which the leader identity is asserted and ascertained, through the course of social interaction (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Therefore, identity internalization is not simply a cognitive process. It is a social process whereby individuals, through social interaction, come to understand their role in a given social process and come to identify themselves as such.

Further, when two individuals agree on each other’s identities such that each one recognizes their own identity and the identity of the other person and they have sufficiently negotiated their identities between each other, this leads to what is known as relational recognition. Relational recognition can occur, for example, if an individual makes a claim for a leader identity and another team member supports this claim by granting it and is then also granted a follower identity by the other individual. In this case, both parties have established their own identity and that of the other person as well. Finally, according to LICT, collective endorsement occurs when one is viewed within the broader social or organizational context as being part of a particular social group (i.e. as a leader or follower). DeRue and Ashford (2010) argue that the leadership identity construction process will be most successful when all three of these elements are achieved, such that an individual’s identity is internalized at the individual level, relationally recognized and collectively endorsed.

## 3.3. The reciprocal nature of identity construction

### 3.3.1. Visibility, clarity and credibility

Drawing from the information processing literature (Daft & Lengel, 1986), DeRue and Ashford (2010) propose that the visibility, clarity, and credibility of claims and grants are important. They suggest that claims and grants of a leader (or follower) identity are more likely to be reciprocally granted or spur claims when they are clear, credible and visible within a broader social context. The example that DeRue and Ashford (2010) give is an individual being elected through public elections during a meeting. This grant of a leader identity is visible because it occurred in public. Further, it is credible because it occurred through popular vote, and because it is representative of the overall group who conducted the vote. Thus, clear claims and grants create transparency in terms of how individuals see themselves and how others see them. Additionally, highly visible grants of an identity may increase the likelihood that others will also feel confident in granting the focal individual their claim. Further, claims and grants need to be sufficiently credible. Thus, it is argued that the clarity, credibility and visibility of identity claims and grants enhance the likelihood that claims of an identity will be granted and that grants of leader or follower identity will be reciprocated with supportive claims.

The previous sections have outlined the work of constructing a leader identity and have focused on providing details regarding the identity construction process. However, DeRue and Ashford (2010) propose that there may be additional elements that have an impact in terms of how or when individuals might make claims/grants or reciprocate with claims/grants. Although these additional elements are not fundamental to the identity construction process, they do provide additional clarity regarding the boundary conditions around the process. The following sections will outline these additional elements.

### 3.3.2. Leadership-structure schemas

In line with the broader leadership literature (Bedeian & Hunt, 2006), DeRue and Ashford (2010) propose that individuals differ in their conceptualizations of leadership such that some individuals believe leadership to be hierarchal and the purview of a single individual in a given situation. Conversely, other individuals may perceive that it is possible for leadership to be distributed and mutually enacted across a group of individuals. LICT proposes that individual differences in the conception of leadership structures may impact when claims are reciprocated with grants and when grants are reciprocated with claims. It may be the case then that if an individual conceives leadership to be the purview of a single individual, yet multiple individuals are making simultaneous claims for a leader identity in a given setting, the focal individual may only grant a leader identity to one individual, rather than to everyone who makes a claim. Similarly, if an individual conceives leadership to be distributed, they may be more willing to grant multiple claims for a leader identity to many different individuals, in a given situation.

Additionally, when individuals align in terms of their conceptions of leadership structures such that multiple individuals in a group all conceive leadership to be the role of a single individual or distributed among several or many leaders, this may bring clarity to the claiming and granting process such that once a claim or claims for a leader identity are made, it is clear in what way it/they should be granted (i.e. granted to a single individual or multiple individuals). However, if there is no convergence in how individuals in a group conceive leadership structures to be, this may lead to confusion and tension in the claiming and granting processes. This type of situation may reduce the likelihood that the identity construction can occur successfully.

3.3.3. History of claims and grants

Sociological theories of role enactment propose that the way in which people enacted their roles in the past, in relation to others, strongly influences how they will enact their roles in the future (Turner, 1978). DeRue and Ashford (2010) propose that a previous history of reciprocal and reinforcing claims and grants between individuals will carry through to future claims and grants. They suggest that this may be especially true if the situation or context is fairly consistent and stable over time. For example, an individual may have a reputation as a leader that carries over into new contexts. The implications of this history of claiming and granting could be that once an individual has granted another a follower identity, they may be inclined to do the same in another context. Similarly, if an individual has been granted a leader identity in one context, it may be the case that they continue to be granted a leader identity in future contexts from the same individuals who previously granted them their leader identity. The reinforcing nature of these historical claims and grants lends an element of habituation to the identity construction process, which may lead to a more coherent and enduring leader-follower relationship.

## 3.4. When will people claim or grant?

### 3.4.1. Implicit theories of leadership

According to implicit theories of leadership, individuals develop assumptions regarding what a leader or follower look like and how leadership unfolds in groups, and these assumptions are in part the result of previous interactions with leaders (Epitropaki et al., 2013; Lord & Alliger, 1985; Schyns, 2006). The same assumptions also hold true for followers and followership, according to implicit theories of followership (Sy, 2010; Uhl-Bien at al., 2014). According to DeRue and Ashford (2010), previous research suggests that depending upon how well a target individual matches one’s implicit theory of what a leader or follower is, they are more or less likely to attribute leadership or followership to the target individual. DeRue and Ashford (2010) take this premise a step further by suggesting that this reliance on implicit theories of leadership and followership creates beliefs about what is leadership or followership which in turn may prompt granting behaviours. They argue that based on these implicit theories, if a target individual matches one’s implicit leadership theory, then they are more likely to grant the target individual a leader identity. The same would hold true for implicit theories of followership. If a target individual matches one’s implicit theory of followership, this may prompt granting to occur. DeRue and Ashford

(2010) suggest that one possible explanation for why grants occur before claims for an identity have been made could be that other individuals perceive behaviours or attributes of a target individual as matching their implicit theories of leadership or followership, thus promoting them to grant the target individual the corresponding identity.

Similarly, the same principle of implicit leadership or followership theories can also prompt claiming behaviours. If an individual perceives that their individual attributes align with their implicit theory of what a leader or follower is, this can prompt claiming of said identity. DeRue and Ashford (2010) therefore argue that the more consistency people see between their own attributes and their implicit theories of leadership or followership, the more likely they will be to make claims for a leader or follower identity. They also argue that the more consistency people perceive between other attributes and their own implicit theories of leadership or followership, the more likely they are to grant a leader or follower identity. However, it is worth noting that implicit theories of leadership or followership are viewed as mechanisms that might prompt claiming and granting behaviours to take place, but they are not the only driving forces behind claiming and granting. The possible reasons for claiming or granting taking place are manifold. DeRue and Ashford (2010) simply suggest that implicit theories may be one of many driving forces behind the claiming and granting process.

### 3.4.2. Motivational risks and rewards

Another possible driver of claiming and granting behaviours could be the motivational risks and rewards of making a claim or grant of an identity. DeRue and Ashford (2010) draw from the motivation literature (Ratner & Miller, 2001) to propose that individuals may perceive certain rewards in making claims for an identity or granting an identity, and that they may also perceive risks in claiming and granting an identity. For example, they propose that it may be the case that an individual may perceive the leader identity as holding certain socially valued rewards such as promotion power, status or other instrumental rewards or may be a valued representation of the ideal self, and therefore serves as a personal or even image-based reward. In this case, the individual may perceive that making claims for a leader identity might be rewarding to them, thus prompting them to make claims. DeRue and Ashford (2010) also draw from the literature on provisional selves (Ibarra, 1999) to suggest that individuals might experiment with an identity as a way of finding out if the identity is a good fit for them. If these identity experiments are then rewarded with grants, this may motivate the individual to continue making claims for this identity, thus spurring the identity construction process on. Taking these arguments together, DeRue and Ashford (2010) propose that the more individuals perceive instrumental, intrapersonal, and image rewards associated with leadership, the more likely they will be to make claims for a leader identity and the less likely they will be to claim a follower identity. The more risks they perceive as being associated with leadership, the less likely they will be to make claims for a leader identity and the more likely they will be to make claims for a follower identity.

### 3.4.3. Institutional structures

DeRue and Ashford (2010) contextualize the identity construction process as taking place within organizations. Given that the organization is the site of this process, consideration of organizational structures must be considered in the construction of a leader or follower identity. Consistent with the reciprocal nature of the identity construction process proposed by LICT, formal organizational structures may play a role in the claiming and granting process. DeRue and Ashford (2010) propose that holding an organizational leadership role may represent a previous history of making claims for a leader identity and may therefore represent an institutional grant of a leader identity conveyed through a formal organizational structure, which other group members recognize and operate within. This recognition may in turn prompt others to continue to grant a leader identity to the organizationally recognized individual. This organizational position may also prompt the leader to continue to make claims for a leader identity. Thus, as noted before, although holding an organizational leadership position is not a prerequisite for being able to make claims for a leader identity, having an organizational leadership position can help to sustain the claiming and granting process, thus facilitating the identity construction process.

### 3.6. Defining social interaction

At the core of LICT is the understanding that the construction of a leader identity takes place through social interaction. The role of social interaction in the construction of identities has only recently begun to be investigated in terms of its importance for identity construction (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Social interaction is a key component of social construction, because it is through social interaction that the objective reality we subjectively experience is communicated and the social structures necessary for maintaining the collective rendering of reality are maintained. Therefore, in order to understand how individuals come to create the social relationships necessary for communicating reality, it is important to understand what social interaction is, as it is only through social interaction and communication that individuals can come together to construct shared meanings (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). According to McCall and Simmons (1978), social interaction occurs any time there are reciprocal interactions between two individuals. They propose that "whenever a relationship of deterministic influence between two events cannot be resolved into a simple function of one but instead must be treated as a *joint* function as a mutual or reciprocal influence, we have a case of interaction" (p.46). Social interaction is most often conceptualized as taking place between two or more individuals who are engaged in a task with the goal of accomplishing some result that can only be produced through interaction with others; for example, two friends deciding upon which movie to watch, a couple deciding who will do the cooking for the next meal, or two organizational departments working together to launch a new product (Lawler, 2003). Implicit in this definition of social interaction is the understanding that within the interaction, all parties are aware of each other and orient their behaviour toward each other.

Although there are several different forms or classification of interaction according to McCall (2003), it is the reciprocal form of interaction that is the focus of the theoretical framework of this thesis. This form of interaction involves at least two individuals acting upon each other in a reciprocal fashion (McCall, 2003). However, McCall (2003) also outlines the difference between other forms of interaction, such as gathering-based interaction, from organizational forms of interaction. Organizations are social structures and work in such a way as to make clear who each individual is in relation to others.

Thus, regardless of the context through which individuals in an organization may interact, their relative position to each other does not often need to be made clear before an interaction can begin. However, as McCall (2003) points out, organizational standing does not mean that identities cannot be further negotiated between individuals during social interaction. Although organizational structure designates who one is and what one does within the organizational setting, there may still be room for further identity construction within the organizational setting, as long as organizational boundaries allow for it. This would suggest that there may be certain, as yet unknown implications for leader identity construction if organizational structures place some forms of restriction upon individual identity.

### 3.7. Previous research on Leadership Identity Construction Theory

As of March 2018, a Google Scholar search for the keywords “leadership identity construction theory” returned over one million four hundred thousand results. Objectively, not all one million plus results have anything to do with LICT. However, this does suggest that besides the theory itself, the topic of leadership and identity are quite significant search terms. Using StarPlus and Google Scholar, further searches of journal articles show that over 600 papers have cited the original work of DeRue and Ashford (2010). A review of the results that directly engage with LICT in some way rather than just having the DeRue and Ashford (2010) citation in their bibliography suggests that there is an ever-growing body of research applying LICT or in some way drawing upon it to inform our understanding of how leadership takes place or how individuals construct an identity as a leader. For example, LICT has been used to inform broader research agendas on leader emergence research (Carnabuci, Emery & Brinberg, 2018; DeRue, Nahrgang & Ashford, 2015) as well as leadership training and development (Ely, Ibarra & Kolb, 2011), identity (Hannah, Lord & Pearce, 2011; Hammond, Clapp-Smith & Palanski, 2017; Karelaia & Guillén, 2014; Selenko, Berkers, Carter, Woods, Otto, Urbach & De Witte, 2018) and followership (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), as well as to inform the theory and practice of leadership in general (Dinh et al., 2014; Epitropaki et al., 2017; Klenke, 2016; Öç & Bashshur, 2013). Furthermore, the literature that engages with LICT suggests that researchers have applied LICT in both quantitative (Chiaburu, Smith, Wang & Zimmerman, 2014; Humphreys et al., 2015; Johnson et al., 2012; Marchiondo et al., 2015) and qualitative research areas (Coultas, Salas & Kaiser, 2015; Myers, 2013; Moorosi, 2014; Wooten, 2016). LICT is also finding prominence in both the psychology and management literatures (Croft, Currie & Lockett, 2015; Chiaburu, Smith, Wang & Zimmerman, 2014; Dinh & Lord, 2012; Fotaki, Long, Schwartz, Petriglieri & Stein, 2012).

The following section will provide a more in-depth review of the studies published over the past five years or so that have utilized LICT as the primary theoretical framework, in order to show the different ways this theory has been applied thus far, the conclusions and outcomes that have come out of these studies, and what insights we can glean from these, in terms of the theory. It should be understood that only articles written in English were reviewed. These studies include both qualitative and quantitative approaches and will therefore be broken up and combined according to their approach. The first study to be reviewed is a study by Myers (2013). This study was conducted as a qualitative interview study in which Myers (2013) sought to investigate the mechanisms of collective endorsement of a leader identity. It framed the collective endorsement of a leader identity as taking place through being selected or not being selected for an organizational “high potential program”. Myers (2013) proposed that being selected for this programme signalled to the individual that they were viewed as a leader at the organizational level and that this acted as a form of collective endorsement of the individual as a leader within the wider organizational context. This study makes a good contribution to LICT by illustrating the wider process through which individuals can receive grants of a leader identity at the organizational level, which then translate into a form of collective organizational level endorsement of the individual’s identity as a leader.

Findings from this study suggest that having one’s leader identity collectively endorsed aids in the overall leader identity construction process. Another example of a study utilizing LICT is one that sought to understand leader identity construction as it takes place though a leader development programme. This study conducted by Moorosi (2014) conceptualized leader development as an identity transition. Moorosi (2014) suggests that in order to construct a leader identity, one needs to develop as a leader as well, and vice versa. This study suggests that the same cognitive functions necessary for developing as a leader may activate and reinforce one’s identity as a leader. The contribution of this study is that it helps to bring into focus the parallels between leader identity construction and development as a leader. This study suggests that leader identity development and leader development are such interwoven processes that one cannot be separated from the other, and that development in one area intrinsically leads to development in the other.

Yet another study utilizing LICT is a qualitative study by Humphreys et al. (2015). In this study, Humphreys et al. (2015) applied LICT post hoc to explain how leadership was co-constructed in a university setting. The aim of this study was to address how the collective endorsement of a particular individual could lead to the construction of a leader identity. This study took a novel approach to its data by using existing secondary data in the form of historical records and interview transcripts. The study did not aim to empirically test LICT but did aim to answer the call of DeRue and Ashford (2010) for qualitative studies of their theory. Thus, this study provides a starting point for addressing LICT from a qualitative perspective, but does not engage with the larger identity construction process such as how identity claims and grants are made or why and how these may result in the internalization of a leader identity.

In terms of quantitative studies, a study by Marchiondo et al. (2015) aimed to test observers' perceptions of claiming and granting behaviours and the identity process. This study capitalized on the capacity of Amazon Mechanical Turk and was carried out in part through the use of virtual avatars acting out identity claims and grants. The study looked at a number of factors that might have a role in observers' perceptions of leader identity claiming and granting behaviours. For example, participants in one of the three studies were asked to rate how much influence they perceived each actor to have and then to rate the amount of interpersonal influence and competence they perceived individual avatars to have in a given leadership scenario. This study was an empirical test of the DeRue and Ashford (2010) model and provides support for LICT while at the same time providing evidence for the role observer perception may have in leader identity granting behaviours. The final paper that will be reviewed is an article by Coultas and Salas (2015). This paper applies LICT to the topic of executive coaching and identity and is the first study attempting to look at identity construction in coaches. In the study, the authors created a simulated coaching situation in a laboratory setting in order to gain further insight into the behaviours used by coaches (i.e. claiming and granting) in order to understand their relationship with coaching schemas and identity construction. They found that coach granting behaviours were positively correlated with increased levels of goal commitment and information processing. Overall, they found that executive coaching behaviour, such as claiming and granting a coaching identity, does play a role in the ability of the coach to gain commitment from the individual being coached, to change and to grow.

These studies highlight the diversity of approaches that have been used to investigate LICT. Interview studies, experimental studies, virtual, and non-virtual settings, are just a few of the methods that have been applied. In terms of findings, what can be taken away from these five studies is that claiming and granting behaviours seem to have application beyond leadership in terms of facilitating the construction of an identity. Secondly, it appears that collective endorsement of an identity may have an important role in the overall identity construction process, such that having one's identity collectively endorsed may have more profound implications for the identity construction process than just claiming and granting alone. Finally, what these studies help to reinforce is that LICT can be applied to both qualitative and quantitative studies, depending upon which aspects of the theory one choses to focus on, and depending upon one's particular research focus. This is an important point to bring out considering that the flexibility of a theory to be applied across different study contexts is important for the overall longevity of the theory itself, but also in terms of the possible findings that can result from a given theory.

However, the perhaps obvious limitation here is that there have been comparatively few studies that have engaged with LICT as the main theoretical framework. Therefore, although it seems from the overall review of the literature that leader identity construction as a theoretical concept is quite popular, there have been few researchers who have chosen to engage directly with LICT as a theory. This could be due to the fact that the theory is relatively new, and deals with a very specific topic, and is therefore unlikely to have much application outside of the narrow confines of leadership identity construction. Further, it should be noted that of the studies that have engaged with LICT, all of them have chosen to focus on one specific aspect of the theory rather than engaging with the broader theory. This could represent a larger issue with integrating all aspects of the theory in a single research project or it could be representative of larger issues with the theory overall. However, although there might be some limitations of the theory in terms of integration and applicability, in my opinion, this does not negate the application of this theory for the purposes of the research conducted in this thesis.

## 3.8. Conclusion

The goal of this chapter was to outline the theoretical framework informing this thesis. Leadership identity construction theory was chosen as the primary theory to inform this thesis due to the fact that it is a theory specifically tailored to the study of identity and leadership. According to LICT, leader identities are reciprocally claimed and granted, resulting in the construction of a leader identity over time. However, the fit of the theory to the research focus was not the only consideration when choosing this theory. Another consideration was that it also acknowledges the social, reciprocal, and mutually reinforcing properties of the leader and follower identity construction relationship, which is important given the fact that this thesis takes a social constructionist perspective. Additionally, this theory was chosen in part because its roots are in identity work. I personally appreciate the individual agency that identity work brings to the construction of a leader identity and I believe that the claiming and granting of identities is representative of my own experience of identity construction, which might explain to some degree my initial attraction to this theory. Therefore, because LICT helps to meet the research goals of this thesis by providing a framework by means of which to study leadership and identity and because I feel it is representative of how identities are constructed in real life, this theory is a good fit for this thesis.

# Chapter 4: Methodology and methods

## 4.1. Introduction

The aim of this thesis is twofold. Firstly, the primary aim is to understand how individuals construct a leader identity. Secondly, this thesis also aims to understand the role that other people have in this process. Thus, for the purpose of meeting these two aims, two studies were undertaken. In the first study, 28 student participants, spread across six teams, were video and audio recorded over the course of a semester as they engaged in a team project. The video and audio recordings were used to document how each team negotiated their leadership roles in order to construct their identities as leaders and followers. The videos from this study were analysed using a method known as interaction analysis (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). The second study consists of 50 semi-structured interviews that were conducted with individuals working in organizations. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the leader identity construction process from a first-hand account of individuals who had gone through or were going through the process. The interviews were analysed using a qualitative method known as thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006). This thesis is qualitative in nature and takes a social constructionist perspective in order to answer the three research questions outlined in chapter one, using the data from the two studies outlined above. The research questions of this thesis are as follows.

1. What kinds of experience, relationship and interaction contribute to the construction of a leader identity?
2. What are the implications for leader identity construction in terms of who supports or does not support one's leader identity?
3. What role do individuals perceive their organization as having in their leader identity construction process?

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methodological perspective of this thesis as well as provide an understanding of the methods employed in the collection and analysis of this thesis' data. In this regard, this chapter will begin by introducing the concept of qualitative research and how this differs from quantitative research, before moving on to a brief discussion of why qualitative methods were chosen for this thesis. Next, the paradigm that informs this thesis will be discussed. The chapter will also cover other details, including the methods of data collection and analysis, the sampling techniques that were used, ethical considerations, data management, issues of data trustworthiness, and reflexivity.

## 4.2. Overview of the qualitative and quantitative approaches to research

### 4.2.1. Qualitative investigation

Understanding the differences between qualitative and quantitative research is of paramount importance to how one designs and carries out one's research as well as the research goals that one sets out to achieve and the research questions one asks (Creswell, 1998). This thesis is qualitative in nature. Although qualitative studies of leadership are not particularly mainstream, they may still provide opportunities for valuable insights and rich detail (Bryman, 2004; Flick, von Kardoff & Steinke, 2004). This means that before discussing how the research for this thesis was carried out, a discussion of what qualitative research is and how it is defined must be presented. Creswell (1994) defines qualitative research as "an inquiry process of a social or human problem based on building a wholistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting" (pp. 1-2). According to Yılmaz (2013), qualitative research is "an emergent, inductive, interpretive and naturalistic approach to the study of people, cases, phenomena, social situations and processes in their natural settings in order to reveal in descriptive terms the meanings that people attach to their experiences of the world" (p. 312). Both of these definitions hit upon a similar understanding of qualitative research as encompassing inductive, subjective and interpretive means of gathering and analysing data, locating the site of qualitative data collection in the natural settings in which the phenomena of investigation take place. Thus, it is from these two definitions that this thesis works as a starting point to clarify how and why this thesis is qualitative in nature.

Qualitative research tends to be built upon the epistemological assumption that psychological and social phenomena are inherently complex and interwoven, to the point that pulling them apart into measurable variables is impossible, or difficult at best. (Bryman, 1984; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Furthermore, this perspective argues that human behaviour is not "caused by uniform laws of nature but by sentient, creative subjects imbued with distinctive understandings of the world in which they live and act" (Weinberg, 2014, p.49). From this epistemological perspective, knowledge is obtained through an in-depth description of said phenomena and is done so from the perspective of the individuals involved, because it is believed that they themselves are the producers of said phenomena (Bryman, 1984). The mutual influence that a researcher and their research respondents have on each other is also a hallmark of qualitative research. Qualitative inquiry is predicated on the epistemological assumption that any knowledge generated is the result of the researcher's interpretation of the research respondents' understanding of the phenomena of interest rather than the result of objective observation (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993). Ontologically, qualitative inquiry assumes that reality is the product of social construction, rather than of a static reality (Weinberg, 2014), but more about this will be said in coming sections of this chapter.

Qualitative research encompasses the employment of a vast array of theoretical paradigms, methods, methodologies and research strategies. These include, but are not limited to, case studies, oral histories, participant observations, action research, ethnography, interviews and grounded theory, to name but a few (Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011;

Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Yılmaz, 2013). Sampling techniques in qualitative research are often concerned with securing a focused and highly relevant pool of respondents who can act as “key informants in the field” and are able to provide the information the researcher seeks (Suri, 2011, p.3). For this reason, qualitative research focuses on the applicability of the participants’ ability to provide the qualitative information the researcher needs. Furthermore, qualitative research strives to gather saturated and highly detailed participant accounts, which place significant time demands on the researcher to collect, collate, and analyse the data. This data-rich and time-consuming aspect of qualitative data is one reason why sample sizes in qualitative research tend to be small in number. However, the small sample size does not necessarily mean that the quantity of data collected will also be small. As Creswell (1998) points out, due to the richness of qualitative data, the quantity of data is often quite great in spite of the small sample sizes.

### 4.2.2. Quantitative inquiry

Quantitative research in the context of the social sciences can be defined as “a type of empirical research into a social phenomenon or human problem, testing a theory consisting of variables which are measured with numbers and analysed with statistics in order to determine if the theory explains or predicts phenomena of interest” (Yılmaz, 2013, p.311). The epistemological assumptions underpinning quantitative research are that psychological and social phenomena can be investigated through objective means and that these same phenomena are governed by universal laws. Ontologically, it assumes a static reality that is measurable and analysable, especially through the use of statistical means (Creswell, 1994; Creswell, 1998; Erlandson et al., 1993; Yılmaz, 2013). There is a wide range of methods, methodologies, and research strategies that can be employed in quantitative research, including but not limited to experimentation, randomized trials and survey studies.

Quantitative research generally employs probability sampling, which is the use of large representative sample sizes that are chosen through the use of random sampling techniques.

Another important difference between qualitative and quantitative research has to do with the goals or aims of the research (Creswell, 1998; Punch, 1998; Sogunro, 2002). The aim of qualitative research is different from that of quantitative research. When conducting qualitative research, the researcher is concerned with providing a description of the phenomenon of interest rather than the measurement thereof (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This description of said phenomenon can only occur by capturing the experience of the study participants through their own words and through the use of observation and interviews (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Silverman, 1993). The assumption from this perspective is that individuals are able to communicate their experiences and the meaning that these experiences lend to their interpretation and understanding of reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In contrast, quantitative research aims to predict, measure, and control phenomena of interest by identifying relevant variables and measuring them (Erlandson et al., 1993). In this way, the difference between qualitative and quantitative research is more than methodological. They differ in key philosophical assumptions regarding how knowledge is gained and what constitutes reality.

The aim of this thesis is to understand how individuals construct a leader identity and what role other individuals are perceived to have in this process. This thesis will therefore need to be able to tap into the experiences and self-definitions of the individual, as well as be able to account for the perceived role of others, and to document claiming and granting behaviours in the leader identity construction process, all of which point to a more qualitative approach to data collection, through the use of observation and participant accounts. Had the goal of this thesis been to predict certain outcomes in relation to leader identity or to understand how to control certain variables that lead to or in some way influence leader identity, then taking a quantitative approach would have been a more appropriate option.

### 4.3. The nature of reality - Social construction and the study of identity

The social theory underpinning this thesis is social construction. The conceptual resources that inform social constructionist thinking come from a wide variety of theoretical traditions, most notable of which are the theorizing of Hegel, Durkheim, Weber and Althusser, to name but a few (Althusser, 1971; Fisher & Chon, 1989). Durkheim contributed to constructionist thinking in part by outlining how certain things we take for granted as essential elements of our individual agency are in fact the product of collective thinking rather than an individual response to external stimuli (Durkheim, 1982). Althusser also contributed to social constructionist thinking through theorizing around the epistemological primacy of knowledge as a product of the dominant class. He proposed that those who control the means of production also control the mode of intellectual production (i.e. politics, religion, art, media and culture), and that through these modes of intellectual production, the ruling classes are able to promote their material interests. Thus, according to Althusser's ideological state apparatus, what we understand as reality is a construction of the narrative that best serves the dominant class (Althusser, 1971).

Later writings and theorizing from Bourdieu and Foucault also provided more contemporary contributions, especially regarding the use of discourse as a tool through which reality is constructed. Foucault (1972) proposed that reality is communicated and constructed through the use of discursive resources, thus predicating reality upon the cultural and historical understandings of language. All of these writers and many more have helped to build and refine how social construction is understood; however, Berger and Luckmann (1967) have often been credited with fleshing out what is most now commonly understood as social construction. In the most basic terms, social construction is based on the premise that reality is socially constructed, but what does this mean in ontological and epistemological terms?

Ontology is concerned with the “nature of reality and what there is to know about the world” (Richie, Lewis, McNaughton Nicholls & Ormston, 2014, p.4). When considering ontological issues, the main question centres around whether or not there is a reality that exists independently of human conception. At one end there is realism, which argues that an external reality exists independent of our beliefs or understanding (Richie et al., 2014). At the other end of this continuum is idealism, which argues that there is no external reality existing outside of our beliefs (Richie et al., 2014). There are of course variations on these themes regarding how strictly one believes these two positions to be true. For example, a positivist researcher might view reality from the naïve realism perspective, which argues that reality can be observed directly and accurately, while someone who adopts more of a weak social constructionist perspective, such as myself, might take a subtle idealism perspective, which argues that the social world is made up of representations constructed and shared by people in particular contexts (Hughes & Sharrock, 2016; Richie et al., 2014).

From this perspective, to say that something is socially constructed is “meant to convey that it is the product of specific sociohistorical or social interactional processes” (Weinberg, 2014, p.4). It also implies some sort of wilful and purposeful construction of social phenomena (Hruby, 2001). It is therefore no wonder that the ontological perspective of social constructionism proposes that all aspects of social reality, including identity and leadership, are socially defined and constructed through ongoing negotiations, agreements and actions within specific social and historical contexts (Gergen, 2015; Hacking, 1999; Sandberg, 2001). Drawing from the sociological branch of social construction, which is very much in line with the subtle idealism approach, Berger and Luckmann (1967) propose that reality originates in our thoughts and actions and is maintained as real through these same means. They argue that the “commonsense” world as we know it, is intersubjectively constructed and maintained. Thus, ontologically speaking our social world is constructed for certain purposes, and in the process of creating this social world, we humans externalize our ideas to the point where they become real. At this point, according to Burger and Luckmann (1967), they become objective, meaning that this process creates a shared world of objects of which we have a common understanding (Fopp, 2008). Thus, social reality is the product of the externalization of ideas that become shared as an objective understanding.

Epistemology is concerned with “ways of knowing and learning about the world” (Richie et al., 2014, p.6). Just as there are variations in how ontology is applied, researchers vary in how they locate themselves epistemologically, which has implications for how one’s research is conducted. One can take, for example, an inductive approach, which means building knowledge from the ground up, by looking for patterns from observations of the world. Conversely, taking a deductive approach means taking a top-down theory driven approach. Most qualitative research takes an inductive approach. The epistemological perspective of this thesis locates the site of knowledge regarding one’s leader identity in the interactional, relational and naturalistic space. In doing so, this thesis proposes that it is through social interaction and relationships with others that individuals carry out leadership and identity construction processes. This epistemological perspective frames leaders, followers and other organizational actors as active participants in both the leadership process and in the leader identity construction process. Furthermore, a key assumption of social construction is that “human experience of the world is always mediated by the socially inherited meanings actors actively confer on it” (Weinberg, 2014, p.7). This to me suggests that in addition to addressing reality, the setting and context in which this reality is constructed must also be addressed.

## 4.4. Qualitative sampling

When considering how to select one's sample in conducting qualitative research, the researcher should aim to employ sampling techniques that allow for purposive samples rather than employing the probability sampling techniques utilized for quantitative research (Coyne, 1997; Koerber & McMichael, 2008; Marshall, 1996; Patton, 2002). Purposive sampling enables the researcher to be able to gain access to "key informants in the field" who can provide the information the researcher seeks (Suri, 2011, p.3). Patton (2002) argues that purposive sampling is one of the distinguishing elements of qualitative research. This is because "the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting *information-rich* cases for study in depth" (emphasis in original text, Patton, 2002, p.273). Information-rich cases allow the researcher to gain deep insights into the topic under research rather than producing the broad generalizations that are the goal of employing probability sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used for both studies in this thesis to select study participants who fulfilled the requirements of each study and which would allow me to gather the necessary type of data.

## 4.5. Overview of research programme and rationale

As noted previously, the data for this thesis was collected from two studies. There were very specific reasons why these two studies were needed in order to collect the data necessary to answer the research questions of this thesis. Initially, I set out to collect data on leader identity construction through video methods. My intention was to video and audio record teams and collect additional data from the participants regarding their perceptions of leadership and followership in the teams. However, when I put the ethics application through for the study, the ethics board felt that due to the nature of video data, it might cause psychological harm to the participants for me to collect personal data which could be linked back to individual participants, which meant that I could not collect data regarding individual perceptions of leadership in the teams as I intended. The ethics board felt that in order to protect the participants, it was important to maintain a high level of anonymity and therefore no personal or identifiable details should be collected which could in some way be linked back to the participants, including the collection of personal perceptions of leadership in the teams, as this would require that the participants identify team members individually. In order to obtain approval from the ethics board to conduct the video study, I had to agree not to collect any individual data (including names or other identifiable information) from the participants. At the time, I felt under pressure to start data collection and felt that I could still make use of the video data without gathering additional data from the participants. I therefore agreed to the terms set out by the ethics board in order to obtain ethical approval. In retrospect, had I had more time and more resources, I would have challenged this decision, but I did the best I could at the time.

After the initial video study was completed in December 2016, I made significant attempts to conduct a second video study with the intention that I would be able to build on the previous study and be able to collect the data I wanted but could not get in the first video study. I had several meetings with the Sheffield Leader Programme to try to gain access to teams for this purpose. However, they would only give me permission to contact individuals who were in the programme to conduct interviews. Several other attempts to gain access to teams to conduct video studies also did not materialize. I therefore decided that I needed to change course and move my research in a different direction in order to keep my PhD moving forward and make progress. For this reason, I began to rethink my study aims and reformulated my research agenda and decided to start conducting interviews. I felt that interviews would allow me to gain access to the type of personal insight and reflection on leadership and identity that I was unable to collect in the video study due to the restrictions imposed on me by the ethics board. I acknowledge that this shift was a significant change in my initial study focus, but given the challenges and the timeframe in which I was working, I decided it was best to adapt and move on.

In terms of how these two studies answer the research questions of this thesis, both studies answer research questions one and two, but in arguably different ways and to different degrees. For example, given that the nature of research question one is to investigate the types of relationship, interaction and experience that contribute to the construction of a leader identity, study one answered this question by providing micro level data that demonstrates how leader and follower relationships are formed. It also shows how previous experiences lend themselves to enabling individuals to make claims for a leader identity. Perhaps most notably, study one provides significant interaction data that highlights what types of interaction are facilitative of leader identity construction. Additionally, the data from study one is illustrative of how support or lack of support from other people is facilitative of identity construction.

Furthermore, in terms of study two, this study answers research question one by providing in-depth insights into the types of relationship, interaction and experience that are facilitative of leader identity construction. This was especially achieved through the reflective properties of the interviews, which allowed participants to provide insights into how their experiences and relationships were linked to their leader identity construction. In regard to question two, study two was well suited to being able to provide insights into how support or lack thereof from others contributed to the leader identity construction process. This study especially provided insights that helped to bring to light the role of others beyond simply claiming or granting identities.

Additionally, as noted in chapter one, research question three was an emergent question that arose from the interview data. Therefore, this question is only really answered through the interview data. In this way, although I did make a course correction very early on in terms of how I collected my research data, both studies contribute to answering the bulk of the research questions. I am also grateful that I was able to shift my research and conduct interviews because of the valuable insights that I gained from this data regarding the role of organizations in leader identity construction. Had I continued to focus on the micro level details of the video studies, I feel that I would have missed this significant contribution.

In terms of how the two studies connect, as noted in chapter one, studies one and two feed into each other by providing insights regarding leader identity construction at different points in time (e.g. young adults, established professionals) while also providing a multi-level analysis through the micro level video data of study one and meso level life experience and organizational level detail of study two. In this way, studies one and two bring different levels of analysis and perspective to the study of leader identity while at the same time providing complementary data that enables me to provide rich and detailed insights. More details regarding the specific methods and data analysis techniques used in this thesis will be outlined in the coming sections of this chapter, along with details regarding the study participants, and other considerations for each study. These details will first be presented in relationship to study one, followed by study two.

## 4.6. Study one - Identity construction in team settings

### 4.6.1. Participant recruitment and participants

Because I wanted to document the real time identity construction process of individuals, I decided that the best way to go about this was to locate my data collection in a setting that would allow this type of process to occur. I therefore decided to attempt to gain access to teams or groups of individuals in which leadership would be needed or would occur as a result of their situation (e.g. due to a team project). With the help of one of my PhD supervisors, I was put in contact with one of the programme directors of an entrepreneurship program for undergraduate students at a large university in England. I first met with the assistant programme director, and then with the programme director and assistant programme director to discuss how my data collection fit with their entrepreneurship programme. After the meeting, it was agreed that I would be given access to the full cohort of students. I was then allowed to come in to the class during the first team meeting and ask for permission to record the teams. All of the students in the cohort were emailed the study information sheet two weeks prior to me coming into the class. On the day that I came in, I again gave out a copy of the information sheet and all other relevant ethics-related paperwork to the students before asking for consent for participation. The ethical considerations associated with this process will be outlined in greater detail in a coming section.

The participants of this study were 28 undergraduate students who were arranged into six teams by the programme coordinators. The teams were structured according to each person's interest in a particular social issue, so that individuals with similar interests in a particular social issue were placed into the same team. No roles or titles were assigned to the team members by the programme coordinators, so that each team was allowed to negotiate and establish their own leadership roles. Eighteen males participated in the study while only 10 females participated. Only one team had an even number of males and females, while all other teams had males and females in varying numbers. Due to concerns from the ethics board, no further demographic data was collected from the participants. The ethics board felt that asking for personal information would cause undue psychological harm, and in consideration of the fact that I did not have any hypothetical need for this additional data, I was asked not to collect demographic data from the participants, and I complied with this suggestion.

4.6.2. Data collection - Video data

Video as a method is relatively new in comparison to other qualitative methods available to researchers (Harris, 2016). This is due to the fact that until fairly recently, it was difficult for most researchers to gain access to affordable and reliable video recording equipment (Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010; Rowland, Ignacio Jr & de Moya, 2016). Video as a method has been utilized across the social sciences and has been applied from diverse epistemological perspectives (Harris; 2016; Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff, 2010; Mondada, 2008). The epistemological perspective in which video is applied in this thesis stems from the naturalist approach, which proposes that in order to understand social phenomena such as leadership and identity construction processes, one must be able to capture these processes in the natural settings in which they take place, and therefore must apply methods that are capable of capturing these naturally occurring processes (Mondada, 2006; Mondada, 2008). Thus, when adopting this naturalist approach, video methods become the principal tool to capture the sequential and temporal nature of these processes. However, there have been comparatively few studies that have attempted to employ video methods in order to study the leadership process, as evidenced by the relatively small number of published articles citing video methods as their primary method of investigation. However, even though it remains an underutilized method at this point in time, there are researchers who are opening up to the use of video as a method of researching leadership (e.g. Gerpott et al., in press).

Examples of previous research that has utilized video methods to study leadership include studies that have looked at team processes and team leadership, leadership and team dynamics, surgeons’ use of leadership in the operating room, and distributed leadership in teaching teams (Cooper & Wakelam, 1999; Scribner, Sawyer, Watson & Myers, 2007; Parker, Flin, McKinley & Yule, 2014; Xiao, Seagull, Mackenzie & Klein, 2004). As these examples show, video methods are particularly well suited for capturing the leadership process as it naturally occurs in teams and groups of individuals working together. Furthermore, video as a method is a form of observational research, firmly positioning it as a suitable method of data collection for qualitative research (Silverman, 1993).

Although video has been and can be used for a variety of research agendas, the use of video as a method in this thesis is drawn from a specific methodological framework that prioritizes the situated and interactional components of human interaction as they relate to the construction of identity and the leadership process. From this perspective, video is used as a tool to capture the everyday mundane events that constitute the real world in which leadership and identity construction take place (Pink, 2012). Furthermore, from this perspective, video is viewed as the appropriate tool for investigating leadership and identity construction processes because of the fact that “video methods are critical and reflexive instruments that can investigate the sensory and embodied elements of everyday practice to understand lived experiences” (Pink, 2012 as cited in Bailliard, 2015, p.36). Thus, because this thesis aims to understand the real-time claiming and granting behaviours individuals use to construct a leader identity, and because these behaviours can occur through both verbal and nonverbal means, video methods are ideally suited for this purpose.

However, setting aside the discussion around the value of video methods, there are a number of practical considerations regarding how to carry out a video study that can capture human interaction (i.e. leadership and identity processes) as it takes place between social actors. Heath, Hindmarsh and Luff (2010) propose that before a video study can begin, the researcher must consider what role they will have in the process. All of these considerations were addressed well before the start of study one. The study took place in a large shared working space in a university building. Visual and acoustic checks of the room were performed before the first data collection session. Table configuration, lighting, sound and potential camera angles and number of cameras needed were all assessed. All of the tables in the room were arranged in rectangles such that a team or group of people could sit around any side of the table they wished, and would be able to see and converse with each other. This table arrangement meant that one video camera, put at either end of the table, some 2-3 feet away, would be able to capture all or most of the table, assuming people did not move or lean away significantly from the table (see figure 2). Based on this arrangement, it was decided that one camera per table would likely be appropriate. There were ample floor level electrical plugs for charging the video cameras should this be needed, and there was also ample room in between tables to set up tripods for the cameras. The lighting was bright throughout the whole room and therefore, extra lighting was deemed unnecessary. However, due to the large size of the room and the number of people who would likely be placed in such a large space for a university class, it was thought likely that audio quality would be an issue.

A digital recording device was tested at one table before the first data collection session to assess the ability of the device to capture audio from all sides of the table. The device was deemed sufficient for this task. It should be noted that all of the tables in the room were of the same size and configuration, with the same number of chairs at each table. Figure two below provides an example of the typical table and video camera setup used. The video cameras were set up in such a way as to be turned on and left to record the activities taking place at each table, with little or no interaction between the participants and researcher. Wide angle handy cams were used as the primary video collection tool. The picture quality they produced was sufficient in quality, but their ability to record audio at distance was very poor. High quality digital voice recorders were difficult to secure in sufficient quantities due to their cost. Only two high quality digital voice recorders were able to be rented out on a weekly basis, and therefore the remaining required voice recorders had to be purchased, but were of inferior quality due to the limitations of the funding available for securing equipment.

This did present some limitations in terms of the quality of data in some instances. However, I will discuss this in greater detail in chapters five and nine of this thesis.

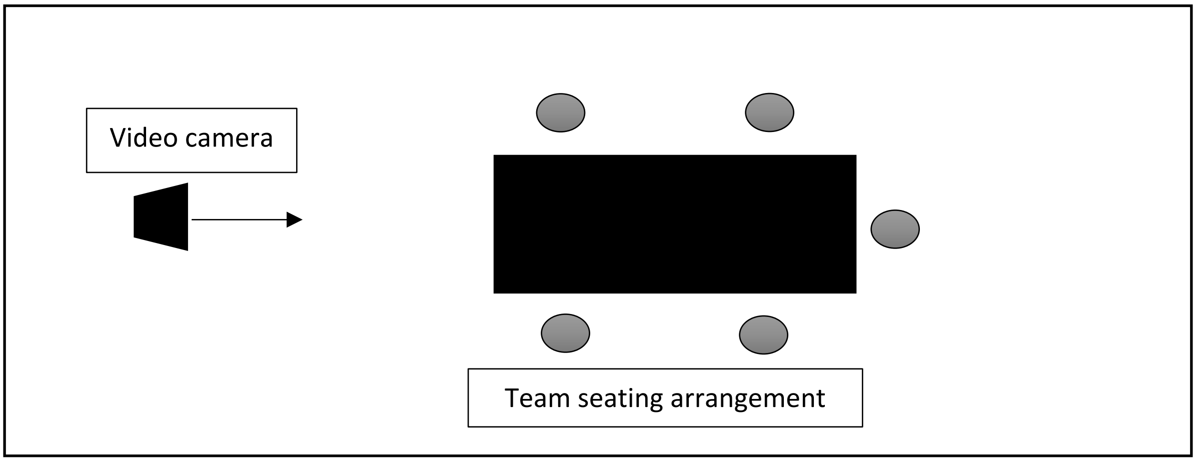



*Figure 2: Example of typical camera setup and team seating arrangement*

During the data collection sessions, each video camera was set up on a tripod next to each table and positioned in such a way as to capture each person at the table. This was a fairly simple process, due to the fact that all participating teams had six or fewer members and as such, it was not difficult to fit everyone into the frame. The digital audio recording devices were also set in the middle of each table during each data collection session.

### 4.6.3. Data Management

Data management was a particularly salient issue in consideration of the methods adopted for this thesis. Study one especially generated a significant volume of data that needed to be managed carefully in order for the study to be carried out successfully. As noted previously, the data for study one consisted of both audio and video data. This study alone generated 51 unique videos, representing approximately 2,300 minutes of video. After each data collection session, each video was downloaded from the digital device that was used to capture and record the video, and was stored on a password-protected device. The video was then reviewed for quality, and then catalogued by group number, date and video session. In cases where there were multiple recording sessions of the same team on a given day, the videos were numbered in order of their creation. All the videos for each team were put into a dedicated electronic folder, so that all the videos for a particular team were stored together, resulting in six electronic team video folders. The videos were then backed up on an external hard drive that was kept in a secure location. None of the videos were edited in any way. For the audio date, the same process was followed as that for cataloguing and storing the video data.

### 4.6.4. Data analysis - Interaction analysis

The aim of study one was to be able to document leadership and identity construction processes as they took place in teams. As a result of this, a method of analysis was needed that was capable of making use of and analysing the richness of the video data of these teams, while at the same time providing a means through which to show how individuals were constructing a leader identity. In order to meet these demands, the method chosen to analyse the video data for study one is a qualitative method known as interaction analysis (IA) (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). Interaction analysis is a method for the investigation of human social interaction (Fairhurst & Cooren, 2004; Jordan & Henderson, 1995; Putnam & Fairhurst, 2001). At its core, IA is concerned with investigating “human activities such as talk, nonverbal interaction, and the use of artefacts and technologies, identifying routine practice and problems and the sources for their solution” (Jordan & Henderson, 1995, p. 39). IA is not grounded in any specific philosophical or theoretical tradition and therefore can be applied to a wide range of research projects. There are other forms of interaction analysis methods commonly utilized to study human interaction, such as Bales’ interaction process analysis (IPA), which is a quantitative method of analysing and categorizing global interaction patterns (Peräkylä, 2004). An alternative form is Sacks’ conversation analysis (CA), which is a qualitative method of analysing the micro level speech acts that facilitate human interaction and communication. Although these two methods are currently the most commonly utilized means of interaction analysis in the literature, because they are not suited for analysing video data, I did not consider them to be an appropriate method for my data.

Although flexible as a method, IA in its most general from can be carried out in the following way, according to Jordan and Henderson (1995). The first step is to create content logs of the video data, which is simply a log of the content of the video. Step two is to review the video many times, either with one’s research team or alone if necessary. The individual researcher should take notes on the initial insights and thoughts that result from the video viewing sessions. These initial thoughts help the researcher narrow down their analytic focus such that the important and meaningful details of the data can be extracted from the video or larger data corpus. This is followed by transcription of the video(s). Jordan and Henderson (1995) recommend a three-column transcript with notation of time also incorporated in some way (see table 1 for an example of video transcript from study one).

The next step is to sift through the data and make sense of the patterns and relationships that emerge, which can be used meaningfully by the researcher to answer their specific research questions. This obviously necessitates a significant amount of interpretation on the part of the individual researcher. For this reason, some researchers choose to analyse their data using a previously defined coding protocol, while others prefer to take a more inductive approach to this process (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). I chose something of a middle ground in this regard. While I did give significant thought to the possibility of using a coding protocol, in the end I felt that this might limit my ability to draw out new insights from the data. I therefore chose to analyse the data more inductively, but I explain the process I adopted in greater detail further on in this section, and in section 5.1.2. of chapter five of this thesis.

*Table 2: Data extract example*

| Time | Actor | Non-verbal action | Verbal action |
|---|---|---|---|
| 21:03 | Mohammed | Holds paper, moves it towards Sara | Alright? |

Although I drew from multiple sources for guidance on the collection, transcription, and analysis of the video data (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011; Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff 2013; Kleinke, 1986; Meinecke, Lehmann-Willenbrock & Kauffeld, 2017; Stivers & Sidnell, 2005), I found myself relying heavily on Jordan and Henderson (1995), Ruhleder & Jordan (1997), Ruhleder & Jordan (1999) and Ruhleder & Jordan (2001) for guidance on how to implement interaction analysis.

Following the guidance of Jordan and Henderson (1995), I began the process of analysis by first transcribing the video data. Unlike the procedures I followed to transcribe the monomodal interview data for study two, for the video data I transcribed the time, who the social actor was, what was being said, and what the social actors were doing in the video via a four-column handwritten transcript, some of which I typed up later on. In order to capture any and all instances of identity claiming and granting, I decided to transcribe all meaningful verbal and nonverbal actions within a given interaction sequence (Sanchez-Cortes, Aran, Mast & Gatica-Perez, 2010; Sanchez-Cortes, Aran, Jayagopi, Mast & Gatica-Perez, 2013). This included all forms of audible verbal utterances as well as, for example, eye gaze, face gaze, posture, head positioning, hand gestures, seating arrangement, use of artefacts, etc. (Jordan & Henderson, 1995).

In addition, during the analysis phase, I also paid close attention to the communication features in the data, beyond just what was said; for example by attending to such things as speaking order, who talked more, and who talked less (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). However, it should be noted that although I attended to these features of communication, I did not attempt to quantify them and provide numeric instances of how many times a certain individual spoke. It would be more accurate to say that I reviewed the transcripts and took note of these interaction and communication patterns in order to understand the identity construction process in greater depth. What this brought to my analysis was a perception of who was perhaps more actively engaging in certain types of behavioural patterns. In terms of the physical analysis of the videos, the analysis phase of the video data was significant and lengthy, such that for each five-minute period of interaction in the video, it took me roughly 30-40 minutes to transcribe what was going on. I also had to view and review each sequence and each video multiple times in order to fully absorb what was taking place. Thus, the analysis of the video data took over nine months of dedicated work to get to a point where I felt I had obtained the most useful and meaningful insights from the data.

Furthermore, in terms of my role as the analyst of the videos, it becomes increasingly critical to the analysis and interpretation that I acknowledge their role in this process. Although I would argue from personal experience that it is possible to be able to document with a fair level of accuracy what actions take place in a sequence of video, it is difficult to infer what thought processes are involved in the actions observed, unless these are explicitly verbalised by the video participants. This brings some subjectivity to the issue of analysis of video data when attempting to interpret what is taking place in the video. As Heath, Hindmarsh & Luff (2010) suggest, when analysing video data, there are a number of analytical considerations, which reflect upon larger methodological and philosophical issues when it comes to the analysis and interpretation of video data from a qualitative perspective. They argue that analysing this type of data is not simply an issue of explicating the primary means through which human interaction is produced, it is also about providing an understanding of how these mundane interactions inform our understanding of the phenomena of interest. This is where the role of the analyst comes in to particular question, as it is in fact the analyst who brings their interpretation to what would otherwise be simple transcriptions of verbal utterances or physical movements. This need for the analyst to function as something of an interpreter brings with it several points worth addressing. On the one hand, as Jordan and Henderson (1995) suggest, “in the process of identifying events and other ethnographic chunks, analysts clearly draw upon their own cultural knowledge” (p.57). And yet, as Geertz (1973) noted, “this fact-that what we call our data are really our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to-is obscured [in our analysis] ... Right down at the factual base, the hard rock, insofar as there is any, of the whole enterprise, we are already explicating: and worse, explicating explications” (p. 9). I feel that both of these points are noteworthy. On the one hand, an analyst brings with them certain information and knowledge, which places them in an epistemological position to understand and interpret their data. Conversely, as Geertz (1973) points out, this epistemological standing may have significant limitations for the analysis. This means that finding a balance between what we (the analyst) present as what our participants have done and what we think they have done is of critical importance.

For my role as an analyst of my video data, I acknowledge that striking the right balance between inductive and deductive analysis of the data was challenging. The desire to produce truly inductive analysis of the data was constrained in some ways by the theoretical framework of my thesis as well as by the topic of leadership itself. I will outline these issues in greater detail in chapter five of the thesis in order to explain to the reader how I have chosen to address the actual analysis of the video data. However, with regard to the epistemological issues surrounding my analysis and interpretation of my data, the theoretical framework of the thesis required me to be able to equate actions in the video to some type of identity construction analysis. This created some degree of artificiality in the analysis and interpretation due to the fact that I was placing the video data and the social actors' behaviours into the narrow scope of identity claiming and granting behaviours. In this regard, there was some degree of deductive analysis taking place in the analysis of the video data. I do not find this issue particularly problematic, however, it does require that I acknowledge when and how my analysis of the video data moves from a description of actions to my own interpretation of what the participants were achieving in their social interactions. I will therefore bring further clarity to this issue in chapter five by providing notation of my own interpretations of events.

4.6.5. Ethical considerations

The research conducted for the purpose of this thesis was approved by the appropriate ethics committee at the University of Sheffield. An ethics review application was submitted for each study prior to any data being collected. Both studies received full ethical approval, and all of the documentation for the approval of the studies by the ethics review board were retained my me, the author (see appendices for the ethics forms that were given to the study participants). Aside from obtaining ethical approval for the studies, I maintained ethical standards by following standard informed consent practices for each participant in both studies. Prior to collecting data from participants, each participant received an invitation to participate via email. The email outlined the basic information about the study through a participant information sheet. In study one, participants who were interested in participating after reading the email and the participant information sheet could then access and read the study informed consent sheet, which was also attached to the email. At the start of the study I approached each participant in person and asked if they would be interested in learning more about the study. The interested participants were then asked if they had read the participant information sheet. If they indicated that they had not, I provided them with a hard copy and gave them ample time to review the sheet before asking them again if they wanted to participate. After this, each participant was given the informed consent sheet in hard copy to read. After they had time to read or reread the informed consent sheet, participants where asked if they would like to participate.

Interested individuals were then given the opportunity to ask any questions, after which they were asked to initial the informed consent sheet. In order to be able to document who had agreed to participate, I decided that asking for the participants' initials would be a good way of seeking documented consent for two reasons. Firstly, I was asked by the ethics review board not to ask for participant names as a stipulation of approving my ethics application. They felt that having names associated with video data might make the participant uncomfortable and could be misused if the data were not properly protected. However, I still felt that I needed a means of documenting consent and I felt that initials would provide documentation while maintaining the anonymity of the participants. Further, I felt that collecting initials serves the dual purpose of maintaining some form of anonymity while at the same time providing proof that the individual agreed to consent. Due to the sensitive nature of video data and the possibility that some individuals may question their participation during or after the fact, I felt it was important to protect myself as a researcher as well as to protect the participants by collecting physical informed consent sheets. In addition, all other standard ethical procedures were followed. All study participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time should they no longer wish to participate. Furthermore, it should be noted that due to the team setting in which study one took place, it was necessary for all team members to agree to participate. Out of the eight teams I approached, there was disagreement in two teams regarding who wished to participate and who did not. In these two cases, I explained that there was no obligation to participate, thanked them for their time and ended my attempts to seek their participation. There was unanimous support and agreement to participate in the remaining six teams.

## 4.7. Study two - Leader identity construction in organizations

### 4.7.1. Participant recruitment and participants

The participants for this study were selected through several methods. Because the sampling method used for this study was purposive sampling, this necessitated that I be able to gain access to participants who met the parameters of the study. The first parameter was that participants needed to be employed in an organization. This first parameter was identified due to the fact that the aim of the thesis is to understand leader identity construction within the context of organizations. The second parameter was that individuals needed to have current or past leadership experience. However, it was left up to the participant to identify and decide whether they met this criterion. I did not attempt to filter out any participants in this regard. This was based on an understanding that each participant would be the best judge of their own personal history and suitability for participation. Participants were given the criteria for participants in the participant information sheet and it was then left to them to decide whether they met the criteria for participation.

Participants were recruited through various methods. The first method was through word of mouth. This method simply meant that I asked people that I knew worked in organizations if they would tell other people they knew about my study and ask any interested individuals to contact me. This method did not result in any interviews with individuals who were directly known to me (e.g. friends, relatives). I was able to recruit 12 participants through this method. The second method was to seek the help of the external relations manager at the Sheffield University Management School to help me recruit participants from their pool of organizational partners. This process involved the external relations manager sending emails with the details of my study and the participant information sheet out to the organizations she worked with, asking if anyone would be interested in participating. Interested individuals were then able to contact me and make arrangements to meet. Eight participants were recruited through this method. Another method involved sending out an email through the University of Sheffield research recruitment email list, which is a database of faculty and staff members at the University of Sheffield and the larger university network who are willing to participate in research projects. The email contained information about the study as well as the participant information sheet. Interested individuals were able to contact me directly to make arrangements to conduct the interview. Through this method, 12 participants were recruited. The final method involved making contact with a human resources director in a UK government department, through my PhD supervisors' professional network. The government department agreed to participate in the study in exchange for me presenting my research to them via a teleconference and in exchange for me asking one question during my interviews with any government employees that would help the department track their progress on their culture of leadership initiative. Prior to contacting me to indicate their interest in participating, potential participants were provided with an information sheet containing information about the study. Interested individuals were able to contact me directly to make arrangements to conduct the interview. Eighteen participants were recruited through this method.

The data for study two consists of 50 semi-structured interviews with individuals from a wide range of professions and organizational positions (see appendix L for a breakdown of participants' industries and organizational positions). Twenty-six participants were female, while 24 were male. The participants ranged in age from 26 years to over 60 years. The interviews took place in person through one-to-one interviews (n=24) or in cases where participants were located some distance away from me or were not able to schedule an in-person interview, some interviews were conducted over the phone (n=26). In the case that the participants requested an in-person interview, I would offer to travel to meet them. Seven participants were able to meet me at a location on the University of Sheffield campus to participate in an interview. I did not purposefully seek out personal or demographic information from the participants, and instead took the approach that they could share whatever information about themselves they felt comfortable with sharing rather than me probing for personal information. I took this approach in order to help participants feel more comfortable with the level of control they had over what personal information they shared or did not share. Furthermore, because I did not need demographic information about the participants, asking for additional information seemed unnecessary.

During the interviews, the participants were asked to report on the tenure of their current role. The average length of tenure in their current role was two years. Participants reported a variety of tenure lengths in their organization, ranging anywhere from 3 months to 30 years. The majority of the participants reported currently living in the UK. Forty participants reported living and working in England. Three participants reported that they were originally from Ireland but were currently working in England. Six participants were living and working in the United States, out of which three had immigrated to the US from India. One participant was an Indian living in India but currently employed by a US-based company. Table three provides a breakdown of the organizational levels of the study participants. As can be seen from table two, the majority of participants reported currently occupying mid to upper level management positions in their organizations. Three participants reported that they were currently in non-managerial positions, such as executive assistant to the head of finance. All of these three individuals reported that they actively sought out their non-managerial position due to personal preference.

### 4.7.2. Semi-structured interviews

Research questions one and three required that I be able to address the individual perceptions of my participants regarding the various phenomena of interest (e.g. the role of the organization in leader identity, relationships, etc.), and this would in turn require that I be able to access information that was highly specific to each individual. To capture this type of data, I chose to utilize interviews as the means through which to access the personal histories, thoughts, experiences, relationships and interactions of individuals engaged in the leader identity construction process. Interviews were the first and most obvious choice of method to enable access to the individual experiences data I required, because as stated by Rabionet (2011), “qualitative interviewing is a flexible and powerful tool to capture the voices and ways people make meaning of their experiences” (p.563).

Furthermore, coming from the assumption that individuals in an organization are “knowledge agents”, meaning that they are knowing beings who are aware of what they do and can communicate their experiences and thoughts, interview as a method is well suited for capturing these experiences and thoughts (Gioia, Corley & Hamilton, 2013). The type of interview used for study two was the semi-structured interview, a variation of interview that allows the researcher to ask questions related to their research topic, but which also allows the interview participant to submit additional information as they see fit (Dearnley, 2005; McIntosh & Morse, 2015; Whiting, 2008). Gioia et al. (2013) point out that semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to gather both retrospective histories as well as real-time accounts of participants. In this way, semi-structured interviews are a good middle ground between the very flexible unstructured interview and the more formal structured interview.

Generating the initial interview questions for study two was an inductive process. 12 initial questions were generated (see appendix A). These questions were generated with two goals in mind. Six questions at the beginning of the interview were designed to gather basic information about the participant, their job role, and other information. For example, one question asked participants how long they had been in their current position. These questions were meant to be a simple and straightforward way to gather information about the participant that might be useful for understanding the participant, and were also meant to serve as a way of building rapport with the participant and allowing them to become comfortable with the interview process. The remaining six questions were aimed at gathering data on the relationships, interactions and experiences the participant perceived as helping them to construct a leader identity. There was also a question that addressed the temporal and changing nature of their leader identity as well as a question that allowed participants to add supplementary information they felt would be useful to the interview, but which I had not asked them about. A 13th question was added to the question bank, as it became clear after the first three to four interviews that this question needed to be asked, as evidenced by the fact that the topic had come up in all of the first few interviews. This question asked participants if they felt their current job role allowed them to act as a leader; if so, in what way, and if not, why? This question was designed to gather participant perceptions about their job role and also help to gather information about the organization, via job role, although again, it should be noted that the information about job roles and the organization in the leader identity construction process were not primary research concerns at the start of the study. I only became interested in them because the study participants brought these issues up.

Before conducting any interviews, I first created an interview protocol in order to help me cover all of the necessary information and procedures for ethical considerations and to guide and outline how I would ask the questions during the interview. Creswell (1998) provides a good example of how to design an interview protocol. Working from this template, I created an interview protocol that incorporated prompts for me to remember all of the necessary informed consent and debriefing protocols along with the interview questions and a space to record the date, time, and location of the interview along with notes on the interview that I felt were relevant. This allowed me to record basic thoughts, reactions or other relevant information at the end of each interview.

All interviews were digitally recorded with the participants' permission. In order to mitigate possible data loss due to equipment malfunction, two recording devices were used during each interview. In order to ensure that the data collected represented the experience of the participants, I chose to treat the interview as a conversation between myself and the individuals who volunteered to speak to me. This meant that I asked the interview questions at points that felt appropriate during the interview, giving the participants the time and space to tell their personal story in their own way and at their own pace (Berg, 2006; Erlandson et a;., 1993; Rabionet, 2011). If the participants brought up a topic I felt I wanted to know more about, I asked probing questions such as "why is that?" and "can you tell me more about that?", etc. If a participant gave a limited or short response, I asked them to elaborate or I asked them if there was more information they wanted to share regarding that topic, or I revisited the same question later on in the interview to probe further and try to get more information. I also ended each interview by asking the participants if there was anything else they felt was relevant that they wanted to share with me. This provided them the opportunity to give me information I had not asked about, but which they thought could be of use to me. Furthermore, to ensure that I was able to collect as much data as possible from each participant, I made sure to ask the participants to share as many examples as they could with regard to each relevant interview question (Flick, 2000).

The 50 interviews were conducted over a five-month period, with the first interview taking place on April 17th, 2017 and the last interview taking place on September 29th, 2017. The interviews lasted between 28 mins and 90 mins, with the average interview lasting approximately 38 mins, resulting in a total of 2,091 minutes, or roughly 35 hours of audio data. At the start of the data collection for the interviews, there was no specified goal in terms of the number of interviews to be conducted. Rather, the goal was to collect data until data saturation occurred. Data saturation for interview data is thought to occur in the range of approximately 20-30 interviews (Marshall, Cardon, Poddar & Fontenot, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). However, data saturation in study two occurred around interview 35. After this point, no new information emerged from the interviews. However, because I had already scheduled the remaining 15 interviews and because I wanted to be sure that no new data would emerge, I continued to collect data, resulting in a total of 50 interviews. After the interviews were complete, I transcribed each interview into a Word document following standard transcription techniques (Davidson, 2009; Mondada, 2007; Seale, 1999; Silverman, 1993). The transcription process resulted in approximately 400 pages of interview data.

### 4.7.3. Data Management

The process for cataloguing the data for study two followed a similar process to that of study one. After each interview was conducted, the digital file was downloaded from the digital recorder to a password-protected laptop computer. The file was labelled and catalogued according to date. In cases where multiple interviews took place on the same day, the files were numbered accordingly using a date and number method. Once the files were catalogued, they were backed up to a dedicated folder on an external hard drive. A separate handwritten ledger was also kept, in which I recorded the details of each interview. This ledger recorded the name of the participant, location of the participant, their job title and industry, and the date of the interview. This ledger provided a place to catalogue additional details about the interview that could be used to cross-reference the digital files and help keep track of the interview files. This ledger was kept in a secure location so that no one except myself had access to it.

All data from both studies one and two were also backed up to the University-provided data storage system known as “Unidrive”. This service is provided to all University of Sheffield students free of charge and provides an alternative source of data backup that is password-protected, but accessible from any internet-enabled device. Using this service provided a further level of protection from data loss and also ensured that should I face an issue of data loss or have a need to access the data without having access to my personal laptop or external hard drive, I would still be able to gain access to the data. All of the participants for both studies one and two were informed of how their data would be stored and protected as part of the informed consent procedures that were followed for both studies.

### 4.7.4. Thematic analysis

The method of analysis used to analyse the semi-structured interviews for study two was a qualitative method known as thematic analysis. I undertook specialist training on how to use thematic analysis with interview data in the spring of 2017 through the White Rose Doctoral Training Centre. Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analysing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set” (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017, p. 2). It can be applied across epistemological perspectives, making it a versatile and useful analysis tool for interview data. I followed the procedures outlined by Braun and Clark (2006) for carrying out the analysis. They layout six steps to conducting thematic analysis. These are: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, naming and defining themes, and producing the report. The analysis began by transcribing the interviews. Next, in order to further familiarize myself with the data, I listened to the interviews a second time, and a third time (if necessary) and followed along with the transcripts. After the transcripts and familiarization were completed, I then moved on to searching the data for initial codes. An inductive approach was adopted in this phase of the data analysis in order to ground the findings in the data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Patton, 2015).

Braun and Clarke (2006) note that thematic analysis can be carried out either inductively or deductively, but they point out that each has limitations. Specifically, they caution that using a strictly deductive (e.g. theoretical) approach can lead to a less rich description of the data, while using a strictly inductive approach may provide the researcher with less theoretically relevant analysis, and thus there are trade-offs to each method. However, inductive analysis allows one to generate "new concepts, explanations, results and or theories from specific data of a qualitative study" (Patton, 2015, p.541). In consideration of the fact that as outlined in chapter one, previous research indicates that we need new insights and explanations for how leader self-definitions are derived and what role leader-follower relationships have in this process, and in consideration of the type of data (e.g. interview data), an indicative method was deemed most appropriate for achieving this goal.

However, it should be noted that during the analysis of the data, the codes I generated were always broadly linked back to the theory, as they should be. In doing so, I attempted to strike a balance between identifying theoretically relevant data while also trying to draw out the rich detail the interview data offered, thus locating myself at multiple points on the continuum of inductive and deductive analysis in order to achieve both rich and theoretically linked findings.

It is also important to consider the depth at which one wishes to code. I did not want to provide a simplistic descriptive analysis of the leader identity construction process and instead wished to go beyond the semantic content of the data to provide a deeper level of analysis. Ideally, this deeper level of analysis could provide an understanding of how leader self-definitions are constructed. It would also allow me to gain insight into how leader-follower relationships contribute to the larger identity construction process of individuals.

This would also allow me to account for the role of the organization in identity construction, which would therefore enable me to draw out the unique contextual issues of the identity construction process. Therefore, I chose to employ latent level thematic analysis. This method entails considerable interpretive development of the themes but results in a deeper analysis of the data than simply providing a description. In order to carry out the latent level analysis, I conducted two-step coding (Gioia et al., 2013).

The first order analysis was conducted after each interview was carried out and transcribed. All effort was put in to transcribing the interview as soon as possible so that I could conduct the first order analysis as soon as possible. I also made sure to review any notes I took during the interview so that I could include any relevant details from the notes. During the first order coding, I made note in the transcript margins of any ideas or concepts in the data that I found thought-provoking, theoretically relevant or conceptually interesting. Thus, for example, the following data extract: “I get feedback from my direct reports and I always get feedback on things we could be doing differently in our relationship” was coded as “seeking leadership feedback”. This quote was coded because to me it demonstrated that the participant saw themselves as a leader. It also demonstrated that they felt that seeking feedback from their direct reports was a way of seeking information about their leader identity and effectively acted as a calming and granting exchange. At first, I did this in the electronic transcript. However, I found that printing the transcript and handwriting the codes in the margins next to the line of the transcript that produced the code was a better method, as it allowed me to easily move across the document. Following the advice of Braun and Clark (2006), I made sure to write these initial codes as fully developed concepts rather than single words in order to fully capture the concept or idea the code represented. This process is similar to what Strauss and Corbin (1990) refer to as axial coding. The first order coding resulted in the generation of 121 independent first order codes, with each code corresponding to a unique line of text from the transcript. All the codes were then collated from the writings in the margins of the transcripts and then written in a dedicated code book.

The second order coding took place through a cyclical process of reviewing the initial first order codes and the sections of the transcripts that produced each code. The goal of this process was to seek out patterns and similarities in the codes so that similar codes could be combined in order to create data themes. To do this, I collated all of the generated codes and printed them on to small strips of paper. I then took each strip of paper with a code on it and began to sort them into groups/themes based upon their relationship to each other. All through this process, I had the interview transcripts in front of me and I moved back and forth between the portion of the interview that produced the code and the codes themselves to ensure that the code I had in front of me reflected the nature of the theme group into which I was placing it.

At the end of this process, I had several codes that did not seem to fit into any theme groups. I therefore reviewed these codes and went back to the interview transcripts to review the section of interview that had produced the code. The goal was to decide what these codes represented and why they did not fit into the themes. If the code seemed completely unrelated to any other codes or concepts, I discarded it. If it seemed that the concepts from the data were related, but that the code itself was the issue, I rephrased the code and retained it. This process resulted in 109 codes being kept. Once this process was complete, I carefully took all the strips of paper with the codes, inventoried them, and then bundled the codes together in their theme bundles and set them aside. Roughly one week later I reprinted all of my codes and repeated the same process with the same codes, but with a separate batch of paper strips. Once I had sorted all of the codes, I compared the first sorting against the second sorting. I found that there was significant agreement between the first and second sorting of codes into themes. I decided to carry out the second sorting as a means of checking how well I agreed with my own coding of the interview data; a process known as intracoder reliability (van den Hoonaard, 2008). Once this process was complete, seven themes had been generated (see appendix C for a full list of themes). In order to ensure that the themes were independent of each other and were in fact unique themes expressing unique data concepts, I reviewed each theme, comparing the codes in each theme against each other, searching for codes that could be similar but were in different themes. This process is known as constant comparison (Braun & Clark, 2006), and involves looking at each code and asking oneself "does this code belong in this list and if so why, and if not why and where could it be a better fit?".

Once the codes had been sorted into themes and I felt the themes encompassed the bulk of the data, I began to look at how the themes could be further sorted into higher order themes, which I refer to as global themes. I found that the seven themes could be further sorted into two global themes; these were identity catalysts and identity barriers. The identity catalysts global theme represented themes that in some way supported the leader identity construction process. The identity barrier global theme encompassed themes that in some way held individuals back in their leader identity construction process or prevented people from being able to construct a leader identity (see appendix C for a full description of themes). More details about the themes will be provided in chapters six and seven of this thesis.

*Table 3: Examples of first order codes and second order themes.*

| **Examples of first order codes** | **Second order themes** |
|---|---|
| Feeling almost like a leader | Leader Identity uncertainty |
| Lack of recognition of leadership | Leader identity rejection |
| Observing poor leadership | Negative role model |
| Emulating other leaders | Role model |
| Having a leadership mentor | Mentors |
| Learning form feedback | Feedback |
| Leading major project | Crystallizing event |

#### 4.7.5. Ethical considerations

In terms of addressing the ethical considerations of study two, the participants were provided with participant information sheets and informed consent sheets before the start of the interview. In the case of phone interviews, the participants were asked to provide verbal consent in addition to the informed consent sheet. Participants who conducted their interview over the phone were given the option of emailing back their signed consent form or mailing their consent form through the post. I chose to follow this method so that I would have verbal consent to participate as well as a hard copy of the consent form for my records. Participants with whom I had in-person interviews were asked to read and sign the informed consent sheet and were also given a copy for their records. The informed consent sheets for all of the participants for study two were kept in labelled and catalogued folders in a secure location.

### 4.8. Trustworthiness of the findings

Guba (1981) and Guba and Lincoln (1982) state that there are four major concerns for evaluating the trustworthiness of qualitative data. These are: truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality (Guba, 1981). Truth value is the concept of how one can establish confidence in the truth of qualitative findings (Guba, 1981). Applicability is concerned with the degree to which the findings can be applied in other settings or contexts (Guba, 1981). Consistency deals with whether the findings can consistently be repeated in the same context (Guba, 1981). Finally, neutrality deals with how to "establish the degree to which the findings have been generated by the study participants and not as a result of the biases, motivations, interests, perspectives, and so on of the researcher" (Guba, 1981, p. 80).

### 4.8.1. Truth Value

The truth value of the data was assessed in several ways. The first way was through the use of member checks (Erlandson et al., 1993). According to Guba (1981), member checks can be carried out by feeding the interpretations of the data back to the audience that produced said data. According to Guba (1981), member checks can be carried out both during the data collection period as well as after the initial findings have been obtained, but before the final version of the findings are set. For study one, I produced a report of the initial findings, which I presented back to the programme coordinators to seek their feedback. Given that the programme co-coordinators had observed the same teams at the same time as I had, getting feedback from them about my observations helped to support my initial findings. Additionally, for study two I followed the same procedure, by producing a report of my initial findings, which I sent to the government organization that granted me access to some of my participants. I also made it a point to meet with a few of the participants who did not work in the governmental organization and talk to them about the study findings and receive feedback regarding my interpretations and understanding of the findings before the final data analysis was complete.

### 4.8.2. Applicability

The applicability of the findings is addressed through producing what is referred to as a "thick description" of the findings (Denzin, 1989). A thick description according to Denzin

(1989) goes beyond creating a record of "what a person is doing. It goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another" (p. 83). The data that informs this thesis were collected from across multiple industries, organizational sites, and countries, and are drawn from different classes of people with often vastly different backgrounds and histories. The variety and richness in how the date is collected, and from whom, allows me to argue with some certainty that the findings of this thesis move beyond describing what a few individuals experienced, to produce findings that speak to the experiences of a shared reality of organizational life as it currently exists in developed capitalist economies; the so-called "corporate culture" with which most, if not all, of the participants in both studies will be familiar as they move through and experience the structures and boundaries of organizing and being organized through their places of work and school. Providing a thick description is achieved through the presentation of the findings not as static snapshots, but as rich detailed explanations of how individuals construct a leader identity, the boundaries and tensions that exist, the people and contexts involved, and all the other seemingly minor details that must be included in order to bring the reader along into the world of the participant (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Ponterotto, 2006).

### 4.8.3. Consistency

Consistency was assessed in two ways. The first and primary way was through data saturation. Because the goal of consistency is to show the dependability of the data, one way to achieve this is to show how reliably the same concepts and ideas occur across the data set (Guba, 1981; Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002). When a data set can reliably and consistently show that the concept or idea is present across multiple cases, the researcher can be assured that the concept or idea is representative of the data as a whole rather than the product of a single case. As noted previously, data saturation occurs when there is no new data and therefore no new themes being generated from the data (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Guest, Bunce & Johnson, 2006). In study two, data saturation occurred around interview 35. The second way that consistency of the data was achieved was through the use of constant comparison (Braun & Clark, 2006) and intercoder reliability (van den Hoonaard, 2008). These concepts were covered previously in the section 4.7.4. of this chapter, and I will therefore not go into further detail here. However, I believe that they allowed me to assess consistency by helping me to establish the structural coherence of my interpretations of how the data was generated and fit together.

### 4.8.4. Neutrality

According to Guba (1981), reflexivity can be used to address issues of neutrality in qualitative research. This is achieved due in part to the role of reflexivity in qualitative inquiry being to allow the researcher to show what they bring to the research in terms of their own bias, personal perspective and assumptions, as well as to help to critically reflect on the research process and the research choices made during this process (Finlay, 2002; Macbeth, 2001; Shaw, 2010; Watt, 2007). However, reflexivity is not simply a means through which to draw lines around our own preconceived notions about one’s research (Berger, 2015; Bott, 2010; Skeggs, 2002). Mauthner and Doucet (2003) argue that reflexivity is also important when researching and writing about the lives of others because it forces the researcher to be explicit about their role in presenting data that effectively comes from the lives and experiences of others, therefore giving space to the researcher to outline how and why they interpreted their data in the way they did. Qualitative research is fundamentally subjective and interpretivist in nature. As such, when it comes to the analysis of qualitative data, although the researcher may present their data as representing the individuals from which it came, ultimately, this analysis is the result of the interpretation of the data by the researcher (Berger, 2015; Dowling, 2006; Guillemin & Gillam, 2004; Mauthner & Doucet, 2003).

### 4.8.5. My reflexive journal

Early on in my PhD studies, I found myself engaging in a lot of reflexive thinking and dialogue. I felt that these thoughts and discussions with others were of real value to helping me understand my research in new ways. Engaging in reflective thinking and reflexive dialogue was also a valuable tool for documenting why I chose to carry out my research in the way I did, and it helped me to make sense of my role in the overall research project that is my thesis (Berger, 2015). For this reason, I chose to keep a reflexivity journal. This journal was a working document that I handwrote in a series of notebooks. I started keeping this reflexivity journal three months into my doctoral studies. In the first several entries, I reflected on what my research goals were, what I wanted to achieve through my research and on what areas I envisioned my research would or would not focus. As the journal grew, I used it as a place to record my thoughts and notes on what I was reading in relation to my research. This allowed me to construct a running dialogue with myself as I worked towards building my literature review. As I moved through to the latter stages of my research, the journal became a place for my deeper reflections on my research, as well as a place for me to record my struggles, fears and difficulties in the research process. As I moved through to the data collection stages, I often utilized the journal to reflect back on the experiences of collecting my data in the field. I found that doing this allowed me a space to record my failures and successes so that I could learn from them. It also gave me a space to acknowledge my role in the data collection.

Engaging with reflexivity also helped me to understand my own position in the study of leadership and identity. Being a woman of European descent, born in the United States, I fully acknowledge that these identities position me in a certain way when it comes to any research. I feel that especially due to my gender, I often focused on certain aspects of the data that I may not have taken note of had I not been a woman. For example, in both the video and interview data, I was sensitive to how women were treated differently. For example, in the video study I noted how in every group, women were asked to be the note takers. I also noted that in the interviews, women participants often brought up issues of gender in relation to leadership, such as the struggle with child bearing and rearing and being a leader. I cannot say for sure if these same issues would have arisen in the data had I not been a woman. I also suspect that because of my gender, I might have received very different treatment from male participants, than if I were another male coming in and asking them about leadership. I am also cognisant of the fact that my personal view that leadership needs to change and become more inclusive is likely the result of me being a woman and recognizing the inequality that exists in terms of overall representation of women in leadership roles across the globe. In this way, I am sure that many aspects of my past life experience, my understanding of leadership, my education and training as a psychologist, and other category memberships have all converged, resulting in a very specific worldview that informs how I conduct research and how I interpret the resulting data.

## 4.9. Conclusion

This chapter was dedicated not only to outlining how and why this particular thesis is qualitative in nature, but also worked towards giving further perspective of the paradigm that informs how the research for this thesis was carried out. Furthermore, this chapter gave space to addressing the epistemological and ontological assumptions underpinning this thesis and in doing so helped to locate the research in the larger body of academic research. This chapter also provided the necessary details regarding how each of the two studies were carried out in terms of the methods used to gather and analyse the data. However, it should be pointed out that it is not possible to include all of the details that might give the reader a full understanding of how the two studies were conducted. As such there is also a significant level of additional detail that has been provided in the data chapters themselves (e.g. chapters five, six and seven).

# Chapter 5: Identity construction in team settings

## 5.1. Introduction

This chapter will outline the data and findings from study one. This study utilized video and audio methods and was conducted with the aim of investigating the micro level interactions that take place between individuals as they engage in constructing leader and follower identities (Larsson & Nielsen, 2017; Schnurr, 2009). The data was collected from six student teams. Leader and follower roles were not assigned to any of the individuals in any of the teams, as all teams were expected to negotiate their own leader and follower roles. Identity negotiation, according to Swann, Johnson and Bosson (2009), consists of the "processes whereby relationship partners reach agreements regarding 'who is who.'" (p.2). Teams are defined as small groups of individuals who are interconnected and who share responsibilities for outcomes (Hollenbeck, Beersma & Schouten, 2012). Group structure is an emergent phenomenon in which ongoing interactions shape the structure that the group ultimately takes on (Barley, 1990). Leadership is therefore just one of many activities that becomes patterned over time, forming relationships and behavioural interactions that vary across time and which impact team functions (Carson, Tesluk & Marrone, 2007). Therefore, it is these emergent relationships and interactions that allowed the mutually reinforcing and reciprocal nature of the leader identity construction process to be observed. This made possible the documentation, through video data, of how individuals engaged in constructing their identities through the real-time claiming and granting process. This also made it possible to document how individuals supported or did not support each other's identity construction processes.

Furthermore, with regard to the use of teams as the source of the data, Morgeson, DeRue and Karam (2010) note that much of the previous research on leadership in teams has focused on formal leadership structures, which has limited the insights that can be achieved in regard to understanding the full capacity of leadership. The same argument may hold true when it comes to identity construction. In this way, the data from this study provides an account of the types of interaction that facilitate reciprocal influence and team goal achievement and therefore facilitate the leader identity construction process. The goal of this chapter is to bring to light the process through which the individuals in these teams worked to construct identities and in doing so co-constructed their collective understanding of the reality of their team leadership. This goal was achieved by placing the analytic focus on the communicative modes each team member utilized to make sense of their team structures and how they worked to negotiate their team level leadership roles.

The analysis of the data in this chapter helps to answer research question one: “what kinds of experience, relationship and interaction contribute to the construction of a leader identity?” by outlining the relational and interactional components and behaviours of leader and follower identity claims and by exploring the process through which leadership takes place in self-managed teams. This chapter also helps to answer research question two: “what are the implications for leader identity construction in terms of who supports or does not support one’s leader identity?” by outlining the role that other people have in the leader identity construction process.

Video data facilitates micro level detail which in turn allows for the detailed analysis of the social interaction processes that enable identity construction. For this very reason, observational studies of real-time social interactions may be better suited than experimental studies to the investigation of identity construction (Argyle, 2017). Observational field studies that capture the real-time behaviours of leaders may be better able to inform us as to what leaders actually do, rather than what people recall they did after the fact, as is the case when applying survey methods to understand leadership interactions (Hoogeboom & Wilderom, 2015; Wherry & Bartlett, 1982).

This study aims to bring greater depth and insight to our current understanding of the experience of constructing a leader identity through the use of data that can document the identity work individuals utilize to define themselves as leaders or as followers, directly or indirectly. In this way, this chapter not only provides observational data pertaining to the leader identity construction process, it also provides greater insight into the role in the leader identity construction process possessed by other individuals invested in the social interaction process. Furthermore, there has been increased recognition of the need to address the temporal nature of interactions that facilitate leadership and leader identity construction processes (Gerpott et al., in press; Shamir, 2011). Video data is well suited to answer this call. Thus, in order to document the temporal and sequential nature of the leader identity construction process, this chapter will present data from different points in time over the course of the team projects. As such, an outline of the structure of the chapter now follows.

In the coming sections of this chapter, each of the six teams will be introduced along with information regarding the basic structure and setup of each team, along with team member pseudonyms. This will be followed by the presentation of data from different points in time for each team.

The data presented in the data extracts in this chapter were chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly, one of the primary concerns was to select interaction sequences that had sufficient audio and video quality to enable me to understand what was taking place. Secondly, I was also concerned with being able to select data that contained salient examples of identity construction. I found that videos from weeks one and two contained the most interactive sessions. This makes sense given that the teams were new and the people in the teams were working to establish their relationships and get to know each other. I also wanted to select sequences involving as many team members as possible so that it was not a simple dyadic exchange. I was also concerned with the content in terms of making sure that it was on topic. Understandably, working with college students means that at times, they can go off topic or discuss topics that may be inappropriate. I was therefore quite selective in the data extracts that I included in this chapter, even though I had a significant amount of data to present. The data will be presented in the form of verbatim audio transcripts of the verbal components of the videos, along with corresponding images in the form of video screen captures. This will be followed by the analysis and interpretation of the interaction sequences in order to demonstrate how the data is illustrative of the leader identity construction process. This will involve breaking down the interaction sequences and outlining how the different behaviours displayed in the transcripts and images demonstrate leadership and identity claims and grants. Presenting multiple interaction sequences from different points in time will also provide evidence of the development of leadership in these teams over time, which leads to the construction of leader and follower roles, which in turn is facilitative of the leader identity construction process.

### 5.1.1. Identifying claiming and granting behaviours in team meetings

Because this thesis aims to understand identity construction within the context of leadership, there is a need to go beyond simply establishing leader emergence. Rather, it is necessary to provide evidence of how the verbal/nonverbal and direct/indirect components of interaction sequences from the videos demonstrate leadership acts and how these acts translate into leader identity claims, in a way that is both grounded in the literature and which can be generally understood as leadership. With this goal in mind, I drew from a range of previous research that has provided insights into identifying both leadership and identity construction. Previous literature that has attempted to document leadership acts at the micro-level from video data suggests that functional leadership behaviours provide useful categories through which to illustrate how individuals engage in leadership, and in doing so construct a leader identity (Gerpott et al., in press; Johnson & Bechler, 1998). Previous research indicates that task-oriented behaviours (e.g. task monitoring, providing direction to the task or team, structuring the task), relations-oriented behaviours (e.g. asking for ideas, being friendly, showing personal interest) and change-oriented behaviours (e.g. initiating actions, driving change to the status quo) can be useful for gauging emergent leadership in team settings (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Gerpott et al., in press; Hoogeboom & Wilderom, 2015). Given that LICT frames the leader identity construction process as a function of emergent leadership and given that previous research suggests that the behaviours noted above have been associated with leader emergence (Johnson & Bechler, 1998; Kirscht, Lodahl, Haire & Smith, 1959), these behaviours may therefore be suitable for identifying leader identity claims.

Therefore, task-, change- and relations-oriented behaviours were one means through which to interpret the behaviours observed in the videos in order to document how and when individuals in the teams made claims for a leader or follower identity. Furthermore, building from the guiding principles of task-, change-, and relations-oriented behaviours as indicative of leader identity claims, these concepts were also applied to the identification of claims for a follower identity, for example by identifying a lack or absence of task- or relations-oriented behaviours in an interaction sequence. Grants of a leader identity were also guided by identifying behaviours such as accepting or agreeing to (or not objecting to) attempts to engage in task- or relations-oriented behaviours. Grants of a follower identity were guided, for example, by identifying behaviours that in some way assigned or attributed follower behaviours to others or acknowledged the acceptance of task- or relations-oriented behaviours.

Furthermore, the analysis and interpretation of the data also drew from the leadership in interaction approach (Larsson, 2016; Larsson & Lundholm, 2013). Studies of leadership in interaction incorporate aspects of leadership behaviours, and therefore complement the functional leadership approach. However, the added value of taking an interactional approach is that it places analytic focus on leader and follower behaviours, in context, thus providing opportunities to understand how these behaviours arise and are indicative of leader and follower relationships (Larsson, 2016). Further, given that LICT conceptualizes leadership as a mutual influence process, and because influence occurs through interaction, thus allowing some individuals to lead and some to follow (Clifton, 2014; DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Larsson & Lundholm, 2010), there is a need to account for the role of influence in the identity construction process. Thus, an interaction approach was adopted in order to account for the role of influence in the leader identity construction process. This also provided an additional means through which to identify when a follower identity was being claimed, for example through the acceptance of influence. However, these concepts were only applied as guiding principles rather than as strict behaviour boundaries. This allowed sensitivity and openness to additional means through which individuals might make claims for a leader or follower identity. Taking this approach to the analysis of the video data might have run the risk of diverting away from a truly inductive approach. However, as stated before, certain guiding principles were needed in order to ensure that the analysis had both a theoretical and practical grounding. Not doing so runs the risk of producing completely abstract findings with no links back to the literature or theory.

## 5.2. Context of the study

As noted previously, the present study took place through the video and audio recording of six teams. Each of the teams were taking part in an entrepreneurship module as part of their undergraduate degree. The module was structured in such a way that all the team members had no or limited previous interaction with each other before the start of the module. The module would run each week on Monday evening from roughly six to nine p.m. During the module meeting times, some time was dedicated to lectures on entrepreneurship, which were delivered by the module coordinators, while the remaining time was dedicated to team meetings and activities or tasks. It was these team meetings that were recorded each week. The length of the team meetings varied significantly from week to week, such that on some weeks the teams met for one to two hours at a time, while on other weeks, the team meetings were interspersed between the lecture blocks. I recorded the team meetings whenever they occurred, regardless of the time or duration.

### 5.3. Micro-level leadership interactions: constructing leader and follower identities

This section will outline how each team "did leadership" and in doing so worked to construct their leader and follower identities through the identity claiming and granting process. The following section will outline the team interaction sequences using data extracts in the form of meeting transcripts and will be accompanied by corresponding screenshots from the team meeting video. The screenshots have been edited in order to obscure the identities of the participants but remain fully representative of the events depicted therein.

#### 5.3.1. Team one

Team one consisted of five members; four males and one female. For anonymity purposes, they were given the pseudonyms of Katie, Tim, Keith, Bret and Wang Wei. In their first team meeting, the team had to decide on a project idea. During the team meetings, Katie always sat at the side of the table, directly across from Wang Wei. Bret, Tim and Keith changed their seating positions from meeting to meeting. However, in the first meeting, Tim sat next to Katie, Keith was opposite Tim and Bret was at the end of the table. In the first meeting, the team struggled with their first task, with no clear project idea being decided upon over the course of the meeting. The video starts with Katie asking the team if they are happy with any of the project ideas that were suggested by the module coordinators.

*Image 1: Katie clarifying that the team can change their project idea.*

5.3.2. Data extract: meeting one

1. Katie: is anyone, one hundred percent happy with these ideas?
2. Tim: should we come up with new ideas?
3. Katie: because what I am going to do is, I need a week for this, I cannot do it right away.
4. Tim: this one is going to be the best (picks up sheet of paper with project idea written on it).
5. Katie: we will be able to change the ideas.
6. Katie: no matter what we choose, we, if say that we agreed on it and message it on Facebook…I want to Google it, I want to research.
7. Tim: okay which one?

*Image 2: Tim asking the team to decide which idea to choose.*

5.3.3. Data extract: meeting one

1. Wang Wei: [inaudible short comment]
2. Katie: I think that is a problem that we would be able to adapt to any social issue, it's about changing perceptions about a service, we make them better than they would already do.
3. Tim: what do you think about the [card]?
4. Katie: every time you send someone a card they see it is from a homeless charity, they think oh that is lovely, they are doing a nice thing.
5. Katie: it like spreads the brand as well, when you see a card, it's just nice, I like the idea.
6. Keith: ya
7. Katie: but most charities won't do it because there is already a market for it.
8. Tim: it's more about Christmas, but what about other times of the year?
9. Katie: there aren't any other seasons when you would need it. This is why I put that suggestion there (points to alternative project idea sheet).
10. Katie: it's a bit different, it's an easy little thing to sell.

11. Wang Wei: [Inaudible short comment]
12. Katie: Ya, we could do like workshops and things and get local designers to come up here and donate their time and volunteer.
13. Keith: maybe if we [make] the cards we can sell the cards for Christmas, [we can design them, get them printed].
14. Tim: what size, on what, for what?
15. Katie: don't know.
16. Bret: If we go with that idea, it's really only Christmas that we could sell them.
17. Katie: All greeting cards are seasonal though, because there are holidays all year long.
18. Tim: The worst thing is to rush in and choose an idea and [regret it] afterwards.
19. Katie: I think they just want us to choose one and we can change our idea later on if we want.

5.3.4. Identity construction interaction

At the start of the video, Katie asks the team if anyone is one hundred percent satisfied with the project ideas. Asking the team for their ideas or input could be seen as a claim for a leader identity, as this could be classified as a relations-oriented behaviour. However, my interpretation of her question also seems to imply that she does not like any of the project ideas, and based on how Tim responds, I interpreted that he also appears to perceive her question as such in line two. In line four, Tim suggests that the team choose a specific project idea. I interpret this as Tim making a claim for a leader identity by attempting to influence the team to make a decision. He also incorporates a sheet of paper into his claim. He brings the paper up to his face, as if to make sure that everyone in the team can see the project idea written on the paper (see image 2). In this way, I interpret that his actions are bringing attention to the idea and to his claim. Incorporating the sheet of paper into his claim for a leader identity is an example of how individuals can utilize tools and other artefacts in their identity claiming process (Bathurst & Cain, 2013; DeRue & Ashford, 2010). In line five, I interpreted that Katie's comments indirectly reject Tim's claim for a leader identity by suggesting that the team can change their idea later. She does not directly state that she does not like his idea, but she also does not give her support. None of the other team members provide any form of support for Tim's suggestion either, and thus his claim is apparently unsuccessful. In line seven, Tim again asks the team which project idea they prefer. Here again, I interpret this as his attempt to make a claim for a leader identity through an additional attempt to drive the team task forward, but this is again unsuccessful.

In line nine, Katie gives some positive feedback about Tim's proposed project idea. In this way, I interpret that she is giving some support to Tim's leader identity claim. Tim then reciprocates in response to this support by asking Katie what she thinks about the card project idea. I interpret this as yet another claim for a leader identity by Tim, through the use of relations-oriented behaviours. However, in line sixteen, Katie makes her own claim for a leader identity by suggesting an alternative project idea. In this way, I interpret that Katie rejects Tim's attempt at getting the team to select his project idea. In line 13, I interpret that Keith supports Katie's idea by suggesting how the team could implement the idea. In doing so, I interpret that Keith grants Katie's claim. Bret, however, follows with a rejection of Katie's claim by suggesting that the cards have limited selling potential, in line 16. The video of the first meeting continues for over an hour and by the end of it the team is in deadlock, with no clear consensus on which project idea to choose. In the last ten minutes of the meeting, I interpreted Katie's actions as continuing to attempt to manage the team by suggesting to the team that they set up a Facebook page and use this as a means to continue the decision-making process.

In the last two minutes of the meeting, Katie takes the initiative and volunteers to hold on to the team's paperwork that they generated during their first meeting, and which will apparently be needed for future meetings. I have interpreted this action as demonstrating that Katie is willing to take on responsibility for the team, but it also serves as an important organizing action and is therefore indicative of a claim for a leader identity. Importantly, when making this claim, Katie gazes at Keith (see image 3), perhaps looking to him to grant this claim. Keith gazes back at Katie and appears to grant this claim indirectly by not objecting. Tim also gazes at Katie, during this interaction, but does not say anything or react in any way. This could be interpreted as an indirect grant of Katie's claims, as Tim is not giving any indication that he objects.

*Image 3: Katie volunteers to hold on to the team task sheets.*

Directly after Katie's offers to hold on to the task sheets (and as I interpreted it, perhaps in response to her claim), Tim begins to organize a time for the team to meet in order to conduct research for their project (see image 4). As part of the module, the teams had to carry out research on their project outside of the official class meeting times. Therefore, by organizing this for the team, I interpret that Tim also makes a final claim for a leader identity.

Across the first meeting, Katie and Tim made several claims for a leader identity, while the remaining team members participated in the identity construction process through their granting or rejecting of the identity claims. Although no decisions were made regarding which team project to select, it may be the case that because two individuals were making claims for a leader identity, both with different ideas about which team project to select, this lack of clarity regarding whose ideas to follow and whose leader identity claims to grant may have resulted in the team deadlock regarding the project.

*Image 4: Tim asking team members when they can meet next.*

5.3.5. Team one, week two meeting

At the start of the week two meeting, Katie hands out the team task sheets to each team member (see image 5). Although this action might seem inconsequential, I interpret it as task driven and that it sets the tone for the meeting by drawing the other team members' attention towards starting the task. Katie then takes out the team task sheet from the previous week from her binder (see image 6). Katie does this without any verbal exchange between her and the other team members. I interpreted from the team's behaviour during this sequence that they understand what Katie is doing, because they gaze at her, waiting for the sheet to be taken out. After this, Katie begins to read the task sheet to herself silently. She notices that Keith and Tim are talking to each other and gazes at them a few times. Keith notices Katie's gaze and stops talking to Tim, and he moves his torso in over the table in order to move closer to Katie (see image 7).

I interpret Keith's actions as him realizing that Katie is starting to carry out the current team task by reading the task sheet, and he follows suit. After this brief interaction, the whole team begins to focus on the task. In this way, I have interpreted that Katie and Keith both silently brought the team together to focus on the task and start the meeting. Since Katie engaged in actions that both facilitated the team's work and brought the team to order, I interpret that through this sequence of events, Katie made a series of indirect claims for a leader identity that were granted by the team, as evidenced by their focus on the task and their attention to her actions.

I have interpreted Keith's action of attending to Katie's body language as subtly influencing the remaining team members into focusing on the task. Therefore, although Katie initiated the influence by nonverbally influencing Keith to engage in the team activity, Keith's actions had a domino effect on the team, creating something of a cascade of influence. This frames Keith as both a follower and a leader in this interaction. This is a good example of what I refer to as "the active follower". An active follower is an individual who supports another person's leader identity claims, and in so doing acts as both a follower, by being influenced by the individual making the claim for a leader identity, and as a leader, through influencing other people in the team to follow.

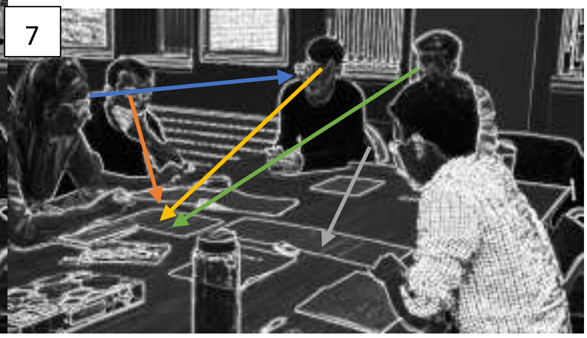


*Image 5: Katie hands out the team task sheets.*

*Image 6: Team members gaze at Katie as she takes out team paperwork from her binder.*

*Image 7: Katie uses gaze to draw team members' attention to the task.*

5.3.6. Data extract: meeting two

1. Katie: I think we need to have some sensitivity to what we are doing, look at the bottom here, what is the location? (gesturing to task sheet).
2. Katie: we need to put in that they are people from this country.
3. Katie: I think we should say for step one, it's people from here.
4. Bret: ya
5. Katie: for this project we have got to do some research.
6. Keith: that is what we have got to get going on.
7. Katie: ya
8. Wang Wei: will it be easier to do the research online?
9. Katie: ya, we will be able to look at like easy habits, and we can look at like how easy it is, and like trends.

10. Wang Wei: [inaudible suggestion]
11. Katie: we could look at like loads of different takeaway places and see like what their minimum charge is for delivery
12. Bret: ya
13. Katie: we know that, that would be a good way to know, for like when they want a takeaway, what are they willing to pay.
14. Tim: [comment about a takeaway business]
15. Keith: Deliveroo that is like another widely used takeaway.
16. Katie: that is quite a premium takeaway, isn't it?
17. Katie: they probably charge extra, more than what the restaurant would.


*Image 8: Team working on task.*

*Image 9: Katie working on task sheet.*

5.3.7. Identity construction interaction

As the above images demonstrate (images 8 & 9), by the end of the week two meeting, it appeared to me that team one had settled into roles. Keith and Tim spent much of the meeting talking with each other, having a bit of a laugh, and conducting research for the team via a smart phone. Wang Wei and Bret also conducted online research via their smart phones. Katie worked on completing the team task sheet and appeared to write down project details. I interpreted their actions during this meeting as the four male team members taking on follower roles for the majority of the meeting and allowing Katie to take on more of a leader role. For example, in this meeting Katie asked for the other team members' input and ideas, which I would interpret as relations-oriented behaviour. Notably, when Katie asked for input, she did so by making eye contact with the other person and appearing to actively listen to their ideas. In contrast, the male team members did not display these types of behaviour. For example, although Keith and Tim talked to each other, they did not ask other team members questions about their ideas for the project. Katie also made suggestions on how the project should move forward, which I interpret as task structuring in nature and therefore task-oriented. For example, in line five, Katie states that the team needs to conduct research, and I interpreted that the four male team members all apparently did so in response to this. Katie also takes on the job of completing the team's task sheet. Although it could be argued that there may be gender role stereotyping taking place due to the fact that the only female team member is doing most of the team's paperwork, I would interpret this as indicative of Katie's task structuring actions and commitment to the project.

Furthermore, what stands out as conceptually interesting about the first two meetings of this team is the role of interaction partners and gaze. An interaction partner can be thought of as someone who actively participates in a social interaction with another individual. Gaze is an act of perception, meaning that to gaze is to take in information and to signal that one is attending to what one is gazing at (Kendon, 1967; Pfeiffer, Vogeley & Schilbach, 2013). From the first meeting, and across the meetings as a whole, Katie displayed a preference to make her claims for a leader identity and to focus her talk towards Keith. For example, in the following screenshot (see image 10), it can be observed that Katie gazes and verbally interacts with Keith. This same behaviour was observed across the first two team meetings (see images 1 & 3 as examples). Furthermore, Katie gazed at Keith much more than any of the other team members.



*Image 10: Katie gazing at Keith in first team meeting.*

*Image 11: Katie and Keith gazing and conversing. Week 2 meeting.*

Image 11 illustrates one instance in which Katie was making a suggestion to the team. She began by gazing and directing her talk to Bret. However, Bret stopped making eye contact with Katie and began looking at his mobile phone. Katie was observed to immediately shift her gaze to Keith and began directing her speech to him instead. Bret's disengagement from Katie's interaction could be interpreted as a rejection of her attempts to make a claim for a leader identity. The fact that Keith returned Katie's gaze and as I interpreted it, appeared to attend to what she was saying, could be an indication of a grant of Katie's leader identity. Katie's choice to shift her gaze from Bret to Keith is both a natural response to someone not paying attention, but also a strategic attempt to continue to successfully make a claim for a leader identity, as I interpreted it. In this way, the role of gaze in the claiming and granting of leader and follower identities appears to be more than just communicative in nature. Rather, it would appear that gaze may have an important function in signalling to others to whom the intended claim or grant is directed. It may also be the case that gaze is indicative of a larger interaction pattern. It would appear that individuals may perceive certain others as highly receptive to their claims and may therefore focus their claims towards this person or persons in the hope that they will grant said claims. In this way, I argue that gaze plays an important role in the reciprocal claiming and granting process.

To summarize the team one interactions, on a whole, I interpreted that Katie and Tim contributed the most to driving the team task forward in the initial team meeting, with Katie taking on more of a leader role in the second week meeting. Katie also used more relational leadership behaviours than the other team members. Given that Katie is female, it could be argued that she has been socially conditioned to engage in more relational behaviours than her male counterparts (Burke & Collins, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 1991). However, regardless of why she displayed these behaviours when others did not, they seem to work to her advantage in terms of enabling her to receive grants of her claims, as arguably having a good relationship with others could engender them to grant her claims. Keith provided the most support through both his verbal and nonverbal contributions, by gazing and providing feedback and comments. Bret contributed far less than other team members but often received his team members' attention in the form of eye gaze and verbal feedback when he did contribute, which may be a function of his white male status. In contrast, Wang Wei received the least amount of attention from his fellow team members. Wang Wei did contribute by making suggestions to the team. Unfortunately, in many instances, the other team members did not gaze back at him when he spoke, except for Katie. This may be an indication of his status in the team as a follower and possibly also an outsider due to his ethnicity.

## 5.4. Team two

Team two consisted of five members. The team members were given the pseudonyms of Mohammad, James, Will, Olga and Sara. In their first meeting, the team was working on developing ideas for their social enterprise; a car washing service run by homeless people. The fifth team member, Olga was not present during the first team meeting, due to illness. During all team meetings, Sara and Will sat next to each other, while Mohammad changed seats from meeting to meeting. James and Olga always sat opposite Will and Sara.

12

13

14

*Image 12: Mohammad picks up task sheet.*

*Image 13: Mohammad, Will and James gaze at Sara.*

*Image 14: Mohammad hands Sara the task sheet.*

### 5.4.1. Data extract: week one meeting

1. Mohammad: Who wants to be the scribe? (gazing at task sheet)
2. Mohammad: I am not doing it.
3. James: [my writing is poor too]
4. Will: [you have good hand writing]? (talk directed at Sara)
5. Mohammad: (gazing at Sara) Alright?
6. Sara: Ya, that's alright.
7. (whole team laughs)
8. Will: that means she does not have to think.
9. Sara: I was thinking you should do it. (talk direct at Will)
10. Will: oh wait, why were you thinking of me?
11. Sara: because I thought you would be good at it.
12. Will: oh but it's going to be my handwriting. (implying that his handwriting is poor)

### 5.4.2. Identity construction interaction

In this short interaction, I interpreted that Mohammad initiates a claim for a leader identity by asking who wants to fill out the task sheet (see image 12). In line 5, Mohammad seeks Sara's agreement to take on the task (see image 13). Having a task assigned rather than taking the initiative to volunteer to take on the task could be interpreted as a grant of a follower identity due to the power dynamic that is implied through being influenced by someone else. By asking or influencing Sara to take on this task, I interpreted that Mohammad was both granting Sara a follower identity and making an indirect claim for a leader identity. James makes a claim for a follower identity in this interaction sequence by stating that his writing is poor, indicating that he should not be nominated to fill out the sheet. It was observed in the video that Will turned his gaze to Sara as soon as Mohammad asked who wanted to be the scribe, which I interpreted as possibly suggesting that he also wanted Sara to take on this role (see image 13). By accepting the nomination from Mohammad to fill out the task sheet, Sara grants Mohammad his claim for a leader identity and accepts the grant of a follower identity (see image 14). The interaction between Will and Sara between lines seven and ten was interpreted as Sara having thought to nominate Will to fill out the task sheet, indicating that she had possibly intended to grant Will a follower identity. However, the team consensus put Sara in this role instead, which brings to question the issue of gender in the claiming and granting of identities. It is unclear why the males nominated the only female member for the task of writing, but it is clear that there are gender divides appearing in the team in this interaction sequence.

5.4.3. Data extract: Interaction between Will and Sara

1. Will: is CSR agreement a phrase that you learned previously?
2. Sara: yes
3. Sara: I learned about CSR in [the student job market programme]
4. Sara: where we had to come up with a CSR idea [for the job shop]
5. Will: oh, this is the same thing?
6. Sara: ya
7. Will: oh, well perfect, you can be team leader
8. Will: I will rank you highly on the peer assessment (laughs)
9. Will: give you a few more points.
10. Sara: no, that is what we did in Careerwise for the job shop for students.
11. Mohammad: oh, did you?

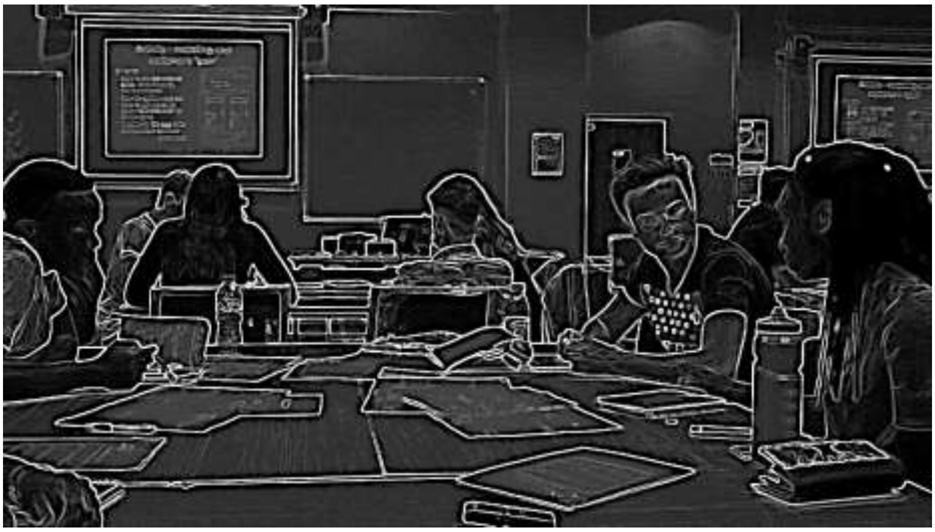


*Image 15: Sara talking about CSR*

5.4.4. Identity construction interaction

In this interaction, Will grants Sara a leader identity by verbally stating that because she has relevant knowledge and experience, she would make a good team leader. As I interpreted it, in response to this Sara shares with the team how she gained her knowledge of CSR, and in doing so provides validation of her knowledge, and justification for the grant. However, in line 5, Will appears to interrupt Sara as she is talking and interjects with the grant. Will also indirectly claims a follower identity by granting Sara a leader identity. Interestingly it should be noted, as I interpreted it, that Will appears to interrupt Sara as she tells her story in order to make his grant. However, in line 10 we can see that Sara attempts to draw the conversation back to her story, as if attempting to continue to demonstrate her capability. This is not the only instance where Sara is interrupted. As the interaction continues (transcript not included in this chapter), Sara goes on to describe how she gained her knowledge of CSR through working with refugees while working at the student careers centre, and Will redirects the conversation away from Sara’s story and begins talking about how he does not understand how refugees from Africa end up living near to his home town. In this way, Will draws the conversation away from Sara and her knowledge, effectively stopping her from continuing to display her subject-specific knowledge. By steering the conversation away, Will effectively ends Sara's ability to further her opportunity to make a claim for a leader identity.

Will displays these types of conversation redirecting behaviours across the first meeting. For example, telling a story about his mum's car when the team is discussing their idea for a car washing service, or when he talks about a pizza truck in France as a business model. Although these other stories do not interrupt any other team members' identity claims, this particular instance with Sara is noteworthy because of the impact it has on the identity construction process, in that it was interrupted. On the whole, Will's stories are highly individual-specific and not wholly relatable to the rest of the team, who are clearly people of colour and likely do not share Will's white and privileged background. It is unclear what role these types of side story may have in the identity construction process, except to function as an attempt at relationship building. What is clear, though, is that they have real potential to distract from the identity construction process of others, if used at critical points, for example, when other individuals are attempting to make claims for a leader identity.

5.4.5. Data extract: Team two

1. Mohammad: is everyone happy with the car wash?
2. Sara: ya, I'm happy.
3. Will: ya, I…
4. Sara: I would work on the car wash…
5. Will: I would…
6. Sara: but the people doing the car washing, do you think they would get bored?
7. Mohammad: ya, but I think…
8. Will: (interrupts Mohammad) if it's your own car you would take pride in it, but if it is not your car, you would not, isn't it?

9. James: maybe you could do more, if…I don't know…if you get commission, or feedback or something like that.
10. Will: ya
11. Sara: feedback is good, feedback, is very good.
12. Sara: I think a feedback system would be good, write that down.
13. Will: ya, I'll write that down.
14. Will: maybe if we expand a bit, for the car wash we could have a manager.
15. James: ya
16. Mohammad: like if we have some non-homeless people…like, overlooking…
17. Sara: ya, ya.
18. Sara: so this…
19. Mohammad: we could do like a video.
20. Sara: we could do a print, with like a car wash in the background.
21. Will: it could be like no reservations, looking cool. We are all going to have to be as lame as possible. (only one person laughs at this)
22. Mohammad: there is an enterprise, I could get in touch with them if you want me to.
23. Will: oh, ya
24. Mohammad: they have like old and new cars too.
25. Will: we could film something on their site.
26. Mohammad: I'll get in touch with them.

*Image 16: Mohammad talking about the car wash.*

5.4.6. Identity construction interaction

In this interaction sequence from the team one, week one meeting, we can see that the team is working on developing their project idea and are brainstorming ideas. In line one, Mohammad focuses the team and brings them back on topic. In this way, he makes a claim for a leader identity, because he is influencing the team's behaviour, specifically to focus on the task. As the interaction moves on, Sara and Will agree with Mohammad's suggestion about the car wash, thus acting as a grant of his claim. However, in line seven, when Mohammad attempts to add some detail or comment, he is interrupted by Will in line eight, thus ending the possible contribution Mohammad intended to make. In line nine, James makes a verbal contribution. However, his contribution is just a suggestion and does not drive the task forward, and thus his claim for a follower identity is maintained. In line 13, Sara instructs Will to write an idea down. This is a direct order and could be interpreted as a claim for a leader identity. In line 14, Will agrees to comply with Sara's order. This is both a grant of Sara's claim, but could also be further indication of a leader-follower relationship being established between Will and Sara. In this instance, it may be possible to see the start of relational recognition of the leader-follower relationship. In line 22, Mohammad makes a suggestion that is actionable, thus continuing his claim for a leader identity. Will appears to agree with this suggested course of action, thus granting Mohammad's claim.

Furthermore, from this interaction sequence, we can see that James and Will take very different approaches to claiming and granting. James grants the leader identity claims of Mohammad and Sara by not objecting or offering simple agreement statements such as "yes", "ya", etc. He also makes his claims for a follower identity by mostly remaining silent during the interaction. Will on the other hand is very verbal. He grants claims by validating ideas and providing feedback. However, he also interrupts Sara and Mohammad on multiple occasions. It would therefore appear that Will's contribution to the leader identity construction process of Sara and Mohammad is positive and helpful, but he also interrupts or ends their claims in some instances. In this way, there is also something of a negative element to his followership.

Overall across the team one meetings, Mohammad and Sara made the most frequent and consistent claims for a leader identity, as evidenced by the examples outlined in the previous interaction sequences. Mohammad also asked other team members questions and participated in overall team conversation, which could be viewed as relations-oriented in nature. In this way, it was assessed that Mohammad made a significant effort to claim a leader identity in meeting two. However, it would appear that Sara and Mohammad differed in how they made claims. Mohammad appeared to make unprompted claims, meaning that his claims were spontaneous in nature and were not prompted by others. Sara, on the other hand, appeared to make both spontaneous claims and prompted claims, meaning that her claims were not always the result of her own action. In several meeting sessions across the video corpus, Sara made claims when others (mostly Will) prompted her to do so. This is interesting to note given that it would appear that from the first meeting, Will and Sara seem to have established a leader-follower relationship, with Sara making claims for a leader identity and Will making claims for a follower identity. In this way, Will appears to have granted Sara a leader identity by offering her opportunities to make claims for a leader identity. For example, in meeting two, Will prompted Sara to start working on the task sheet. After this, Sara took control and ended up running the team meeting for a significant amount of time. During this time, Mohammad also allowed Sara to take on this role. In this way, we can see how Will supported Sara's leader identity, but also at times interrupted her and ended her claiming process. This tension between support and interruption is an interesting dichotomy to observe in team interactions. It would suggest that support for another person's identity construction process may not always be linear or consistent.

## 5.5. Team three

Team three was comprised of three women and two men. The team members were given the pseudonyms of Beth, Chris, Mike, Sheela and Ruth. For the majority of the team meetings, Sheela was seated at what could be considered the head of the table, while during most meetings, Chris and Beth sat next to each other on the right-hand side of the table, and Mike and Ruth sat next to each other on the left-hand side of the table. The first data extract comes from the team's first meeting.

*Image 17: Team three, week one meeting.*

5.5.1. Data extract: week one meeting

1. Sheela: should we Google it?
2. Mike: what?
3. Sheela: I said should we Google it, she said we could Google it.
4. Chris: ya, Google it, don't email me (laughs).
5. Sheela: so, we could go to care homes and…
6. Beth: ya.
7. Mike: (laughs) who is it, what is its name? I always forget.
8. Chris: it's just
9. Sheela: that place up north?
10. Chris: no, they cook food
11. Sheela: oh Samaritans?
12. Chris: Samaritans.
13. Sheela and Chris: (at same time) ya, that one there (pointing at the computer screen).
14. Chris: um, see if there are any more
15. Beth: I'll have a look at it now.
16. Chris: um, ya have a look at what they charge, what they serve.
17. Sheela: it's free
18. Chris: it's free?
19. Sheela: it looks like they have a centre near here, I've heard of it.
20. Beth: also on the other side of town.
21. Beth: they also offer accommodation and food and showers and things like that.
22. Sheela: ya.

23. Beth: it’s a big operation.
24. Sheela: ya.
25. Chris: um.
26. Beth: um, let’s just write stuff down.
27. Chris: I think we could potentially find a place we could do it and look at resources around the area.
28. Beth: yah that’s true.
29. Sheela: basically, how many lunch cafés are around?
30. Beth: yah or how many kind, of cheap…
31. Beth: kind of how many there are…
32. Chris: um.
33. Beth: lunch clubs there are.
34. Ruth: their menu.
35. Beth: hum?
36. Ruth: their menu.
37. Sheela: ya, ya.

5.5.2. Identity construction interaction

In line one, Sheela offers to Google information for the task. Because this would drive the team task forward by getting the necessary information, this action could be interpreted as a claim for a leader identity. Chris supports her idea, which could be interpreted as a grant of Sheela’s claim. In line fourteen, Chris makes a claim for a leader identity by soliciting additional information, which Beth grants by offering to look up the information. Because Beth did not initiate the need for the information, her offer to help would not be considered a claim for a leader identity. Chris then reciprocates by giving Beth instructions on what information to look for. In this way the reciprocal nature of the leader identity construction process can be observed. In line twenty-six, Beth suggests that they should write down the information they are finding. This is a useful action to take, but because it does not necessarily drive the task forward in a significant way, it could indicate a claim for a follower identity rather than a leader identity. The team continues to discuss the project details throughout the meeting. Mike and Ruth contribute very little in the way of verbal contributions to the team discussion. In this way, I interpreted that they both made claims for a follower identity.

5.5.3. Data extract: week two meeting

1. Sheela: what should we go with, students or elderly people?
2. Mike: [inaudible comment]
3. Sheela: yep.
4. Chris: I am in two minds about it.
5. Mike: I think we need more information about it.
6. Sheela: ok.
7. Mike: with students it could be a big success or a [failure].
8. Sheela: let's all hope it is a big success.
9. Chris: I think it depends with some students.
10. Chris: it could be a bit more busy with students.
11. Sheela: ya, that is a bit more…
12. Mike: if they feel like they could cook that at home.
13. Sheela: it all depends, so we will hit more on the older generation.

*Image 18: Team three working on completing task sheet.*

5.5.4. Identity construction interaction

At this point in the team meeting, Sheela has taken control of the team's task sheet, and now has it in front of her. As observed in the video, the team is working on developing their target market. Sheela gazes at all the team members one at a time and asks whether the team should focus their social enterprise on students or the elderly. Asking the team for their ideas is a relations-oriented claim for a leader identity. Chris and Mike provide the majority of the arguments in response to Sheela's prompt for a decision to be made. By responding to Sheela's prompt for a decision on their target market, in this interaction sequence, I interpreted that Mike and Chris are claiming a follower identity. Beth maintains her claim for a follower identity by continuing to maintain eye gaze in Sheela's direction, which I interpreted as indicating that she is engaged in the conversation, and by providing nonverbal validation to Sheela by nodding her head when Sheela announces the final decision to focus on the elderly as the team's target market. Ruth also maintains her claim for a follower identity by remaining silent during the interaction. She neither agrees nor objects and allows other team members to make the decision.

Across the team meetings, both Sheela and Chris take turns driving the team task forward and therefore both make consistent claims for a leader identity across the meetings. However, Sheela made more relations-oriented claims than Chris. Beth and Mike consistently support the team by providing feedback and offering to take on tasks. Although they do not make as many suggestions to drive the team task, they both contribute to the team. Ruth also contributes to the team through making suggestions and helping the team with research and completing tasks, but she does so much less frequently than other team members. In many of the team videos, she is seen sitting quietly for long periods of time, watching the team as they talk, as can be seen in image 19 below. The four other team members all move closer together in order to talk, while Ruth is left by herself to read the task sheet. I interpreted this behaviour to indicate that the team has granted Ruth a follower identity by not including her. Interestingly, Ruth did not attempt to move closer to the team and the rest of the team members also did not ask her to move closer nor attempt to include her. In this way, I interpreted that they have constructed her as a follower and an outsider.

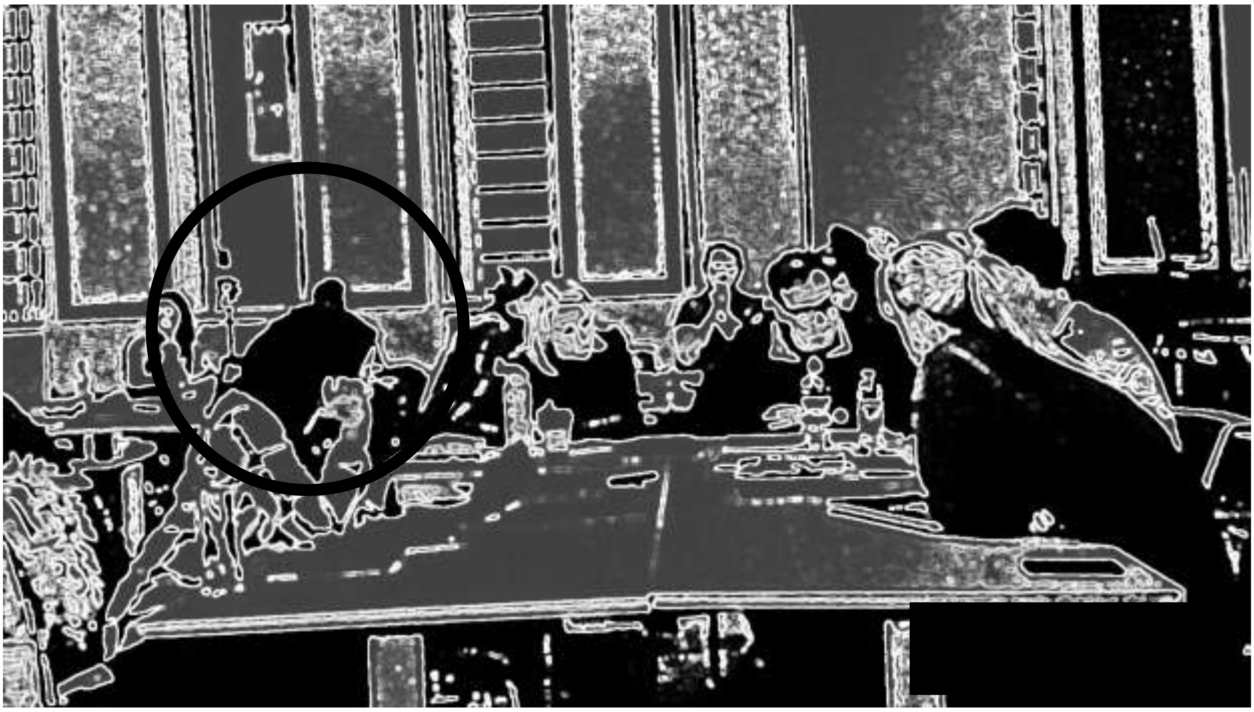


*Image 19: Ruth sitting quietly while the rest of the team works.*

5.6. Team four

Team four was made up of four members, of which three were male and one female. The participants in this team were given the pseudonyms of Trish, Zhang Wei, Aarav and Steven. Steven was not present during the first meeting. During the first meeting, Trish and Zhang Wei sat on opposite sides of the table from each other. Aarav sat next to Trish. The decision on which team project to select was made by Trish, Zhang Wei and Aarav. The team did not fully understand what their task was in the first team meeting and required significant help from the programme coordinators for the first fifteen minutes of the meeting.

*Image 20: Team four, week one meeting.*

5.6.1. Data extract: Team four

1. Trish: what would you put for that? (gestures towards question on task sheet)

2. Aarav: for that?

3. Trish: ya

4. Aarav: well this can, you can also like sell your products in stores.

5. Trish: oh ya, ya, ya

6. Aarav: right! You know like the Card Factory, these types of places, they sell stuff like that don't they?

7. Aarav: but why would they get that stuff in for the social, ah.

8. Trish: what is the background on this?

9. Trish: [inaudible short comment]

10. Aarav: ya

11. Trish: I think for the customers we need to find the problem.

12. Aarav: the type of product, the indecisiveness of the customer.

13. Trish: ya

5.6.2. Identity construction interaction

In line one, Trish makes a claim for a leader identity by attempting to get the team started on the task by asking the team to give their input on the task. Trish continues to ask questions and drive the task forward, for example in line eleven when she states that they need to find the problem for their customer. However, Trish was not the only one to make claims for a leader identity in this first meeting. Zhang Wei also made a claim for a leader identity, as can be seen in the next interaction sequence.


*Image 21: The team discuss project details.*

*Image 22: Trish volunteers to help fill out the task sheet.*

*Image 23: The team further discuss the details of the project.*

*Image 24: Zhang Wei indicates that he will take over the task of filling in the task sheet.*

*Image 25: Aarav volunteers to help fill in the task sheet.*

*Image 26: Aarav moves new task sheet to middle of the table so everyone has equal access.*

### 5.6.3. Identity construction interaction

As can be seen in image 24, Zhang Wei reached out to pick up the task sheet from the middle of the table. Observing this, Trish helped Zhang Wei get the form by moving it closer to him. Zhang Wei was then observed beginning to fill out the form. Because Zhang Wei is driving the task forward through his proactive behaviour to fill out the task sheet, this behaviour can be classified as a leader identity claim. Zhang Wei then sought information to put down on the form from Trish and Aarav. By asking for input from the team, Zhang Wei is making a claim for a leader identity. Aarav and Trish grant this claim for a leader identity, firstly by not objecting to Zhang Wei filling out the form and secondly by responding when asked by Zhang Wei for information to put down on the form.

All three team members contributed to filling out the team task sheet and took turns making claims for a leader identity and reciprocating by making grants to their fellow team members when it was their “turn” to make claims for a leader identity. In this way, more so than any of the other teams, team four established a distributed leadership model in their first team meeting. Furthermore, unlike other teams, all the team members contributed equally and supported each other’s identity claims through reciprocal grants.

## 5.7. Team five

Team five had five team members. The pseudonyms they were given were Max, Bill, Allen, Olie and Brenda. Brenda sat next to Allen at the first team meeting. Max and Bill were directly opposite, sitting next to each other. During their first team meeting, team five started by getting to know each other. This included asking for and sharing personal information with each other and looking for each other on Facebook. Olie was not present for the first team meeting. At the start of the first team meeting video, the team focused much of their attention on their mobile phones in order to look at each other’s Facebook profiles. Max asks if they have set up a Facebook group yet but receives no response from any of his teammates. His first attempt at organizing the team falls flat. However, the team is then prompted by the programme coordinators that there is a limited amount of time left for the team to decide on their project idea. At this point, Max attempts to bring the team’s focus around to the task.

### 5.7.1. Data extract: team five

1. Max: so, what are we thinking?
2. Bill: it's all decided.
3. Brenda: fine
4. Brenda: I mean any of them we could have probably developed.
5. Max: ya
6. Brenda: to a reasonable level if…, it's about the amount of effort we were to put in.
7. Max: ya
8. Brenda: this seems like this one is more likely to work.
9. Bill: we don't actually have to do it do we?
10. Brenda: no, no, you don't actually set it up, but if it was a good project, you can go and set it up yourself, and I think you can get extra points for that.
11. Bill: seriously?
12. Allen: you mean properly set it up?
13. Brenda: You have to pitch it. You have to pitch it to them and plan it basically. They could be like this is great I am going to do this.
14. Max: Ya, I mean, ya.

*Image 27: Brenda gazes towards Max as he attempts to get the team to make a decision on their project.*

5.7.2. Identity construction interaction

At the start of the interaction, Max makes the first claim for a leader identity by attempting to get the team to decide on a team project idea. Although Max has asked the team a question, he attempts to bring the team's focus back to the task rather than looking at Facebook, which is an attempt to influence the team's actions, which is change-oriented in nature. Bill responds that it has "been decided" but does not give any further clarifying details. Bill's dismissive comment could be interpreted as a rejection of Max's leader identity claim. Allen does not make any verbal contribution at this stage, but he does gaze in the direction of Max and indicates his project choice by pointing at a team project idea on a sheet of paper (see image 28). In doing so, Allen grants Max his leader identity claim by responding to his attempt to organize the team and influence their actions. In line three, I interpreted that Brenda appears to accept Bill's rejection of Max's claim, but brings in the caveat that any idea would work. In line eight, Brenda indicates her selection of the preferred project idea by pointing at an item on the project idea list (see image 29). By doing so, I interpreted this as Brenda dismissing Bill's argument that the project idea has been decided and supporting Max's claim by indicating which project she is thinking of.



*Image 28: Allen indicating his project selection by pointing.*

*Image 29: Brenda pointing to her chosen project idea.*

*Image 30: Team five, week two.*

5.7.3. Data extract: week two

1. Brenda: we need to find out how many old people there are in the local area, so we can just use Nomis, Nomis, which should take 5 mins.
2. Bill: it's a hundred and ten thousand people.
3. Brenda: okay, easy, we can get a break-down of where they live most through the Office of National Statistics and then, if you go on Nomis.
4. Bill: N O M I S
5. Brenda: that is the office of regional statistics, that will have things like that.
6. Brenda: you do economics?
7. Max: I don't know this stuff.
8. Bill: so, that's Nomis, the cities' elderly population.
9. Brenda: that is all the different types of surveys they do. So, census will have loads of information.
10. Allen: and the populations?

11. Brenda: state pensions you can probably get off of there…then download it and you get all the data for each individual…district within the city.
12. Bill: do you want to fill this in? (the team task sheet)
13. Bill: because I saw you enjoying writing and shit.
14. Brenda: (Laughs)
15. Olie: you did it last week?
16. Brenda: umhum
17. Max: do you want me to fill it in?
18. Brenda: umhumm
19. Max: it's rubbish, I should be doing something...thank you (Max is handed the form to fill out)
20. Max: so what elements are we aiming for?
21. Brenda: what does that even mean?
22. Allen: I don't know.

5.7.4. Identity construction interaction

In this interaction sequence, it is evident that Brenda makes a number of helpful contributions. In line one, Brenda directs the team towards a course of action and provides details regarding where this information can be found. In this way, she not only attempts to influence the team's actions, she also provides information the other team members apparently did not have. In this way, Brenda makes a claim for a leader identity. In line ten, Allen asks for further information from Brenda, and in doing so grants Brenda a leader identity by acknowledging that she has important information that is needed for the team task. This particular interaction sequence is a good example of the role that having task-specific information can have in driving the interaction sequence forward and in doing so act as a claim for a leader identity (Clifton, 2009).

In line thirteen, Bill attempts to get Brenda to fill out the team task sheet, and in doing so attempts to make a claim for a leader identity through influence. However, through their actions, I interpreted that other team members seem to reject this claim. Brenda does not accept the task and laughs at Bill’s suggestion. In line fifteen, Olie attempts to clarify whether Brenda did the task last week, as if to assess the fairness of Bill’s suggestion, as I interpreted it. Max offers to take on the task in response. I interpreted this sequence of action as Max possibly attempting to deflect Bill’s grant of a follower identity to Brenda but also simultaneously making a claim for a follower identity. Had Max volunteered to take on this task prior to this interaction, it could have been interpreted as a claim for a leader identity, but because Max’s offer to fill out the sheet builds from Bill’s attempt to get Brenda to do it, it would not be interpreted as a claim for a leader identity. This example may indicate the ability of a claim to resonate in a team even after time has passed. Brenda’s claims for a leader identity through knowledge seems to have trumped Bill’s attempt to grant her a follower identity.

Across the team meetings it was observed that Brenda’s influence in the team grew. It was very clear that across the team meetings, she was the one driving the conversation and decision making. These early interactions, which have been outlined in the data extracts, are illustrative of this occurrence, although it is also worth noting that Brenda was a student athlete, as were other team members. It is therefore possible that this status brought with it some credibility to her leader identity claiming process. For example, in another interaction Brenda outlines how she is part of the leadership team for her university sports team. This claim for a leader identity outside of the context of the team may have also proved beneficial to her claims in the team.

## 5.8. Team six

Team six was made up of four team members with the pseudonyms of Amanda, John, Andy and Liza. Amanda and John sat next to each other at the side of the table, while Liza and Andy sat next to each other at the end/head of the table. This team was the only team with an even gender distribution. Unfortunately, due to a battery failure in the video camera, their first team meeting was not recorded in sufficient detail to be included. The first data for this team therefore comes from their second team meeting, which took place one week after the first meeting. At the start of the video, the team is deciding on how they want to conduct the market research for their product. At the start of the video, Amanda has taken on the task of filling out the team task sheet.

*Image 31: Amanda angles her torso over the table to be in the direction of gaze of the whole team.*

5.8.1. Data extract: week one

1. Amanda: so, I’ve just put on here. If you want to know anything about what they pay for a candle, because obviously we are going to have to think about prices and pricing. So, if you ask do you buy candles, you can still put what have you paid for a candle in the past?
2. Amanda: they might say oh for a tealight I paid that for a pack, and for like a candle like this I pay this, ya, um what else have I written here. Oh, if they say why not...if they say no to… if they say I wouldn’t want to stock a candle as part of a social enterprise, why not, is it product based, would it be something else that they think it would not work?
3. John: ya
4. Amanda: um
5. Liza: that way we can learn if also another product would sell if not a candle.
6. Andy: yep
7. Amanda: yep we have already got too many candles, but I feel like we are getting somewhere with that. Right so…
8. Andy: what are we supposed to be doing? (reads task instructions aloud).
9. Amanda: secondary research.
10. Liza: that list of questions.
11. Liza: ya, do you want me to change it to bring like a copy for Monday?
12. Amanda: ya, but I would need like quite a lot of room though, because we might not just ask these questions though, we might ask others.
13. John: ya.
14. Amanda: let’s leave like a bit of a gap though.
15. Liza: I’ll send you like a map and you can mark on it how you like.

16. Amanda: ya that would be good.
17. Amanda: so, for secondary research we could…
18. John: maybe we could, ask the distributers, is it product based?
19. Amanda: (interrupts John) so if we go into shops, we could.
20. John: ya
21. Amanda: we could go into shops and ask, or we could go into shops and see what they sell.
22. John: ya, and also…, ya
23. Amanda: um, what candles do.
24. Liza: what they sell, and we could just stay there for a couple of minutes and observe what customers tend to buy more.
25. Andy: ya, um

5.8.2. Identity construction interaction

This sequence of interactions begins with Amanda reading out what she has put down on the team task sheet. Although filling out the task sheet might be interpreted as a claim for a follower identity, because Amanda filled in the task sheet on her own initiative, using her own ideas and the ideas of the other team members, she has taken on an important task and in doing so has driven the task forward. In line eight, Andy asks what the team is meant to be doing. Amanda clarifies what the task is, and in doing so makes an additional claim for a leader identity. In line eleven, Liza makes a claim for a follower identity by offering to complete a task for Amanda. Offering to complete this task could be seen as a claim for a leader identity because it drives the task forward. However, because Liza offers to do the task for Amanda, it is linked to Amanda's claim for a leader identity and therefore not an independent task. Interestingly, at the start of this interaction sequence, Amanda talks a lot and her teammates seem to allow her this significant air space by not interrupting her as she talks. In this way, it can be observed that Amanda makes a significant claim for a leader identity simply through her extended verbal contribution to the team, and the team reciprocate with claims for follower identities by listening to her and attending to what she has to say.

5.8.3. Data extract: making contact with businesses

1. Amanda: do you think we need to say something about how we are only going to use the information for the project?...Because I am sure there are like ethical things for the project that you have got to mention… um do you remember when we did fit coffee?
2. Andy: ya
3. Amanda: I actually remember them saying that you have to say that the information is going to be used for the project.
4. Andy: for the project.
5. Amanda: for the project.
6. John: I mean if they say that, then we will do that.
7. Amanda: what did you say again? Yours was good. (Laughs)
8. Andy: um…I'm a student at a university and we would like your advice… do you have any time for us?
9. Amanda: we can say that we will only take a few moments or…
10. John: yep.
11. Amanda: hello, which do you think sounds better?
12. John: I do like saying my name… saying it will take a few moments…will probably be better.
13. Andy: ya
14. Andy: so custom small business owner.
15. John: ya...more like local business owners.

16. Andy: so, how do we determine what is a local business?
17. Amanda: that is probably something that we can work out to be honest. You can probably pick some that will be easy.
18. John: we still need to ask that...are you the person who makes the decisions?
19. John: because obviously it's not about customers.
20. Amanda: because some guys actually sold some stuff to a couple and I was like no I can't sell it, so they had to back out of the deal.
21. John: at the end of the day we need to be asking people who are in business what their decisions are.
22. Amanda: ya
23. Andy: we might have to come back to it.
24. John: that is true.
25. Amanda: then maybe we should try and go earlier than that?
26. Andy: what do you do then, you go into a business and you ask when are you free, right?
27. John: right.
28. Andy: so, we have got to do that Wednesday morning.
29. John: ya.

*Image 32: Team six discussing their strategy for introducing themselves to businesses.*

5.8.4. Identity construction interaction

In this interaction sequence, John, Amanda and Andy do all of the talking. Liza does not contribute to the discussion, and therefore appears to be continuing her claim for a follower identity. In this interaction, John and Amanda appear to make claims for a leader identity. For example, in lines eighteen and nineteen, John makes useful points that help to clarify the team's task, and in doing so drives the conversation and task forward, which could be seen as a claim for a leader identity. Amanda also makes several contributions, but also supports the ideas of her teammates. In this way, she is displaying both claiming and granting behaviours. Andy asks mostly clarifying questions that help to contribute to the task, but which do not significantly drive the task forward, and in doing so supports the team through his claiming of a follower identity. Liza also takes on more of a follower role in that she does not participate in the conversation and therefore is claiming a follower identity.

On the whole, the members of this team all contributed to driving the task forward. However, Andy and Liza contributed slightly less than Amanda and John and therefore appear to have taken on more of a follower identity in their team. However, this team had a noticeable shift of back and forth claiming and granting between the team members as a whole, which resulted in more of a distributed leadership model. However, again, this was skewed more towards John and Amanda, who made a greater number of claims for a leader identity in comparison to Andy and Liza. Amanda's claims were also notable in comparison to other teams and other claims. Across the meetings, she claimed and was granted significant air time during the meetings, meaning that she talked a lot more than many other team members. This was in contrast to other teams, who distributed the amount of time each team member spoke, or actively interrupted each other. In this team, Amanda talked a lot and her teammates allowed her to do this. This is perhaps one of the significant indicators of how she was granted a leader identify by her team members.

## 5.9. Conclusion

This chapter has outlined how individuals in teams work to construct their identities as leaders and followers, and answers research questions one and two in the following ways. The team one data helps to outline how the direction of influence in a team can shift. It was observed that Keith helped to support Katie's claims for a leader identity by influencing other team members to also grant Katie's claims. In this way, Keith was both following and leading, indicating that it may be possible for one critical individual to tip the scale in favour of constructing an individual as a leader. I have termed Keith's action as that of the "active follower". In this way we can observe the types of interaction and relationship that support leader identity construction. Another notable finding from this chapter is the role of gender in constructing the behaviours of different individuals in the teams, such that female team members were more often asked to complete the forms and task paperwork. This may reflect the deeply held and often unconsciously activated gender role bias of women as being more suitable to these types of role. However, it may also be the case that these situations provide opportunities for women to gain valuable management and leadership skills above and beyond their male counterparts, who refrain from taking on these roles.

The data from this chapter also brings to light the ability of teams to implement a distributed leadership model such that the team tasks and the claiming and granting of identities are distributed across the group rather than being the remit of a single team member. Although research on distributed leadership continues to grow, there remain questions regarding how this form of leadership actually plays out in self-managed teams (Day, Gronn & Salas 2004; Gronn, 2002), and these findings therefore provide insight into this area of the leadership literature. The team one data also helps to illustrate the role of gaze in the interaction process and the impact that gaze may have in aiding individuals in their leader identity construction.

It was also observed that some individuals may be prompted to make claims of a leader identity. This point is worth noting, given that it may be perceived that individuals are expected to exercise agency in making claims for a leader identity. However, it is possible that other individuals who wish to support the leader identity construction process can prompt others to make claims, thus providing opportunities for the individual to make claims for a leader identity. This example helps to further illustrate the types of interaction and relationship that can help to support and facilitate the leader identity construction process. It may also be the case that in terms of experiences that facilitate leader identity construction, having someone prompt you to make a claim for a leader identity could be a fundamental shift in how one perceives oneself and could be quite critical to their leader identity construction. Therefore, although it is not possible to address the issue of experiences of identity construction due to the level of analysis for the data in this chapter (e.g. team level rather than individual level), it is still possible to conjecture the possibility.

The data from this chapter also helps to highlight the variable nature of identity grants. From the team two data, it was observed that some individuals were quite inconsistent in their support for their teammates' identity claims. This would suggest that the claiming and granting process is not a linear process, and that even though LICT proposes that identity claims and grants can occur in positive or negative cycles, it may be the case that there is much more variability in this process. It could be that identity claims, grants and even rejections come in waves and cycles rather than consistent patterns. The implication of this type of situation will be discussed in greater detail in chapter eight of this thesis.

Finally, the data from this chapter helps to provide greater insight into how individuals may engage more or less actively in the claiming and granting process. For example, in all of the teams, it was observed that some individuals only made claims for a follower identity and did so through indirect means, such as Ruth in team three and James in team two, while other individuals played more of a supporting, active follower role, for example Keith in team one or Beth in team three. The value of this insight is that it provides an understanding of the quality and quantity of identity claims and grants. It appears that not everyone participates in the same way and at the same level in the identity construction process and that these variable participation levels have very real outcomes in terms of who emerges as a leader or follower. Although this kind of outcome might be expected, there is very little data that actually looks at differences in identity claiming and granting behaviours and what impact these variations may have in the identity construction process. The implications and further details of these behaviours will be discussed in further detail in the discussion chapter of this thesis.

# Chapter 6: Leader identity construction in organizations

## 6.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I outlined how the micro level identity construction process took place, through the claiming and granting of leader and follower identities. However, because the identity construction process takes place across levels of analysis, it is also necessary to take a step back and address more meso level details of the identity construction process. To this end, this second findings chapter presents the data and findings of study two. As per the research questions outlined in chapter one of this thesis, I was interested in understanding in greater detail the interpersonal components of the identity construction process. More specifically, because there are clear relational and interactional aspects to the identity construction process, I wanted to gain a better understanding of what types of relationship and interaction contribute to this process. I was also interested in understanding what experiences are deemed meaningful and therefore give rise to the leader identity and as such, sought to understand what leadership experiences lend themselves to the identity construction process. Furthermore, because I was interested in understanding the role of other people in constructing a leader identity, beyond their function as identity granters or claimers, I aimed to investigate what the implications might be in terms of who does or does not support the identity construction process. In this way, I aimed not only to gain a deeper understanding of the interpersonal components of identity construction, but to gain insights regarding both the quality and content of the relationships, experiences and interactions that may be implicated in the leader identity construction process.

The aim of gaining a better understanding of both the intrapersonal and interpersonal components of leader identity construction impacted my choice of method as well as how I analysed and interpreted the data. The findings I present in this chapter, although emergent in nature, all contribute to answering research questions one and three. Therefore, the two research questions that inform this chapter are “what kind of experiences, relationships, and interactions contribute to the construction of a leader identity?” and “what are the implications for leader identity construction in terms of who supports or does not support one’s leader identity?”.

This chapter will outline the major sub-themes that emerged from the data, which centre around what is being referred to in this chapter as leader identity catalysts and leader identity barriers, and in doing so will provide insights into the leader identity construction process. Leader identity catalysts are issues and concepts identified by study participants as being helpful to their leader identity construction process. Leader identity barriers are issues and concepts identified by study participants as a challenge or problem in their leader identity construction process. Although this thesis did not set out to understand the difficulties that individuals might have in their leader identity construction, these issues did present themselves in the data. As such, even though there is no specific research question associated with leader identity barriers, these still contribute to understanding what experiences, relationships and interactions may contribute to the leader identity construction process, and as such contribute to the overall goal of the thesis. The chapter will present the findings and will demonstrate how the identity barriers and catalysts relate back to and inform our understanding of the relationships, experiences and interactions that contribute to constructing a leader identity.

The chapter will also outline how these themes inform our understanding of who does or does not support one’s leader identity construction process and what the implications of this support or lack of support may be. This chapter is broken down into two main parts. Part one will outline the identity catalysis identified by the study participants. Part two will outline data focusing on identity barriers. Both parts will present the findings using data extracts in the form of direct quotes from the interviews (see appendix K for a list of participants' names and industries). The chapter will conclude with a summary of the findings and will outline how the data answers the research questions.

## 6.2. Study findings

### 6.2.1. Catalysts to the construction of a leader identity

This section will present data extracts from the interview data in the form of direct quotes that will outline the leader identity catalysts identified as significant sub-themes. There are five sub-themes covered in this section, which all fall into the leader identity catalysis category (see figure 2). These are role models, mentors, negative role models, crystallizing events and feedback. In addition, connections will be drawn between each sub-theme and the associated aspects of the research questions in order to outline how the themes answer these questions.

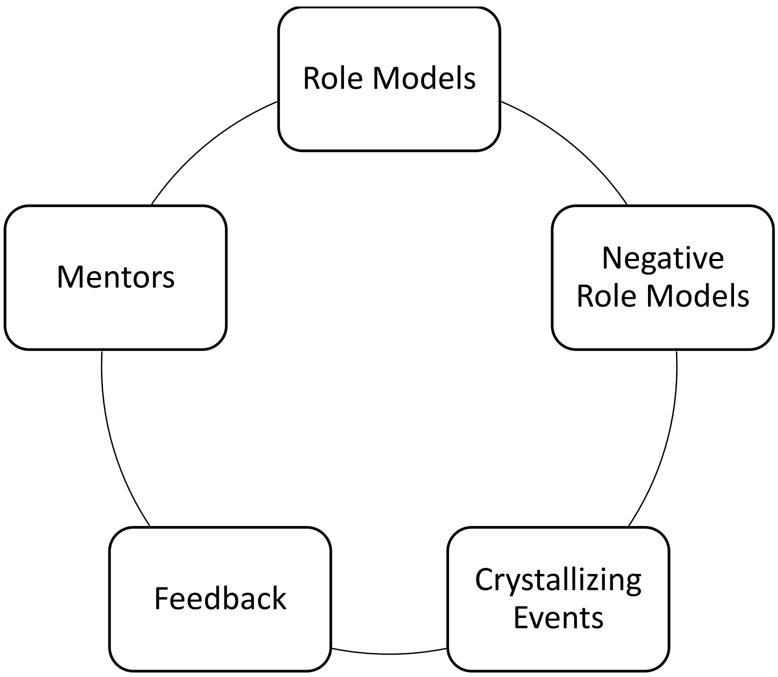



*Figure 3: Leader identity catalysts*

### 6.2.2. Positive Role models

Role models were identified by study participants as important individuals whose relationships with them contributed to their leader identity construction process. Role models are individuals whose personal styles, behaviours and attributes are emulated by others (Shapiro, Haseltine & Rowe, 1978). Role models may demonstrate to new or developing leaders what it means to be a leader, and what is possible in terms of leadership role attainment and execution (Gibson, 2003; Ibarra, 1999; Sealy & Singh, 2010; Vinnicombe & James, 2006). Role models were found to contribute to the leader identity construction process of the study participants in two main ways. Firstly, role models served as a source of possible leader identities that individuals could observe and learn from (Ibarra, 1999). Secondly, they also provided opportunities for the study participants to make claims for a leader identity or they provided leader identity grants. A quote from Jacklyn helps to illustrate how a role model acted as an observable source of a possible leader identity for her.

> "I had an amazing boss who hired me because he saw potential and creativity and he knew I was good with people…but he himself modelled for me utter discipline and calm".

In this quote, Jacklyn reflects on how her boss acted as a role model of leader behaviours. In this way, her boss demonstrated discreet behaviours that were salient to her, leading to her being able to learn from them. Acting as a source of leader behaviours to model is an important function of role models, according to Gibson (2004). Other participants also reported on the impact of role models to their leader identity construction process. A quote from Margie is illustrative of this.

> "My manager at the time she was a senior civil servant…she had an excellent leadership style, she was really open, and gave huge amounts of time to people, and I think that was

> the first time I had seen a strong female leader in the civil service and I thought I want to be like her".

For Margie, observing this leader helped her to see what it was possible to achieve in their organization by showing her a gender-congruent leader identity. According to Singh, Vinnicombe and James (2006), women often utilize gender-congruent role models to help them learn new skills through social learning. Therefore, having a female leader role model may provide opportunities for observing behavioural outcomes that they can also apply in order to learn how to make successful claims for a leader identity. Coco also reported on the benefits of having a gender-congruent role model.

> "She was incredible. She was so strategic but did not mind talking about the details, and quite inspiring because she had a young family and was kind of doing it all really, very good at her job. I always think of her as quite a key person…she was really good, very driven, but really nice, and understanding as well, and really good at her job and got stuff done which is nice".

For Coco, seeing another woman who was good at her job, a great leader, and also able to be a take care of her young family helped her see what was possible in terms of being a leader and a woman with a career and a family. Having a role model who can demonstrate what is possible as a leader, while also demonstrating what is possible in terms of navigating the challenges of being a mother, may have a particularly powerful impact on other female leaders and their leader identity construction. Previous studies suggest that gender-congruent role models may be key to helping women enter into and remain in male-dominated sectors and roles (Drury, Siy & Cheryan, 2011). Leadership is decidedly male-dominated. Female role models may therefore be particularly influential for new and developing female leaders.

In terms of acting as a source of identity grants, James reflected on the impact that one of their leader role models had on their leader identity. In this case, they identified that their leader actively granted them a leader identity by giving them ownership of their work, while also modelling a possible leader identity.

> "she would give you ownership of your project which is something I had not seen before…and I think that sort of leadership style was helpful, and that is something I try to use in my own projects".

Parker also identified how one of their directors acted as a role model for them and contributed to their leader identity construction process by granting them a leader identity, while also displaying a possible leader identity through modelling appropriate leader behaviours.

> "My current director is one of the few people I have identified in my career as a role model…he…is very relaxed and easy going and he is very clear where he is going…he is pinpoint clear about what he wants as an outcome but he does not spend a nanosecond talking about how it is to be achieved, because he puts that trust in me".

Louis also identified the influence a role model had on his early leader development in helping to shape how he thought of himself, but also how he acted as a leader.

> "Thinking back to role models, this one guy…I always saw him as ambitious, a good communicator, and I found that in my early career I sort of modelled myself on and I found myself emulating his behaviours and modelling his body language and I think that really helped me because it gave me a confidence boost because I realized I could do what he was doing".

Some participants also reported how they viewed famous or historical leaders as role models and the impact that these types of individual can have as leader role models. For example, when asked to discuss an important relationship they felt had an impact on their identity as a leader, Melody reported that they looked up to Churchill.

> "I would say that Churchill is my hero as far as leadership is concerned, when times got difficult he was exactly what our country needed".

Although this quote does not directly link Churchill to Melody's leader identity construction process, it is in some way alluded to in the quote. In this case, Churchill, as a leader, is acting as a possible leader identity that Melody reported looking to in an attempt to model herself after, and in doing so work to construct her own leader identity. Famous individuals are a common form of role model and are capable of providing the same learning opportunities to individuals as other types of role model (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). Therefore, it may be possible to argue that regardless of their proximity to the individual, role models can impact the leader identity construction process in terms of acting as a possible leader identity. However, this same lack of proximity prevents these famous individuals from acting as sources of identity grants, in the same way that role models in closer proximity may have. In this way, it may be that these more distant role models serve a different function to role models in the workplace. Famous role models may serve more as an inspirational leader identity to aspire to, while workplace role models may take on more of a participative role in the reciprocal claiming and granting process.

A quote on role models from Shelly helps to further illustrate how role models can impact one's leader identity.

> "There have been individuals that have touched me, and I can take things from them and learn things, doing things differently either on a personal level or a professional level. I suppose they have helped shape me in different attributes of who I am and how I am,

> helped me understand who I am and how I can therefore lead others and work through others".

In this quote, Shelly identifies the link between role models she has had in the past and the impact these have had on shaping her leader identity. In this way, it is possible to see how role models contribute and play an important role in helping individuals gain insight and knowledge about themselves and in doing so help individuals learn about how they want to lead, thus contributing greatly to identity construction.

Kanan was another participant who reported benefiting from having a role model, who was also their direct supervisor.

> "My first manager had the biggest impact on me. I could see how he used his leadership skill across the organization. We were a close-knit team and one of the ways that I could see him exercise his leadership was through his telling of the organizational story, he also exercised his leadership informally".

In this example, Kanan observed how their leader role model acted as a leader, displaying for them specific leader behaviours that they reported modelling in their own leadership. This suggests that not only did this individual model a possible leader identity, they also likely helped Kanan to identify behaviours he could use to make claims for a leader identity, as evidenced by his statement that he modelled certain leadership behaviours. However, it would appear that these observed leader behaviours go beyond how the role model led, to include the observation of how their leadership footprint extended across the organization, thus expanding the context in which the leader role model's behaviours can be applied. The implications of this are that leader role models can act as more than just sources of discreet behaviours in a single context. Rather, it may be the case that role models can also show individuals how to lead across the organization, not just in one context, thus expanding the scope of possible leader identities to learn from. A further quote from later on in the interview with Kanan helps to further drive home the behavioural modelling component of leader role models.

> "I saw how my managers were and I tried to mimic that…we try to see the leader and try to emulate what he does".

This additional contribution from Kanan, although brief, further illustrates how individuals look to role models as a source of discreet leader behaviours to observe, learn from, and emulate as part of their own leader identity construction process.

A quote from Maddie also helps to illustrate the impact that having a supervisor who is also a role model can have, especially when they also provide leader identity grants to individuals. When asked to reflect on an important relationship they felt had had an impact on how they think of themselves as a leader, Maddie shared the following.

> "She was very good at giving me opportunities to do things, because I really respected her and thought she was good at what she was doing in the department. I always thought that if she was asking me to do this thing she must think I could do it, and that really sort of changed how I thought of myself and my role".

It is also noteworthy that in addition to describing the value of role models, some study participants also found that being a role model for others was helpful to their leader identity construction process. Patty, a civil servant, reported that she had acted as a role model for others, and although she reported that being a role model was not the single most important contributing factor that led her to think of herself as a leader, it was still a component of the process. Another participant, Elizabeth, also reported that she felt being a role model was an important component of being a leader. She felt that modelling good behaviours was just one way of leading and was one way that she expressed her leader identity.

### 6.2.3. Mentors

Mentors were also identified as having an important role in the leader identity construction process, both as a source of modelling possible leader identities and in providing opportunities for individuals to claim or grant a leader identity. Mentors are individuals who often hold senior or high-level positions and help lower level individuals to navigate career or other related issues in organizations (Gibson, 2004). Unlike role models who may be unaware of their role, mentors often have some form of formal or informal agreement to act as a mentor. Shapiro et al. (1978) found that mentors play an active role in the career development of their mentees. This would seem to support the active role that mentors seem to have in creating opportunities for the claiming and granting process of the leader identity construction process to take place. For example, Kollin reported having an important relationship with a mentor in his organization. This mentor granted him a leader identity by identifying their potential as a leader in the organization and taking them on as a mentee.

> "I was mentored by my leader, he was quite high up in the organizational hierarchy, but I was not his direct report, but he did see something in me and he started mentoring me…so that individual had a huge impact on my overall leadership, my style, how I would approach things".

A quote from Silvia also echoes a similar experience of benefiting from relationships with mentors.

> "I have also had important relationships with mentors along the way who have acted in a way that have made me think "oh that is a good way to treat somebody", the way she just

treated me, because it just feels good, it feels supportive, it feels respectful, it makes me think more about what my contributions are and I want to have that effect on others."

As the quote from Silvia highlights, mentors provided opportunities to learn about the type of leader individuals want to be and provided them with observable leadership behaviours that the participants were then able to actively attempt to emulate. As Silvia clearly pointed out, relationships with mentors gave them access to observing the type of leader behaviours they found supportive. These relationships also allowed them to reflect on the types of leader behaviour they wanted to display.

Sadie also reported on the benefit she received from having an informal mentor in terms of learning about a possible leader identity.

> "[She] is an incredibly inspiring person to work with…she is very motivating and driven…and I sort of observed that she is the kind of person that everybody wants to make it work when they work with here, so I thought I have got a lot to learn from somebody like that".

In this quote, Sadie points out that she observed that her mentor was someone that other people wanted to work with, and identified that she could learn from this individual. This quote illustrates how mentors can help individuals observe possible leader identities to aspire to. There is also the added element that this mentor was both gender-congruent and sufficiently proximal for Sadie to observe on a regular basis. As was noted previously, research suggests that women need gender-congruent mentors and role models who can show them how to navigate the unique barriers women face in organizations (Burke & McKeen, 1990; Hill & Wheat, 2017). However, there is an added element to this in that gender-congruent mentors may also help in learning how to navigate the challenges of being a female leader. In this case, having a gender-congruent mentor who she can observe regularly may help women like Sadie to learn how to navigate female leader identity issues that may aid in their leader identity construction process.

Teresa also reported on the experience of having two significant mentors during her early development as a leader. Although Teresa had several mentors over the years, two stood out due to the impact that Teresa felt they had on her leader identity. One mentor in particular helped her to see the value in expanding her leadership footprint.

> "The person that I reported in to had more of an influence on my life than anyone…they really helped shape my leadership in a more meaningful way than just going in and working with people".

The second mentor that Teresa reported as meaningful to her leader identity construction provided ongoing grants of a leader identity as well as opportunities to make claims for a leader identity.

> "working with him as a mentor…I guess he saw something in me as a leader and all of a sudden I was put in charge of different events".

In the first quote, it appears that the first mentor showed Teresa what was possible in terms of a leader identity, which subsequently had a positive impact on how she enacted her leader role. The second mentor provided opportunities to lead, thereby granting her a leader identity. In this way, it is possible to observe that the role of mentors in the leader identity construction process is multifaceted in nature. They are both exemplars of what a leader is like, therefore acting a possible leader identity icon. When gender-congruent, they can also serve to add an element of helping the individual identify discreet means of coping with the challenges they may face in being a leader with regard to their gender. And finally, due to their relative positions of seniority, they may also offer opportunities to make claims for and provide grants of a leader identity.

### 6.2.4. Negative role models

In addition to positive role models, study participants reported that negative role models also contributed to their leader identity construction process. Previous research suggests that there are both positive and negative sides to role models, such that individuals may be a source of both positive and negative leader behaviours (Bucher & Stelling, 1977; Gibson, 2004; Duck, 1994). Thus, there may be opportunities to learn from role models beyond the previously suggested positive leader identity role model scenario. Negative role models can help to illustrate a feared self to be avoided and may help motivate individuals to take steps to avoid these feared or unwanted selves (Lockwood, 2002; Lockwood, Jordan & Kunda, 2002). They may also represent negative or unwanted attitudes or behaviours to avoid (Gibson, 2004). However, due to the undesirable leader behaviours negative leader role models display, their function may serve more as a boundary guide, giving individuals information about what a bad leader is like, so that they can take steps to avoid being a “bad” leader or to avoid an unwanted “bad” leader identity. In effect, these negative role models act as a valuable learning tool for individuals, to help them identify the type of leader identity they do not want, possibly enabling them to focus their identity claims in such a way as to avoid being perceived as a bad leader. Olivia outlined how she learned from a negative role model.

> “Early in my career, I experienced bad examples [of leadership], that I think formed how I want to be and how I don’t want to be. I had some leaders early in my career who were very successful but made life difficult for people…I could see the effects of these behaviours and somehow managed to survive them myself and take the learning forward in my own career”.

As this data extract shows, for Olivia, observing a leader whose behaviours negatively impacted those around them served as an opportunity to learn about the type of leader identity they wanted to avoid. What this quote helps us to understand is the vital role negative role models have in helping individuals to gain insights into their own leadership, ultimately helping them to learn about the type of leader identity they want to avoid, which may aid them in their leader identity construction.

Shelly outlined how she learned from a negative role model who was her supervisor.

> "I have had some poor experiences of being managed and that has influenced how I want to manage others…and I think that has grown out of situations where I was not doing well and was not hearing what I was doing well".

In this example, we can observe how Shelly's experience with a negative leader role model contributed to her leader identity by helping her to identify a discreet skill she found to be lacking and wanted to incorporate in how she leads, which is to be the type of leader who provides positive feedback to others. For her, this negative experience helped her to identify possible leader behaviours she wanted to actively model, thus helping her to frame her leader identity.

Another example from Patricia also helps to further illustrate how negative role models may contribute to the leader identity construction process by acting as a source of information about possible leader identities to avoid.

> "When I was a PhD student…I had an extremely young and inexperienced mentor that sort of showed me what bad leadership could be like… and then when I started doing leadership I sort of amalgamated all of this together and worked out how I wanted to be".

Patricia reported having a number of mentors and positive and negative role models over her career who impacted her in both positive and negative ways, which consequently helped her to learn about and craft her leader identity. Thus, Patricia's example helps to illustrate the role that both positive and negative leader role models and mentors can have in shaping an individual's leader identity, both through their display of observable leader behaviours (which individuals can learn from and either emulate or try to avoid), and by displaying possible leader identities.

Coco provides a further example of the impact of negative role models on the leader identity construction process.

> "I had one manager that to me was kind of okay but quite controlling and quite difficult for the team and I found that difficult on the team's behalf…and that made me think that I do not ever want to be like that".

From these examples, it is possible to begin to piece together the important part that negative role models play in helping to shape an individual's leader identity. By acting as examples of possible negative leader identities, negative role models provide individuals with leader-specific behaviours they can actively work to avoid, and in doing so aid individuals in learning about the type of leader they want to be. Negative role models also appear to provide new and developing leaders with opportunities to learn about leadership, and may also provide examples of how not to claim a leader identity. If the negative role models' claims for a leader identity are perceived negatively by others, it may be the case that other individuals who observe these claims can take note of their flawed nature and learn from this with regard to their own identity claims.

### 6.2.5. Feedback

A further significant sub-theme that emerged from the interviews focuses around seeking and receiving feedback about one's leadership. As will be demonstrated through the interview quotes below, participants reported seeking feedback about their leadership, often as a means of self-monitoring. For some, this meant monitoring to avoid an unwanted negative leader identity and for others, this meant monitoring to maintain and/or improve upon their leader identity. It is argued that feedback allows individuals to monitor their performance as a leader, which contributes to shaping their leader identity. Feedback may also function as a means of facilitating the reciprocal leader and follower identity construction process. It is also likely that beyond seeking information about one's functional leadership performance, some individuals may utilize feedback for the purpose of working to maintain their leader identity in front of others. Feedback may also provide individuals with information regarding the success of past leader identity claims by providing them with information and confirmation of what they are doing right or wrong as a leader. Furthermore, due to receiving feedback confirming that one is a leader, it may also function as a form of leader identity grant. Thus, because feedback can allow individuals to self-monitor and make changes to their behaviour to improve themselves as a leader, it is therefore argued that feedback functions as a catalyst for the leader identity construction process.

An example of the ability of feedback to help provide information about past leader identity claims comes from Patty, who reported a direct link between receiving feedback and her self-perception as a leader. She stated that:

> "feedback of how I have helped to bring them along or the actions I have taken that were seen as being inspiring has helped me with my leadership and understanding what it means".

She also added later on in the interview that she actively seeks feedback from her direct supervisor. For Patty, receiving feedback about what she did right as a leader may be acting as a form of leader identity grant. Receiving this feedback lets her know what she did right as a leader and may work to reinforce her leader identity.

Another individual, who was given the name Rowan, also reported that feedback provided him with information regarding the success of his leader identity claims, while also providing him with information informing his perception that others saw him as a leader. He stated: “I have had positive feedback about the way that I lead meetings and chair things, people think I am good at it and want me to do it”. Rowan gave multiple examples in his interview of how he had been granted a leader identity in his organization even though he was not in an official leader role. It therefore appears that feedback about his behaviours and performance was just one of several ways that he was granted a leader identity.

Shelly, a mid-level manager, reported that in addition to engaging with psychometric personality tests, she also seeks feedback about how she leads. She said:

> “I get feedback from my direct reports and I always get feedback on things we could be doing better in our relationship, so I think there are different opportunities for me to learn and improve how I lead”.

This quote demonstrates how Shelly uses feedback as a tool for self-monitoring and could even be interpreted as her way of seeking validation of her leader identity from her direct reports and that she is granting them a follower identity, effectively making the feedback an identity claiming and granting practice. In this, it is possible to see how feedback is linked with identity construction through the active and reciprocal claiming and granting process. An additional point to bring out is the fact that she seeks feedback not from her supervisors, which would suggest that she links her leadership to performance, but that she seeks it from her direct reports, suggesting that the relational aspect of her leader identity is the most salient element.

During her interview, Coco recalled a particularly difficult time of being led by someone who was quite difficult, as she put it. As a result of this experience, Coco reported that she now actively seeks feedback about her performance as a leader from her direct reports. She seeks this feedback as a means of assessing whether or not she is displaying any of the negative leadership qualities she had observed previously. She said:

> "Now, I even say to my team, if I am being like this tell me, because I don't mind being all these other things, but I don't want to be like this".

For Coco, her feedback seeking appears to act as a means through which to monitor herself in order to prevent enacting an unwanted negative leader identity.

Finally, an example of the role of feedback comes from Sadie, who reported that she sought feedback from others as a means through which to continue her leader identity construction process.

> "in the past I had a mentor and a coach…you can get very busy and not have time to stop and ask yourself 'is this working?'".

For Sadie, feedback was a means of monitoring herself as a leader. She reported perceiving that other people in her organization believed that her gender was incongruent with leadership, and feedback therefore acted a tool to reinforce her identity as a leader. This feedback from individuals outside of her organization likely acted as a grant of her leader identity when she was experiencing a lack of grants from those within her organization.

These examples bring to light the role that feedback can have in the leader identity construction process. At face value, it might appear that feedback may serve to act as a form of self-monitoring, but the quotes would perhaps indicate that there is more to it than that. It is clear that feedback also serves the purpose of facilitating the active and reciprocal claiming and granting of leader and follower identities by establishing and reinforcing leader and follower roles. However, it may also critically serve as a means of reinforcing one's identity by clearly communicating how one's leader behaviours, and therefore ones claim's for a leader identity, are received and perceived by others.

### 6.2.6. Crystallizing events

A sub-theme from the interviews suggests that key events, both positive and negative, may also have a critical role in the leader identity construction process. Across the interviews, when participants were asked to recall events they felt were important to their leader identity construction process, participants often reported significant events that crystallized their leader identity. Although all participants were asked about significant events they felt had had an impact on their leader identity, a number of participants reported on experiences that stood out as highly formative or crystallizing with regard to their leader identity. As will be shown through the data extracts below, these events were significant points of tension, change or challenge to the individual and/or their organization. Furthermore, for most individuals who reported experiencing crystallization of a leader identity event, the events described in the interview happened several years or even a decade in the past. Therefore, these events were not necessarily the most easily recalled events, or the most recent. These events were significant points in the participant's life history that signified a recognized change point in their life story and self-perception as a leader.

In his interview, Matthew discussed a crystallizing event in which he was a founding member of an association for gay members of his organization. He said:

> "we were setting up despite the apathy and discouragement, so that was one of my greatest achievements".

Matthew had a very strong and clearly formed leader identity due to his previous work experience, but to be able to finally openly express his leader identity and his identity as a gay man at the same time was liberating, and formative. It is likely that the importance of this event to Matthew was that it allowed him to enact his leader identity in a more authentic way. It can also be argued that being a founding member of an association requires significant leadership skill and could have provided Matthew with ample opportunities to make claims and receive grants of a leader identity.

Another individual, Alistair, reflected during his interview how a significant time of change in his organization and his involvement in driving this change acted as a crystallizing event for his leader identity. He stated:

> "the piece of work sticks with me as the best leadership work I have done and really cemented my view of myself as a leader".

Although this quote is quite to the point, it clearly indicates how this experience was formative of Alistair's leader identity. Going through this difficult experience and coming out well on the other side of it critically cemented his identity as a leader. An additional point making this event remarkable is that Alistair had just been promoted when this change event happened, and this was coupled with the issue of a lack of resources in the department. These factors combined probably created complex situations to evolve that likely led to highly visible identity claims and possibly even multiple opportunities to make claims, which is possibly why this was a crystallizing event for him.

Poppy reported on a crystallizing event for her, which was a situation in which she took on a leadership role during a challenging time in her organization. Like Alistair, Poppy also led on a significant change initiative in her organization. However, unlike Alistair, Poppy volunteered for this role. She remarked that:

> "the leadership and leading that piece of work and giving people their own areas they could lead on and checking up on people so that they were not left behind" constituted a significant event in her coming to see herself as a leader.

Again, it appears that significant points in time, in which individuals have the opportunity to make highly visible claims for a leader identity, seem to act as identity catalysts.

A quote from Lily also helps to highlight the role of crystallizing events. She said:

> "I was deputized for quite a long period of time as the team leader and I think it was something I led and got a lot of respect for in the point in time…what people said to me is that I dealt with it in a sensitive and correct way".

From this quote it appears that this challenging time, in which Lily received positive feedback regarding how she handled it, served to cement her identity as a leader. Having a situation in which there was a great need for leadership likely facilitated a situation in which Lily was probably able to make highly visible claims for a leader identity, while also increasing the likelihood of receiving grants for these claims.

Ava, a leader in a UK city level government position, reported on a crystallizing event that encouraged her to continue in leadership.

> "I call them pivotal points in your life or pivotal points in your career, when something happens and it changes the way you are or the way you feel more importantly…one of the pivotal moments was that someone gave me a job and they told me they thought I was quite good and I had never heard that before, and they trusted me to run this community centre and I did not have a clue, but the fact that someone had trusted me enough and valued me enough to put me in that position…it set me on the path to thinking that I could do this".

As Ava herself pointed out, there are times in one's life or career that seem to be more formative than others. For her, having someone give her her first experience with leading and being in charge gave her the confidence she needed to carry on taking on leadership roles. In

Ava’s case, she did continue seeking out leadership roles across her career, to the point that she reached a significant leadership position in local government. This is a noteworthy achievement for anyone, but more significantly someone who would likely not be seen in most cases as having significant leadership potential. This example brings to light the positive impact that having a leader identity granted before one makes a claim can have on one’s confidence and motivation to continue working to construct a leader identity.

The final example of a crystallizing event came from Olivia, who reported such an occurrence when she had to carry out an investigation of a direct report. She stated:

> “You know I had to be the leader, I had to make sure that I was really clear about what I did and what I was doing and that I was doing the right thing, and I also had to be able to look myself in the mirror as well. I had to make sure that I was not being lenient and also that I was not being too hard to compensate for it”.

From this quote, the difficult nature of the event comes forward and we can see how Olivia struggled with navigating the tensions between her relationship with the individual and enacting her leader identity in a way that felt right to her. She had to be seen to be not just the leader, but a fair leader. McCall, Lombardo and Morrison (1988) argued that difficult and challenging events or crystallizing events, as they are referred to here, help leaders grow. These data extracts seem to support the value of challenging events to help people grow, but the added perspective that is brought here is that these crystallizing events can serve as identity catalysts. By providing highly visible opportunities to make claims and receive grants of a leader identity, to establish and strengthen leadership bonds with others and even grant a leader identity to others, these crystallizing events have a valuable role in the leader identity construction process.

## 6.3. Barriers to the construction of a leader identity

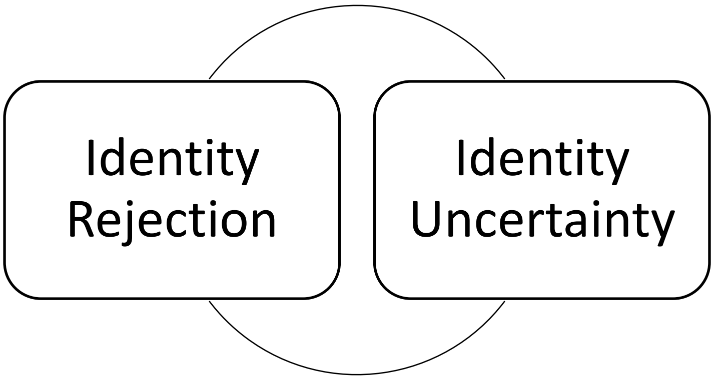



*Figure 4: Leader identity barriers*

### 6.3.1. Identity rejection

During the interviews, some participants reported experiences where their claims for a leader identity were rejected by other individuals. In some instances, these claims were rejected by single individuals, and in some instances the rejection occurred on the part of groups of individuals higher up in the organization. As noted previously, according to LICT, identity claims and grants need to occur concurrently in order for a leader identity to be constructed. If an identity claim is rejected (i.e. not followed by a grant at some point in the future), or in other ways actively countered with behaviours or information indicating that the other individual or individuals do not wish for the claim/s to be granted, there is a likelihood that the individual may become demotivated to make further identity claims, and in turn may be unlikely to construct a leader identity. Martin shared his experience of having his leader identity rejected.

> "I have really sort of been blocked in my leadership aspirations in my current organization, and that was important to me…I am not in an organizational hierarchy position in terms of what matters most to me".

Martin went on to explain that his bid for an organizationally influential position had been rejected by the board of his organization. Yet during the same period, he was given a leadership award by his staff. He reported that he knew that the staff lower down in the hierarchy recognized him as a leader, as evidenced by the leadership award, yet his leader identity claim for a leadership position in his organization had been rejected by those higher up in the organizational hierarchy, as evidenced by the board rejecting his application for promotion. Martin faced a troubling dichotomy whereby his leader identity was being recognized and granted by certain individuals in the organization, while simultaneously being rejected by others. This led Martin to report that he was currently struggling with his identity as a leader. This example may indicate that those who reject an individual's leader identity may be just as important as those who grant it. The data suggests that having one's leader identity rejected by organizationally powerful individuals such as a board of trustees may have a greater negative impact on one's leader identity than having one's leader identity rejected by less organizationally powerful individuals. In the case of Martin, having his leader identity granted by his staff does not seem to have been sufficient to overcome the rejection of his leader identity claim by the board.

However, as will be shown in the following example, just as having one's leader identity rejected by individuals with organizational power or prestige may be a particularly powerful barrier to constructing a leader identity, having one's leader identity rejected by those lower down the organizational hierarchy may not be as problematic if there is also support from individuals higher up in the organization to counter this rejection. Jacklyn reported an experience where she faced rejection of her leader identity from one of her direct reports.

> "When I moved up and became a campus manager at a community college up north, I had some stiff wind against me, in that one of the workers had been fulfilling my duty before… [and] she really worked against me".

During her interview, Jacklyn reflected on the experience of having her right to carry out her new role being rejected by someone who had previously been doing the job. In this case, Jacklyn's claim for a leader identity was rejected by her direct report. However, as Jacklyn went on to explain, while she faced having her leader identity rejected by her direct report, this rejection did not seem to impact her leader identity, because she also simultaneously received support in the form of leader identity grants from her own supervisor. Therefore, it may not be as black and white as having one's leader identity granted or rejected. The person doing the granting, or the rejecting, clearly matters, and those individuals with greater perceived power or status or organizational position appear to have a key role in driving leader identity construction processes.

Patrick, a senior consultant with the NHS, also reported experiencing the rejection of his leader identity during a particularly difficult situation in his organization.

> "I tried to allocate a task to this person and they wouldn't [accept it]…so I had to repeatedly ask this person to take on this role and he said no, but the problem here is that there was a vulnerable person [involved] and I could not just park it, I had to find a solution and this person stormed out…but what I found hard was that the person who should have supported me on this followed the person out and tried to comfort them".

In this situation, Patrick faced having his claim for a leader identity rejected, both in the form of allocating tasks and assigning people roles. However, he also had the issue of his own direct supervisor not supporting his claim, but instead reinforcing the rejection by supporting the individual who rejected Patrick's leader identity claim. In this way, supporting the other individual effectively acted as support for their rejections of Patrick's claim. In the larger scale of things, having a situation such as this play out in a meeting may have implications beyond just the dyadic level between these two individuals. It is possible that other people observing this interaction may also question Patrick's identity claim. Work by Marchiondo et al. (2015) suggests that in settings such as meetings, how other individuals in the meeting perceive the identity claims and grants of focal social actors may influence the claiming and granting behaviours of the observing individuals. In other words, even if one is not involved in the claiming and granting process directly, it is likely that observing someone having their leader identity rejected by another person can have an impact on how one perceives the situation and subsequently on how one decides to engage in the identity construction process as well. In summary, it is argued that observing rejection may lead to further rejection.

In addition to participants reporting experiences in which they felt that their identity as a leader or their leader identity claims had been rejected, there were also a few participants who reported that they felt they had to reject certain aspects of themselves in order to be a leader. Jessica reported that she felt she had to monitor and control how she approached being a leader. She said, "I have had to develop the right approach and not fall back on my natural approach because that can be quite scary and too demanding for some people". She further reported that she thought her "natural approach", that is her natural self or authentic self, would not get the best out of people, and being her natural self would make her a manager, not a leader. This example brings to light the issue that some women may experience in being a leader. There is some evidence to suggest that women in leadership roles may experience greater difficulty with feeling that other individuals are perceiving them positively and accurately (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May & Walumbwa, 2005; Meister, Sinclair & Jehn, 2017) This experience of not being able to be one's true self or who one really is as a woman because this would not make one a leader, or that who one is as an individual is incongruent with being a leader, is both a symptom of how leadership has been socially constructed as masculine or male and evidence of the need for women to be able to navigate the intersectionality of gender and leadership in a way that is authentic to them. Although the issue of feeling that one has to suppress aspects of one's natural self in order to be a leader did not come up in many of the interviews, it does present itself as an interesting issue, with potentially significant implications for the leader identity construction process. At a more concrete level, feeling that one's self perception is misaligned with one's perception of what it means to be a leader may lead to one feeling incapable of making claims for a leader identity or at best may lead individuals to make claims for a leader identity in ways that may not feel truly representative of the self. This inauthenticity may in turn lead to feelings of being a fake leader, which would likely have negative consequences for the leader identity construction process. At a broader level, if individuals perceive that they cannot be who they are as individuals, and also be a leader, this may lead some to disengage with the leadership process or not engage in the first place.

A variation on the theme of identity rejection comes from Ajay, who rejected a leader identity. Ajay had previously held a senior leadership role in a business school in a higher education institution in the UK and was clear about his reservations about identifying himself as a leader. In fact, during the interview, he stated that he saw himself as a follower rather than a leader, and that given the choice he would rather not be a leader, and yet, he reported that he felt that if there was a need to step up and take on a leader role, he would feel compelled to step in and fill that need.

> "If given the complete choice, I would rather not be a part of the hierarchy and would rather not be part of power structures, if there is an organizational need to do so, especially as a senior academic I would feel the need to do something about it".

This quote helps to further demonstrate the tensions and uncertainty that some individuals may feel about being a leader and taking on a leadership role. Ajay's quote suggests that he perceives himself as capable of leading, but that there is some degree of uncertainty or reluctance regarding leadership and his identity as a leader. It may be possible that for Ajay, making a claim for a follower identity and rejecting a leader identity is the way he removes himself from the power struggles and bureaucracy of leadership in large organizations, and doing so enables him to avoid the unwanted aspects of a role, which he does not want to continue having to deal with.

Taken together, these quotes help to outline the difficulty faced when attempting to construct a leader identity when one's claims are not granted by others. As was noted previously, although it was not the original aim of this thesis to focus on barriers that might be experienced when constructing a leader identity, the issue of identity rejection brings greater understanding to how the claiming and granting process functions, and helps to highlight how the experience of facing identity rejection can create barriers to the leader identity construction process. In this way, this topic provides valuable insights that would be lost had I chosen to omit or disregard the emergent issue in the data.

### 6.3.2. Identity Uncertainty

The final theme identified as acting as a barrier to the leader identity construction process centres around identity uncertainty. In the context of this study, identity uncertainty is understood as an individual feeling uncomfortable or uncertain about their identity as a leader. This uncertainty or discomfort with identifying oneself as a leader manifested itself in a variety of ways. For example, a number of study participants reported feeling uncomfortable with identifying themselves as a leader and in making claims for a leader identity due to a reluctance to stand out. They do not want to be the centre of attention and therefore struggled with identifying themselves as a leader because they felt that being a leader meant being the focus of attention. However, for some participants, their job role necessitates that they be perceived as a leader, even though they felt that naturally they would rather not lead or be in a position of leadership. For these individuals, the demands of their job role or their organization were in conflict with their natural tendencies, resulting in their labelling themselves as either not a leader or as a reluctant leader, both indicating a level of uncertainty about their identity as a leader. A quote from Patrick helps to illustrate this point.

> "I am quite an introvert, given the choice I am a solitary person and would like to stay off people's radar, so initially did not see leadership as something that I wanted to do, but over time I realized that if I want the best for my patients, and my colleagues, then I need to adapt to the role, so initially a reluctant leader".

As Patrick went on to explain during his interview, he did currently identify himself as a leader, but he recognized his struggle with making claims for this identity. Given that Patrick experienced having his leader identity rejected on several levels, as evidenced by a previous quote, it is not surprising that he viewed himself as a reluctant leader for some time. This is a concrete example of how the experience of identity rejection may be linked to insecurity or uncertainty about one's identity. Surely, having conflicting or counter information that disaffirms one's leader status will lead to uncertainty about one's identity. Another reluctant leader was Jim. Like Patrick, his job role was considered a senior leadership position in his organization, and yet he too struggled with taking on the title of leader in this role.

> "I don't see myself as a leader…some people at school are leaders, I was very much a follower, I have always seen myself as a follower, I did not want to stand out, I did not want to be a leader, I never wanted to be noticed…if I am a leader…it is certainly not something that I sought out".

For Jim, his desire not to draw attention to himself seems to be in some way functioning as a barrier to his leader identity due to the fact that it is preventing him from feeling comfortable with identifying himself as a leader. Jim recognized the need to be perceived as a leader in his current job role, but he struggled to come to terms with how to construct an identity as a leader that could serve the needs of his job role while at the same time allow him to stay within his personal comfort zone. In this case, it is more than his personality or his job role at issue. It appears that the disconnect he perceives between himself and what it means to be a leader within the context of his job role is the issue.

For Logan, a leader identity is intangible. This participant was uncertain of whether or not he saw himself as a leader due to the fact he felt that leadership was unmeasurable, while management could be measured.

> "If you look at what is the difference between a leader and a manager, the output is measured, whether that's KPIs, when you are managing something there is normally a measurement. So, you can document it, you can task it, it is very black and white…leadership is not measured. It is how people feel, it is very subjective, it's about connecting to people who work for you".

What this quote helps to highlight is the reality of what it means to be a leader for this individual. For Logan, his organization is highly structured and makes use of many modern management techniques. This focus on measurement and performance metrics seems to give Logan a sense of certainty. In contrast, the apparent ethereal nature of leadership, and its lack of certainty regarding what leadership is, makes it more difficult for him to know when he is being a leader, especially if he does not receive feedback regarding his leadership from others.

Another participant who experienced uncertainty about her identity as a leader was Debbie, who reported the following:

> “I would like to think that I am a good leader, but when I see other leaders, I would term them as a leader, but I am not at their level, I don’t have the insight, I don’t see the big picture…I would like to one day see myself as a leader, but I think I have a bit more to go before I can”.

From this quote, it appears that Debbie has a very specific understanding of what it means to be a leader. This social construction of leaders as having insight and thinking of the big picture is what appears to be holding her back from being able to feel comfortable with identifying herself as a leader. Further, she also added during the interview that she felt leaders are confident and that she is not a confident individual. This would suggest that there is some sort of incongruency between Debbie’s own self-evaluation and her understanding of what it means to be a leader. It may be the case that if she was exposed to a different understanding (social construction) of what it means to be a leader, she may see herself differently. This example is perhaps a good illustration of the implications that one’s social construction of what it means to be a leader can have on one’s leader identity.

Another example from Rohit demonstrates the struggle some participants felt with identifying as a leader and the uncertainty that can precede actually coming to see oneself as a leader. In his interview, Rohit stated the following:

> “No, I don’t see myself as a leader, because the department is so big on being a leader…but it has made me realize that I am not a leader and also in my personal life I am not a leader”.

Interestingly, Rohit reported during his interview that he had been in a leadership position previously and that his direct reports seem to have liked him.

> “they all did look up to me and they did praise me a lot, I did not understand it, I was like what are you talking about?”.

These two quotes paint an interesting picture of this individual. He reports that he does not identify as a leader and yet he had been in a leadership role and received positive feedback about his performance in this role, and seemingly also received grants of a leader identity, yet he seems not to understand why he received this positive feedback because he is uncertain about his identity as a leader. Thus, it would appear that Rohit’s uncertainty is not the result of experience with leadership. Rather, it is likely that this is yet another example indicating that the source of the leader identity grants matters. The fact that Rohit was receiving apparently positive feedback from his direct reports about his leadership would indicate that they were granting him a leader identity. However, it appears that Rohit did not value these grants. This would indicate that Rohit perceived that the social information he was receiving regarding his leader identity was not valuable or perhaps inaccurate. The question remains whether he would have perceived this same information differently had it come from different people, such as his direct supervisor.

A variation on leader identity uncertainty is the concept of the impostor syndrome. Impostor syndrome in leaders is associated with feelings of fraudulence and lack of confidence in one’s ability as a leader (Chapman, 2017). Previous research on the impostor syndrome has found that leaders across industries experience feelings of insecurity regarding their identity as a leader (Chapman, 2017; Clance & Imes, 1978; Robinson-Walker, 2011). The extant literature on the impostor syndrome suggests that female leaders may be more likely to experience the impostor syndrome due to a number of factors, such as having their status as a leader questioned owing to the perceived incongruence of their gender with associated leader biases that preference males (Clance & Imes, 1978; Robinson-Walker, 2011). The two participants who reported experiencing the impostor syndrome were both males. However, this is not an indication that other participants have not experienced this as well. For Jim, his experience with the impostor syndrome was precipitated by a grant of a leader identity he received from his department in the form of being promoted to deputy. He reported that he was caught off guard when asked to take on this deputy role, and struggled to come to terms with what this grant meant about him as an individual.

> “being a deputy is quite nice for the CV, it is quite a senior role, but…it was a surprise, I did not see myself as the kind of person…we all have that impostor syndrome… my family is astonished that I have been made head of first year medicine, you know we make jokes about it”.

This quote from Jim is particularly powerful in terms of explicating the struggle this individual seems to have with his identity as a leader. Although he received endorsement of his leader identity in the form of being asked to apply for and subsequently being promoted to first year head of medicine, it would appear that he is experiencing an incongruence between the grant he received from his department and the apparent “astonishment” of his family that he could be perceived as a leader and subsequently granted a leader identity. It is unclear whether his family’s apparent rejection of his identity as a leader is associated with his own uncertainty as a leader. It is also unclear if his promotion was the result of department policies dictating that individuals have to be promoted regardless of leadership skill or ability. It is also unclear what the implications of these scenarios would be on this individual’s leader identity construction. What is clear is that this individual appears to be receiving conflicting feedback regarding his identity as a leader, which may be linked in some way to the uncertainty he is experiencing.

The second participant who reported experiencing the impostor syndrome was Tim. During his interview, this participant asked me if I was familiar with the impostor syndrome.

> "Have you heard of the impostor syndrome?…I came across it in my doctoral studies…I used to suffer from that, but the leadership programme helped me over that feeling…I have been here a long time…I have been here a lot longer than some of the executives…and I do actually know what I am talking about in my field".

Jim and Tim both reported experiencing feeling like an impostor. However, Tim was able to overcome this through his participation in an organizational leader development programme. Having the training from this programme apparently gave Tim the tools and skills he needed to be able to overcome his leader identity uncertainty, because, as he reported, it helped him realize that he did have leadership knowledge and skill. Thus, it would appear that the leadership training was self-affirming and helped Tim to put his knowledge and skills into context, thus removing the uncertainty.

The concept of uncertainty helps to further shed light on the experiences and relationships that lead to the construction of a leader identity by identifying ways in which one's experience with leadership and identity construction may be impaired or impacted at times. I say that it helps, because it is important to understand what does not work just as much as what does. Furthermore, I feel that these examples help to provide further validation of my argument that the source of the identity grants one receives is important. In this way, although we are dealing with a fundamentally negative experience, we can still gain insights into the leader identity construction process from this sub-theme.

## 6.4. Conclusion

The data presented in this chapter focused on presenting several key sub-themes centred around leader identity construction and answered research questions one and two in the following ways. Firstly, the sub-theme data on role models, negative role models and mentors helps to illustrate the types of relationship that facilitate the leader identity construction process. These relationships not only provided individuals with opportunities to make claims for a leader identity and receive grants of this identity, they also provided valuable learning regarding leadership as a skill as well as demonstrating possible identities that study participants were then able to learn from and incorporate into their own leader identity construction. From the interviews, it would appear that role models and mentors seem to be sought out or become salient during transitional periods in the leader identity construction process, such as when an individual is presented with a new opportunity for growth or change.

Previous research has found that individuals may seek out mentors early on in their careers in order to learn how to achieve the “dream” that they have for their life (Duck, 1994; Gibson, 2004). It may therefore be the case that individuals seek out mentors who can support their leader identity construction process as part of a larger leadership development goal. It may be that role models are sought out to help the individual learn and decide what it means to be an individual who has achieved a particular desired status so that they can learn from them and emulate their path to success. Mentors also appear to be utilized in these transitional phases as a means of seeking feedback or gaining access to the resources or support they need to move on to the next stage of their leader identity construction process. However, it would appear that mentors also seem to be utilized on a more long-term basis than role models. This would suggest that some of the functions of role models and mentors seem to overlap in terms of their role in identity construction.

Furthermore, the data on crystallizing events helps to outline the types of key experience that can facilitate the leader identity construction process, while the data on feedback helps to provide greater insight into the types of interaction that help individuals gain insight into their leadership, which aids in the construction of a leader identity. Finally, the data on identity rejection and uncertainty also help to provide greater insight into the interactions and experiences that also shape and impact the identity construction process. Although these aspects are more negative in nature and were identified as barriers, they help to bring to light the tensions and difficulties individuals experience along their identity construction journey. Additionally, the data in section 6.3.1. brings to light the impact that having one's leader identity rejected at the collective or organizational level can have on the leader identity construction process, and in doing so answers yet another research question. The data suggests that having one's leader identity supported by others and receiving leader identity grants from individuals who are deemed important or salient to the individual, such as bosses, supervisors, and so on, can have a significant impact on the leader identity construction process. Furthermore, it seems that when the same individuals reject an identity claim, this can have a negative impact on the individual. Thus, in summary, it would appear that it matters *who* grants or rejects an identity.

Finally, an additional insight that can be drawn from the data is that the leader identity construction process takes places across the life span, not just within the context of organizations. Several of the participants in the study gave examples of when they had felt that they had been granted a leader identity or claimed a leader identity in their childhood or adolescent years. There is also evidence to suggest that in addition to individuals within the organization, it may be the case that while this leader identity construction process is taking place, individuals from outside the organization can also play a role in granting or rejecting a leader identity. Other people can affirm or disaffirm the leader identity, possibly resulting in conflicting identity feedback. Although LICT as a theory proposes understanding identity construction in an organizational context, the identity construction process does not occur solely in this context. It is therefore likely that during the identity construction process, individuals are receiving feedback from sources outside of the organization (i.e. family, other social contexts) which are either supporting or disaffirming the individual's identity, such that having one’s identity affirmed or disaffirmed outside of the organizational context may also contribute to the leader identity construction process. Work by Hammond, Clapp-Smith and Palanski (2017) suggests that leadership development can occur across domains. It may also be the case that leader identity can occur across domains. LICT could benefit from an expansion of its scope in this regard. The insights and findings from this chapter will be discussed in greater detail in chapter eight, the discussion chapter of this thesis.

# Chapter 7: Organizational Control of the Leader Identity Construction Process

## 7.1. Introduction

This chapter will outline the data that emerged from the interviews regarding the role of the organization in the leader identity construction process. The chapter presents data that takes an organizational level focus by looking at how the organization impacts the leader identity construction process. In this regard, the focus of this chapter is placed on the interplay between individual experience and organizational forces on leader identity, therefore providing something of an integration of the individual micro level issues (i.e. perceptions of organizational control of the leader identity) with meso level organizational forces (organizational structures, power, etc.).

For many leaders, the organization is the site of much of their leader identity construction. However, when considering the issue of identity in organizations, Alvesson and Willmott (2002) argue that organizations control the identity construction process of employees. Therefore, given that organizations have some level of control over the identity construction process, it brings to question what role organizations might have in the leader identity construction process. The research question informing this chapter is as follows: what role do individuals perceive their organization as having in their leader identity construction process? Control of the leader identity construction process has received limited attention in both the leadership and identity literatures, thus providing significant justification for further addressing this topic through this thesis beyond the issue of emergence.

Following along from the meta categories in chapter six of this thesis, the role of the organization was found to be perceived by some individuals as acting as an identity catalyst, while for others, it was perceived as a barrier. It is important to note that although this section presents sub-themes from the data that acted as a catalyst or a barrier, the difference between this chapter and sections 6.2 and 6.3 in chapter six is the level at which these catalysts and barriers are focused. The catalysts and barriers in chapter six mainly focused on the individual or dyadic level, while the catalysts and barriers outlined in this chapter are centred around the organizational level, because they are either directly controlled by the organization or are perceived by the study participants as being in some way controlled by the organization. This chapter will present these findings in five main sections. Section one is the introduction to the chapter. Section two will provide some basic background information regarding organizational control. The third section will provide evidence of how organizations were perceived as supporting the leader identity construction process. The fourth section will provide evidence of how organizations were perceived as challenging the leader identity construction process. The conclusion of the chapter will attempt to synthesize these two positions in order to reconcile their relationship to each other and how they inform the identity construction process of leaders.

## 7.2. Organizational context in the leader identity construction process

Because the data in this chapter was emergent, it is important to integrate into the chapter some background literature on the topic. Therefore, before outlining all of the ways in which organizations were perceived to have worked to contribute to or hinder identity construction, it is important to first outline how organizations are thought to broadly impact the identity construction process. As noted in the introduction of this chapter, organizations are thought to have some level of control over the identity construction process. Organizational structures such as hierarchies, grades, rewards, division of labour, job roles, and so on, work to control the identity construction process of individuals in organizations through the creation of patterns of regularity (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002; Ouchi, 1979; Ranson, Hinings & Greenwood, 1980; Schein, 1971; Schein, 2010).

Organizations may have good reasons to control identity construction processes in the first place. For example, Alvesson and Willmott (2002) cite that it can increase commitment and alignment of organizational values, and identification with the organization, to name but a few. Furthermore, Virtaharju and Liiri (2017) suggest that although social constructionist perspectives on identity would argue that individuals construct their identities through their own agency, there may also be other factors at play in this process, such as organizational structures. In this sense, a leader identity could therefore not be attributed to individual agency alone but would also be the product of external forces acting upon the individual. Therefore, given that identity construction occurs through the dynamic interplay of individual agency and organizational forces, and that organizational structures might be one way organizations exert this control, it brings to question how organizations are thought to establish this control.

This question is not only fundamental in terms of the research question of this chapter, it is also fundamental in terms of the accounts given by the study participants and presented in this chapter. Identity construction within this context is not a simple agency vs. control dichotomy. The same structures that are argued to work to control identity are themselves created and maintained by these same individuals (Ranson et al., 1980). Therefore, organizational individuals are both the product of and the producers of these organizational structures. This embeddedness leads to a blurring of lines between what the organizational member can control, and what they produce. I believe that this blurring of the lines is what has contributed to what appears to be contradictory perceptions of organizational control in the data for this chapter.

On the one hand, there are individuals who reported feeling that they have very limited control over their leader identity construction due to the perceived control of their identity construction process by organizational structures. In this way, control over the leader identity is both informed and reproduced at the individual level, as the individual perceives that their efforts to construct a leader identity are controlled, resulting in them subsequently restricting their own leader identity claims. However, in other instances, individuals also reported perceiving that their organization has enabled them to construct a leader identity through formal organizational structures such as leadership titles or grades. In this regard, organizational structures are facilitating the granting of identities, and legitimizing identity claims. These opposing accounts are especially difficult to reconcile when taking into account the fact that LICT provides limited insight into how these accounts of identity construction might be integrated to address the issue of agency and control in the leader identity construction process.

According to LICT, leadership is enacted through influence and this influence is a reciprocal process in which any one individual can influence anyone else, in any given situation. However, LICT places much less emphasis on power relations or formal organizational structures as forms of control, arguing instead for the ability of leaders to follow and followers to lead. In fact, even though LICT is supposed to be embedded within the organizational context, there is actually very little theorizing around how fundamental components of an organization such as organizational structures or culture might factor into the leader identity construction process. LICT does propose that formal leadership roles or titles might act as an identity grant and may represent successful previous claiming and granting cycles. However, the theory does not provide any insight or understanding of how identity claims might be controlled or how grants might be withheld as a result of organizational factors. Therefore, it would appear that there might be some conflicting perspectives between LICT and classic organizational behaviour theory in terms of the role of individual agency and organizational control in the leader identity construction process, and this chapter will attempt to draw these issues out in the coming sections through the use of data extracts in the form of quotes from the interviews.

## 7.3. Organizational catalysts to leader identity construction

Across the data set, participants shared insights relating to how their leader identity was in some way positively shaped by factors related directly to their organization or to aspects of the organization over which the organization had direct control or influence, such as job roles or organizational grade and hierarchy structures. Organizations provide individuals with both leadership opportunities and leadership titles and in doing so, may act as a catalyst for leader identity. According to LICT, individuals who receive organizational support for their identity claims, either through recognition of their claims from others or through organizational leadership titles, are more likely to make claims for a leader identity and have these claims granted by other organizational members. The clarity and credibility that an organizational leadership title may provide to one's leader identity claims may then lead to reciprocal grants and further positive leader identity claiming cycles, eventually leading to the construction of a leader identity.

The first example, outlining how organizations might be implicated in the control of the leader identity construction process, comes from Louis, who reflected on the impact his job role has had on his perception of himself as a leader.

> "I think this role as a director makes me feel that I have got a certain level of autonomy, I certainly feel that I have got the room and tools to be a leader, my boss who is the CEO…gives me an awful lot of free rein to do what I think is right for the centre".

This data extract from Louis demonstrates how the nature of one's job role can have an impact on one's leader identity. In this case, it appears that it is the structure of the role and the resources available to him that enable him to enact his leader identity in a way that feels right to him, and this is facilitating his leader identity construction process. Furthermore, the role of Louis' boss is that he is facilitating a vital component of Louis' job role; namely the component of autonomy that appears to be critical to Louis feeling that he has the tools to be a leader, while also granting him a leader identity. From this example, it appears that the nature of the job role along with the leader identity grants from his boss are intersecting to act as a catalyst for Louis' leader identity construction process. Furthermore, I would like to point out the unique element of receiving grants from one's boss or supervisors. As noted, Louis' boss granted him a leader identity and in doing so is both leading and following. Arguably, this granting of a leader identity signals to others that Louis should be identified as a leader and therefore functions as a form of leadership in and of itself. In this way, we can see how leading and following may be more interconnected than much of the leadership literature might suggest. Further, given that both chapters six and seven provide illustrations of how bosses' and supervisors' grants contribute to leader identity, this issue will be discussed further in chapter eight.

A quote from Margie provides another illustration of the role of the organization as a catalyst to the leader identity construction process.

> "I don't think it was until I embraced the decision making or the autonomy, really driving things in my last role that I really started to feel like a leader, even though in that role I was not managing anyone".

In this example, Margie discussed her move up to grade seven in her organization. During the interview, she reported that she had managed a small team in her previous role, but that this management of others did not result in her internalizing a leader identity. It was not until she moved up to the higher grade that she was able to internalize a leader identity. In this grade, unlike the previous grade she was in, Margie was given much more autonomy, which likely afforded her quite a number of opportunities to make claims for a leader identity. The higher grade also likely offered her some level of legitimacy, which in turn probably led her to receive grants for her claims, as it is likely that more people saw her claims and felt comfortable granting them. Thus, for Margie, moving up a grade acted as a grant of a leader identity, while also allowing her opportunities to make claims for a leader identity, resulting in her ultimately internalizing a leader identity. This is also a good example of how individuals can still construct a leader identity even though they might not be in roles traditionally associated with leadership (i.e. having line management duties).

Frank, a UK government employee with over 40 years of tenure in his organization, reported that his leader identity fluctuated. When asked when he felt like a leader or thought of himself as a leader, he reported that it was contextually tied to having a leader title in his organization.

> "It is times when I was handed the baton and assumed the responsibility and stepped into a space…I applied for the head of change management role and got it and I felt like I got the badge, so it was after the title, it was a blank sheet of paper and I just wrote on it and made it mine. Where space is available where I felt that I could move forward, propose things and that was being nodded through, I was being given tacit approval to lead in that area, but there are so many times in my career where I have not been given that space to lead and I found it difficult to lead".

For Frank, his leader identity is very much tied to a title, which is arguably quite limiting in terms of his ability to construct a leader identity outside of this context. However, the title appears to act as a grant of a leader identity, which Frank needs in order to feel that he has the power to act as a leader and be a leader. As noted previously, according to LICT, organizational leadership titles can act as a form of leader identity grant, and it is clear from

Frank's quote that he felt empowered to make claims for a leader identity only when he had this title. Furthermore, it is also clear from Frank's quote that he made a claim for a leader identity by applying for this position, and it is likely that it was not just the grant itself, but the clarity and credibility that the grant gave to him, that helped to reinforce his perception that he was a leader because of this position. From this quote and the quote before, it could be questioned whether organizational leadership titles work in the way LICT proposes they do. Perhaps an alternative account could be that rather than being a catalyst, these organizational structures are masking other aspects of the leader identity construction process, resulting in individuals perceiving that it is the role or grade that has contributed to their leader identity rather than the relational and interactional components of the claiming and granting process. It could be argued in this case that the organizational leadership roles are simply proxies for a larger unnoticed or unarticulated process of which the participants are unaware.

Another example of how the structure of one's job role can enable one to construct a leader identity comes from Patty, who said the following:

> "I think I felt more like a leader when I was starting as an HEO in my first role when I was managing a whole group of people, but I had a lot of autonomy in that role, I could make a lot of decisions about what was going to happen in that role".

For Patty, the formal leadership component of this role, in the form of line management duties and decision making, were vital components of the role contributing to her identity construction. Because individuals need opportunities to make claims for a leader identity, job roles providing individuals with the latitude to do so are likely to act as a catalyst to the leader identity construction process. As the quote above points out, Patty's job role was structured in such a way as to allow her to make claims for a leader identity, as evidenced by the autonomy for decision making she described, as well as the line management duties, which would arguably provide her with opportunities to make claims and receive reciprocal grants from the individuals she line managed.

As noted previously, according to LICT, anyone can make claims for a leader identity and anyone can be a leader. However, the theory does propose that certain situations may lend themselves to furthering the leader identity construction process. For example, it is proposed that although one does not need to have a leadership role to make claims for a leader identity, having a leader title or leadership role may help individuals to be recognized as a leader, which may in turn help them to secure grants for their leader identity claims, and may also provide a certain level of credibility to their claims. An organizationally recognized leader title is another form of organizational structure that may therefore act as a leader identity catalyst. A quote from Alistair further helps to demonstrate the ability of organizational structures in the form of leader titles to facilitate the leader identity construction process.

> "Our team is being restricted at the moment and I think we feel a bit rudderless and I have been actively trying to act as a leader to help my colleagues who are feeling kind of lost…but it does feel different from the other times when I was a leader. So, if you looked at the organizational chart it would not say that I was in a leadership title, that is easier even if we are all leaders, I think it is easier when those around you know that you are recognized as a leader in the formal hierarchy, which is a shame but quite true".

From Alistair's quote, we can further unpick the difficulty with organizational titles and leader identity claims. Even if an individual makes significant claims for a leader identity, in the absence of an organizational title, they may be unable to receive grants for their claims if other organizational members rely upon organizational titles as a measure of leadership. Rebecca also provided a quote that helps to demonstrate the impact that organizational structures in the form of organizational hierarchy can have in the leader identity construction process.

> “I think my direct report does [see me as a leader], but I think that is automatic almost, due to organizational structure, but I think there is a more complicated line as well because of my role as a business partner, because I think my customers see me as a leader”.

This is a good example of how individuals are able to make leader identity claims and receive grants from different sources. Although Rebecca may have some level of organizationally sanctioned leader credibility from her title, she also has a clear avenue for making claims for a leader identity and receiving grants from other individuals she does not line manage. In this way, it is possible to see how the title might provide some level of organizational control in that it is through the organizational structure rather than the individuals’ claims that they have received grants of a leader identity. Rebecca added additional details further on in the interview regarding the role of organizational structures in helping her to identify herself as a leader.

> “When I was in a role where I was managing a team, that was my main role, to be a leader, and in that role, it was really clear whether or not I was leader and it was measurable, whereas in others and in other roles around me I think it is less clear”.

This additional insight from Rebecca illustrates how others might rely upon organizational titles as a proxy for leadership. In this case, the grants of a leader identity come from the title itself, rather than the actual claims the individual makes. Olivia, a civil servant in the UK, also reported that she perceived that others saw her as a leader not necessarily through her leadership actions (i.e. identity claims), but because of the organizational leadership title the role gave her. When asked if she thought anyone in her organization saw her as a leader, she replied as follows:

> “Yes, I do, I think my direct reports see me as a leader, but I think that is automatic almost due to the organizational structure. But there is a more complicated line as well because of my role as a business partner”.

In this way, the organizational structure, or more accurately, the organizational leadership title she has been given that identified her as a leader, effectively acts as a grant of a leader identity, which she has identified as then impacting how she is perceived by others in her organization. In this way, what Olivia has identified is that others view her as a leader not only through her identity claims or behaviours as a leader, but through her organizational role.

From these examples, a picture can begin to be drawn regarding the role of the organization in the leader identity construction process. Some of the quotes from the study participants indicate that they perceived that leadership titles or aspects of their roles allowed them greater latitude for making claims and receiving grants. This would indicate that specific organizational structures function as catalysts for the leader identity construction process. However, these same structures could be questioned in terms of the actual value that these organizational structures bring to the identity construction process. Although these organizational structures appear to have some positive impact on the leader identity construction process due to their ability to act as facilitators of identity grants or to enable identity claims, they may also create boundaries or perceptions of barriers around who is or is not a leader in an organization. They may also create boundaries around what constitutes an appropriate way of claiming a leader identity. Specifically, these structures are clear indications of the organization controlling who has the privilege of access to opportunities to make claims for a leader identity and also to receive grants, and in effect, controls the leader identity. At face value, although leadership roles may have meaningful value to leadership development, the very fact that these roles exist signals to others who is and who is not a leader, with the result being that the status quo of control over who is or is not a leader is maintained. The positive benefits some individuals derive from these organizational structures may in fact obscure the role of the organization, therefore creating some misperceptions around who is in control of the leader identity construction process. This may lead to perceptions that someone has worked very hard to become a leader, but in fact this may be less a result of their own agency, and more a result of successful organizational control. The next section will discuss the role of organizational structures as barriers to the leader identity construction process.

## 7.4. Organizational barriers to leader identity construction

Across the interviews, participants reported that their ability to construct a leader identity was negatively impacted in a number of ways, which were either directly related to their organization or organizational structures. For example, it was reported that the organization in some ways controlled the means and frequency of identity claims. Other ways in which the organization controlled the leader identity construction process include, but are not limited to, control over organizational rewards and control over allocation of organizational titles. This section will outline the ways in which study participants perceived that their organizations created barriers to their leader identity and in doing so controlled their leader identity construction processes.

The first example of how organizations might control identity construction comes from Melody. Melody reported that in her organization, not everyone was able to make claims for a leader identity due to how certain job roles were structured. She reported:

"some people have to just sit and produce widgets, they don't have time to think about being a leader, it's just about how many widgets they can turn out in a day".

What Melody brings to light in her quote is the issue of opportunity in the claiming and granting of a leader identity. If individuals need to interact with other people in order to make claims for a leader identity and in return receive grants, then this process cannot take place if the individual is relegated to working at a desk all day with very little meaningful interaction with others. This is a particularly salient example of the role of organizations in regulating the identity construction process. By controlling what individuals do in their job role and with whom they interact, or do not interact, organizations maintain a significant level of control in the leader identity construction process. The previous section provided a quote from Frank, who reported that his leader identity was very much linked to an organizational leadership title. Another quote from Frank brings to light how his organization controls opportunities to make claims for a leader identity. As reported before, Frank stated that on occasion he did think of himself as a leader. When asked to elaborate on why it was that he only occasionally thought of himself as a leader, he replied as follows:

"…when I feel that I have the scope to step into that space, I am not shy about it, I like doing it, but I do feel that on lots of occasions there is no space to step into".

This quote is an example of how individuals may perceive that their ability to construct a leader identity is controlled by lack of opportunity. Although LICT presents the leader identity construction process as an almost continuous cycle of making identity claims and grants, in reality some individuals may perceive that their ability to make claims in the first place is not always consistent, meaning that they may face inconsistent claiming and granting cycles. Although LICT proposes that if claims are not granted, individuals may be less likely to make claims in the future (i.e. negative identity spiral), what is left unaddressed is that in many cases, the ability to make claims in the first place is controlled such that individuals may indeed perceive that they are not able to make these claims. As Frank outlined, although he feels he has agency in making claims, as evidenced by his statement that he feels comfortable stepping into leadership roles when the opportunities present themselves, he perceives that his organization controls his ability to do so.

Organizational control over the leader identity construction process of individuals is also evident in a quote from Aditya.

> "it is not about how I am as a leader, it's about the perception of the people above me about my leadership skill and if I am ready for the next level. And that is the problem...I even ask people how do you know if someone is ready for the next level, if you have two people doing the same job…how do you compare if one person has a team of 20 under him and the other is an expert but has a small team of experts under him and what I have seen…is that they look at the size of the team, and that is what people ask, how many people report to you… before I take on a job I ask is it high visibility, I don't want to take on some grunt work, what could happen is that someone…could do a job, but at the end of it someone else gets promoted because they lead a bigger team".

What constitutes leadership and how it is assessed and measured is something that each organization will define as part of their organizational culture (Schein, 2010). However, what is made salient from Aditya's quote is how organizational culture translates into control of the leader identity construction process. Even though Aditya makes claims for a leader identity by leading teams and projects, because his organization has established a culture whereby leader is equated with team size, his claims for a leader identity are not granted or recognized by the organization in the same way they would be if he led a large team. Despite his performance record, Aditya reported facing significant challenges in being perceived as a leader by those above him in the organization. He reported not receiving grants in return for his claims for a leader identity because his organization assessed leadership by the size of an individual’s team rather than by their overall contribution.

As a result, even though Aditya was leading in his organization, he was not being recognized as a leader and was therefore not receiving organizational rewards for his leadership. Aditya confided that his organization was holding back on giving him the same level of pay other leaders at this level had received, because he chose projects based on the technical requirements rather than on the team size. As a result, he felt that his identity as a leader within the organization was being rejected. In this way, organizational culture functions as a form of control over the leader identity by regulating who is viewed as a leader and who is not, and as a result, functions as a barrier to the leader identity construction process.

Martin, a senior consultant for a UK health provider, also reported perceiving that his leader identity construction was impacted by the culture of his organization.

> “On my ward I guess I will be the leader, but I don’t really carry a badge saying I am the leader. I think from what I see in the organization is that the title is incredibly important…I think another thing with the title is that it can relate you to the hierarchy so that you know where you stand…I am not in an organizational hierarchy position in terms of what matters most to me…you can achieve a certain amount of influence without an organizational title, but to actually make change to scale across a whole organization or region without an organizational title is extremely hard, if not impossible”.

This extensive quote brings to light the issues many participants reported facing when it comes to leader identity construction, which is that because many organizations create cultures around what constitutes leadership and many individuals within these organizations continue to equate leadership with an organizational leadership title, not having a leadership title can limit one's leader identity claims and grants. As noted in chapter six, Martin was uncertain about his identity as a leader and had experienced a significant rejection of his leader identity. From Martin's story, the outcomes of organizational control of the leader identity construction process become salient. Having his identity rejected led to his inability to obtain the leader title he felt he needed to enact change in his organization, and as a result he was uncertain about his identity as a leader.

Yet another example of how organizational culture may create barriers to the leader identity construction processes, and subsequently control this process, is through leadership training. Each organization may employ their own form of training aimed at producing the "right kind of leader"; the organizationally ideal leader. Elizabeth, a UK civil servant who has worked in the same organization for over 35 years, reported on her efforts to reshape the leadership behaviours of members of a recently joined department. She reported:

> "I am working on a leadership project now, there is a new team that has just come under [the department]…so some of the leadership behaviours are not what we would want, so some interesting dynamics. So, we know that we have some work to do and I have spent the last few weeks looking at what we can do and putting together a leadership programme and it is going to take some time".

What this example outlines is the organizational level understanding or construction of what leadership is and what being a leader means in this organization. Elizabeth interestingly points out that the new team leads in a way that is not what the organization would want, but still identifies their behaviours as leadership behaviours. Often it might be the case that a lack of leadership would be identified as a problem and thus would warrant the need for leadership training, but in this instance, it is the way that these individuals are leading and the fact that their leadership style is incongruous with what the organization identifies as good leadership. As such, the organization has decided that they must work to reshape their leadership. As previously noted, because leadership training has been directly linked to leader identity construction, in this case, the organization is playing an active role in the leader identity construction process of these individuals by first identifying that their leadership is not organizationally ideal, and then by trying to “reprogram” their leadership through leadership training. Although the value of leadership training is likely quite positive for many leaders, it could be argued that leadership training is yet another way that organizations work to construct the reality of what it means to be a leader within that organization. However, at a much broader level, leadership training initiatives also likely function to reinforce culturally distinct perceptions of what it means to be a leader and thereby aid in the establishment and reinforcement of habituated understandings of what leadership is and what it means to be a leader. Leadership training is therefore both a form of organizational control of the leader identity construction process and a potent tool for the social construction of leadership. This is especially the case when leadership training is based on the dominant leadership frameworks and westernized concepts of leadership and what it means to be a leader.

A quote from Cheryl helps to show how organizational structures such as hierarchy and grade impacted her perception of herself as a leader.

> “Where I work in the organization there is a rigid hierarchy and structures around grades, so from that point of view I would not see myself as a leader until I reached a particular level in the organization”.

Cheryl reported that she did not think of herself as a leader because she did not have what is considered a leader position in her organization’s grade and hierarchy structures. While she reported that she might be seen by others in the organization as being a leader, her lack of an organizationally sanctioned leader title left her feeling unable to identify herself as a leader. Cheryl went on to elaborate further regarding the role of her organization in acting as a barrier to her leader identity.

> "I think it has a lot to do with the culture of the organization, and the kind of bureaucratic structures that we have…so while the organization does have various sorts of communications and documents about everyone's a leader, I think the reality is that there is still a leader, and I think the reality is leaders tend to be certain grades in the organization and I think I have accepted that, and almost become part of it".

Later in the interview, Cheryl provided an additional insight regarding the role of the organization in her leader identity.

> "It just would not be acceptable for me or for anyone else to assume that leadership role without being promoted into it and being given the job… if I am talking about what a leader is where I am, the structure sort of prevents you from, you cannot be the leader you want to be without gaining that position in the organization."

These quotes illustrate the impact that organizational structures have in creating barriers to the leader identity construction process. Further, in this quote, Cheryl alludes to a culture of leadership initiative that had begun to develop in her organization. However, despite the attempts of the organization to change its culture and shift it away from promoting the perception that leaders are clearly defined and organizationally recognized individuals to a culture of more distributed leadership where everyone is a leader, it would seem that more work is needed for this cultural shift to have the desired impact.

Yet another example of the impact of organizational control over the leader identity construction process comes from Lilia.

> "I would do management and lead on certain projects…I think that is where the next stage of my career is going…I don't think I could move up the grade without taking on more of a leadership role".

From this quote, it seems that Lilia recognizes that if she wants to advance in her organization, she will need to take on more leadership roles. If leadership is expected of individuals in order to advance in their career, those individuals who are uncertain about being a leader, or perhaps do not wish to lead at all, will likely be held back from advancement. In this way, the practical implications of leader identity uncertainty become clear. Having leadership viewed as being tied to grade and therefore expected in order to advance into a higher grade, or expected once one advances into a grade, creates a certain expectation of leadership and what it means to be a leader. On the one hand, if someone is not expected to be a leader until they move up to a higher grade, then what does this say about their ability to be seen as a leader in lower grades? Will their claims for a leader identity be granted if they are not in this leadership grade? On the other hand, if someone progresses into a leadership grade but they are not ready to be in a leadership position, will the grants they receive have any impact on their leader identity? These questions cannot be answered here, but they do point to significant issues concerning the association of leadership with grade.

Another example of how organizations create barriers to leader identity comes from a quote from Emily, who reported the following:

> "It depends on where you work…because I think that historically we have had a culture in operations that people are told what to do, they have not been expected or we have not told them to think for themselves…for me it is about giving people the space to do that [see themselves as leaders] and how controlling you are because if you're told to just come in and answer the phone and that is all they are interested in, that does not engender

someone to move to be able to think of themselves as a leader, no one is interested in their opinions, they are not looking to improve, you just come in and you do your job and go home”.

Emily went on to explain that in other departments in her organization, employees are given more time to work on personal development and to think about being a leader and take on leadership roles. Organizations have the power and ability to structure job roles in such a way as to develop and capitalize on the strengths of their employees. However, when job roles or even whole departments become overly task-oriented, the ability of an individual to engage with the leader identity construction process becomes negatively impacted, if not outright impaired. Rebecca also provided some insight into her experience of job role constraints on the leader identity construction process.

“I think it is the job role, some roles are just set up like that, we have some front facing staff who follow really rigid structures and scripts and the system is set up like that, it is fairly robotic, and I do not think that gives them the space and individuality they need to be a good leader”.

Emily’s example, that certain roles in her organization create boundaries around who can or cannot be a leader, is a telling example of organizational control. Structuring certain roles such that they heavily restrict agency and human interaction creates limitations on the concrete functions of identity construction. It can also lead to the creation of mental barriers in which individuals internalize their perception that they cannot or need not engage in leadership or leader identity construction because it is outside the purview of their organizational role.

Silvia, a human resources professional in an executive role in higher education in the US, talked about the way she perceived that her current job role limited her ability to make claims for a leader identity. She said:

> "I don't let it allow me to be out there, but I do tend to make my contributions than others, or if I were in a different role".

Silvia identified that her current job role restricted her ability to put herself "out there" as a leader, meaning that she perceived significant control of her behaviours and actions because of her role. Even though Silvia stated that she thought she did make contributions to the organization, she confided that she felt highly restricted by her role, even to the point of affect regulation. She stated that she felt she had to regulate the types of emotion she displayed in public or towards her employees because of her role. Arguably, if Silvia perceives that her job role controls her to the level of affect, it could be that this would also translate into how she makes claims for a leader identity. Some forms of leadership, such as relational leadership, might require greater levels of interpersonal interaction and displays of emotion such as warmth and regard towards others. Therefore, if Silvia feels restricted in her range of emotional display, she may feel unable or uncomfortable making claims for a leader identity in certain ways.

Silvia's example is especially noteworthy given that many of the previous examples in this section have outlined how grade or job role work to control identity claims or grants. This quote on the other hand suggests that organizations can even control individuals at the level of emotion. Control of such critical components of human behaviour, at such a micro level, suggests that the work of constructing a leader identity involves much more than just making simple verbal claims or sitting at the head of the table during meetings. Perhaps Silvia's example is quite an extreme outlier, but it brings to light significant issues regarding how organizations knowingly or unknowingly control the leader identity construction process as well as the level at which individuals make claims for a leader identity.

Organizational transitions can also act as a barrier to the leader identity construction process. If an individual has been working with certain individuals over a period of time and they have a clearly established leader-follower relationship, what happens when all or some of these individuals leave? This is the question that Tim has for himself in terms of his team leader role after an organizational transition. Tim, a senior leader in a UK higher education institution with over 20 years of leadership experience, expressed concerns about his ability to continue leading in the same way after a change in leadership in his organization. He said:

> "I mentioned a change of manager for myself, and we got a change of structure…as things stand yes, I get a lot of freedom to lead and make strategic decisions, and I think…we are at the whim of all sorts of things…under previous leadership I felt I could do that but under the new leadership, it is a bit too early to say".

This quote brings to light the role of other leaders in regulating the leader identity construction process of others. Tim perceived that if his new manager changed his ability to make strategic decisions, then he would no longer be leading in the way he wanted to, which would likely lead to a perceived change in how he had been making claims for a leader identity. This would probably lead to him needing to find new ways of engaging in the leader identity constriction process in order to maintain his leader identity. After all, if his future leader identity claims are not granted by the new leadership, he may withdraw such future claims, which could lead to a negative identity spiral.

Patricia, a mid-level programme director for a UK higher education institution, reported that she felt the bureaucracy of her organization prevented her from acting as a leader at times. She said:

> "you get bogged down in a lot of bureaucracy, so you cannot act as a leader as much as I would like because there is a lot of firefighting…there are a lot of jobs that have to be done because there are not enough administrators and not enough hours".

This quote especially highlights the issue of time as a function of control in the leader identity construction process. Limiting the amount of time an individual has to spend on being a leader or engaging in leadership acts can significantly impact how and when one makes leader identity claims, which will also likely impact the number of grants received. Leaders are chronically stretched for time; therefore, it is worth considering how time factors into the leader identity construction process.

In summary, the examples presented in this section of the chapter help to bring to light issues around how organizational control is exercised in the form of organizational structures. The next section of this chapter will outline how sections 7.3 and 7.4 help to answer the research question set out at the start of this chapter, and will work towards providing an integration of the findings.

## 7.5. Conclusion

Organizational structures such as job role, grade and hierarchy were all outlined as examples of identity catalysts controlled by the organization. However, these same structures were also reported to act as barriers to leader identity. Although these mechanisms were all outlined as possible forms of identity control by Alvesson and Willmott (2002), they have not previously been identified as also working to control leader identity specifically. This connection provides a useful understanding of the organizational context in terms of how it factors into the leader identity construction process. This chapter also outlined other barriers to leader identity in the form of organizational control such as organizational culture, affect regulation, opportunities to make claims, organizational rewards and leadership training. In this way, the data presented in this chapter helps to shed light on the contextual parameters and forms of control that regulate the leader identity construction process. In doing so, the data in this chapter helps to answer the research question “what role do individuals perceive their organization as having in their leader identity construction process?” in the following ways. Firstly, this is achieved by demonstrating how structures such as job role, grade and hierarchy can help or hinder individuals in their ability to make claims and receive grants of a leader identity.

Additionally, from this data, it is possible to argue that even though in principle, individuals can make claims for a leader identity in any situation, the findings suggest that there are many ways in which one’s leader identity may be controlled. For example, even though organizational leadership titles might be perceived by some individuals to aid the leader identity construction process, it could be questioned whether organizational leadership titles work in the way LICT proposes they do. Perhaps an alternative account could be that rather than being a catalyst, these organizational structures are masking other aspects of the leader identity construction process, resulting in individuals perceiving that it is the role or grade that has contributed to their leader identity rather than the relational and interactional components of the claiming and granting process. It could be argued in this case that the organizational leadership roles are simply proxies for a larger unnoticed or unarticulated social construction of leadership of which the participants are unaware.

Additionally, it may be the case that people rely upon these titles to discern who is a leader, rather than relying upon leadership actions. In this case, although leadership titles may act as a form of identity grant and may provide individuals with a certain level of credibility and validation They may be overly relied upon as true indicators of leadership and may negatively impact the leader identity construction process if they are not officially conferred upon an individual or perceived as being unobtainable. It can also be argued from the data that organizations might control leader identity in less obvious ways. The data regarding leadership training and control over individual time allocation are subtle yet still very powerful forms of control, which may not be understood as such.

Furthermore, in regard to the discussion of agency versus control which was outlined in section 7.2 of this chapter, it would appear that although individuals might be perceived as having agency in making claims from an outsiders' perspective, the participants actually perceived that their organizations produced tangible barriers that worked to limit not just how they made claims, but also the number of claims they made. For example, organizational structures such as job roles create barriers by dictating how one is to perform one's job role, where this job role is to be carried out, and with whom one is to carry out the job role, all of which impact how, when, and with whom people make claims for a leader identity. In this way, the implications of the findings of this chapter move beyond theoretical to practical.

The data would suggest that organizations appear to have a very high level of control over the leader identity construction process. However, participants reported not only organizational barriers, but also that organizational structures helped to facilitate thinking of oneself as a leader, and therefore contributed to the leader identity construction process. However, again, although these organizational titles were viewed positively by participants, as noted before, it could be argued that they are in fact another form of organizational control. This would suggest that actual individual agency might be significantly challenged by the reality of organizational control. Thus, it is argued in this chapter that even though organizations can have both a positive and negative role in the leader identity construction process, this does not negate the control they appear to have in this process. Therefore, in addition to outlining the role of the organization in the leader identity construction process, it is also important to take a deeper look at how these seemingly contradictory explanations might be accounted for and in what way they inform our understanding of the larger issue of organizational contribution to the leader identity construction process.

Understanding how the leader identity construction process is controlled by organizational structures and how individuals perceive these controls to function can help to provide a greater understanding of LICT, including its limitations, as well as helping to provide a greater understanding of the issues that may prevent some individuals from making claims for and receiving grants of a leader identity, which are fundamental components of the leader identity construction process. This chapter therefore helps bring to light how the different components of the process (i.e. claims and grants) are controlled at the organizational level and the impact this control is perceived to have had on the individuals who experienced it. The issues and topics outlined in this chapter will be discussed in greater detail in the discussion chapter of this thesis, along with a possible explanation for these divergent accounts.

# Chapter 8: Discussion

## 8.1. Introduction

This chapter will provide a discussion of the thesis findings and in doing so will provide an integration of the findings in order to show how they inform our understanding of the leader identity construction process in new ways, while also demonstrating how these findings are interconnected and complement each other. In chapter five, I outlined how teams navigated the negotiation of identities and roles in order to meet their task goals. In chapter six I outlined the ways in which individuals experienced their leader identity construction, and the issues that helped them and those that held them back in this process. In chapter seven I demonstrated how organizational structures are reproductive of control over identity construction. In this chapter I will provide insights into these three chapters in order to demonstrate how they answered the three research questions set out in chapter one of this thesis.

## 8.2. Leadership in interaction: Key insights from chapter five

Chapter five outlined how individuals in teams work to construct their identities as leaders and followers. The data from chapter five answers research question number one, which is: what kind of experiences, relationships and interactions contribute to the construction of a leader identity? It does so by informing our understanding of the relational and interactional components of leader identity construction in two key ways. Firstly, it provides insights into the types of behaviour and micro level interaction that facilitate the establishment of leader and follower relationships. This is in contrast to the data in chapters six and seven, which both take a broader level analysis. Secondly, the data in chapter five provides insights into the relational components of leader identity construction, which can provide a greater understanding of the ways that individuals contribute differently to the identity construction process. It does this by describing the variations in how individuals claim and grant or in other ways engage in the leader identity construction process. However, what makes this data noteworthy in comparison to the data in chapter six or seven is that it makes explicitly evident the negotiation process that facilitates leader identity construction by presenting both the dyadic and team level interactions. In comparison, the data in chapter six and seven presents evidence of the outcomes of leader-follower interactions. Therefore, because the data from chapter five contributes to our understanding of the leader identity construction process in two key ways, this section will be broken down into two parts, each of which will outline and discuss in greater detail the findings from chapter five.

Evidence from the data in chapter five suggests that some individuals may actively attempt to end or prevent others from claiming an identity or continuing to make claims and in doing so reject their teammates' leader identity. Another notable finding from this chapter is the role of gender in constructing the behaviours of different individuals in the teams, such that female team members were more often asked to complete the forms and task paperwork. This may reflect the deeply held and often unconsciously activated gender role bias of women as being more suitable to these types of role. However, it may also be the case that these situations provide opportunities for women to gain valuable management and leadership skills above and beyond their male counterparts, who refrain from taking on these roles.

The data from this chapter also brings to light the ability of teams to implement a distributed leadership model such that the team tasks and the claiming and granting of identities are distributed across the group rather than being the remit of a single team member. Although research on distributed leadership continues to grow, there remain questions regarding how this form of leadership actually plays out in self-managed teams (Day, Gronn & Salas 2004; Gronn, 2002). This data helps to provide an understanding of how leader identity construction takes place in distributed leadership settings. These findings bring to light how individuals may choose to equally support each other's claiming and granting in a highly supportive and collaborative way.

The team one data also helps to illustrate the role of gaze in the interaction process and the impact that gaze may have in aiding individuals in their leader identity construction. Finally, the data from this chapter helps to provide greater insight into how individuals may engage more or less actively in the claiming and granting process. For example, in all of the team it was observed that some individuals only made claims for a follower identity and did so through indirect means, such as Ruth in team three and James in team two. Meanwhile, other individuals played more of a supporting, active follower role, for example Keith in team one or Beth in team three. The value of this insight is that it provides an understanding of the quality and quantity of identity claims and grants. It appears that not everyone participates in the same way and at the same level in the identity construction process and that these variable participation levels have very real outcomes in terms of who emerges as a leader or follower. Although this kind of outcome might be expected, there is very little data that actually looks at differences in identity claiming and granting behaviours and what impact these variances may have in the identity construction process. The implications and further details of these behaviours will be discussed in further detail in the discussion chapter of this thesis.

### 8.2.1. Identity rejection in the team video data

Across the teams, individuals differed in terms of their support or lack of support for the identity construction processes of their teammates. More specifically, there is evidence of identity rejection taking place in several of the teams. For example, in the team two video, it was found that Will interrupted Sara's leader identity claims. There was also evidence in team five suggesting that Brenda's claims for a leader identity were rejected by some of her teammates. Identity rejection in these examples took place both through actively attempting to grant a follower identity and not granting leader identity claims. Other methods of rejecting included changing the topic of conversation to end the ability of another person to continue to make direct claims for a leader identity. Identity rejection is actively denying a claim, not just ignoring it. It may be the case that someone will make a claim and others will not respond or take note of it.

However, identity rejection means that other people actively work to deny said claims. Identity rejection as a concept is important to address because of how it impacts the individual. In the video data, it was observed that individuals made claims for a leader identity, which other people did not react to. In this case, it would be considered that the claim was not granted, but not granting it does not imply that the granting individuals do not want the claimer to be a leader. It could simply mean that they were not receptive to the claim or were not sufficiently convinced by it to make a grant. Identity rejection on the other hand is when other individuals actually work to end the identity construction process of others, and behave in a way that suggests they do not see them as a leader or do not wish them to be a leader. The behavioural outcomes of the identity rejection are important to consider. Arguably, if the individual perceives that others are actively working to prevent them from being a leader, this rejection of an important identity may have profound negative consequences on the individual, leading them to stop making claims for a leader identity in the context of the interaction, and possibly having more long-term consequences. Having one’s leader identity claiming process interrupted over the course of several interactions or across contexts could lead them to disengage from the identity construction process. In this way, although the data outlining how individuals interrupt the identity construction process of others is limited to a few examples from the data, it is possible that this is indicative of a larger phenomenon with real implications.

### 8.2.2. Role of cultural factors in the leader identity construction process

The teams in the chapter five data were quite diverse in terms of the national origin of the team members, and it is my understanding that the module co-ordinators of the programme worked hard to ensure this diversity in the teams. However, although I believe that team diversity is important, I did observe differences in how team members made claims and grants around cultural lines. Specifically, I observed that there were significant issues with foreign or non-UK team members in terms of how they made their claims and grants and how their claims and grants were reacted to by others. In many of the team meetings, I observed that non-UK team members made fewer direct leader and follower claims, had fewer claims granted, talked less than their UK-born counterparts, and were talked to less. I do not believe that these differences in behaviours are necessarily a reflection of their skill or ability with regard to the team project. The ideas these individuals expressed and the contributions they made in their teams were just as valuable to the projects, in my opinion. However, because they made more indirect claims and grants, for example by not objecting to suggestions on how to take action in the team project, or by not nominating themselves to drive the task forward, I believe they were perceived by their teammates as less participatory and were therefore more often granted a follower identity.

Furthermore, I also observed that non-UK team members had fewer social interactions in the teams overall. I believe that the issue of frequency of interaction is worth further investigation. If social interaction is a key cornerstone of LICT, then it comes into question how individuals can effectively internalize a leader identity in the absence or infrequency of interaction. More specifically, because the UK students engaged with their non-UK teammates less, and because there was an imbalance in the ratio of UK students to non-UK students in the teams, the non-UK students were effectively outnumbered. This meant that if the UK students did not engage in social interaction with non-UK students, then the non-UK students had very few options for finding other ways of engaging in the kind of social interactions necessary for leader identity claims to be made and granted, effectively reducing their ability to internalize a leader identity in this context. I believe that this is a powerful example of how discrimination based on cultural or national lines directly translates into the reduction of interaction, which leads to reduced opportunities to construct a leader identity and engage in the leadership process.

Furthermore, I believe that the data from the team videos brings to light issues about how rejection of a leader identity can start early on in a team, while also demonstrating what happens when there is an absence of reciprocal claims and grants. For example, in team four, there was significant sharing of the team task and collaboration, resulting in all of the team members being able to make claims for a leader identity. More importantly, though, this took place because each team member took the initiative to make claims, but also to reciprocate, grant and acknowledge the actions of their team members. In comparison, in other teams, such as team one, the contributions of the only foreign team member were often ignored or disregarded by several of the other team members. As was outlined in chapter five, Wang Wei made contributions to the team project, but his contributions were often only acknowledged by Katie.

Furthermore, in team three, Ruth was often ignored by her team members. At times Ruth would sit quietly by herself while her team members worked together. Arguably Ruth could have moved closer to her teammates and found other ways to participate, but the same could be said about her teammates. There was nothing stopping them from inviting her to participate or sit closer to the rest of the team. I therefore argue that it is not the case that the non-UK team member did not contribute or did not make leader identity claims at any point during the team meetings. It is also not the case that the claims and grants of minority team members were of lesser quality or value to the team project per se. Rather, I argue that it was the fact that other team members did not actively reciprocate and acknowledge the value of the claims and grants made by the minority individuals, which contributed to the difference in both the frequency and quality of the identity claims and grants of the minority team members.

I find the chapter five data to be particularly interesting with regard to how discrimination can have significant negative effects without any openly derogatory or abusive behaviour taking place. It is noteworthy to point out that none of the team members were openly or directly discriminatory to any of their fellow teammates, and yet, it is clear from the data that discrimination took place and had an impact on who was able to make claims and receive grants of a leader identity. I believe that this data helps to inform our understanding of how people can still be discriminated against and held back from leadership opportunities even in the absence of the types of behaviour that would be commonly associated with discrimination (e.g. use of derogatory words or names). I believe that much can be learned from these examples in terms of how simply excluding someone from a team conversation or a group decision can have a ripple effect on leader identity construction. This data further highlights how the micro level interactions we often take for granted in team work can have a significant impact on the leadership process and leader identity construction.

### 8.2.3. Role of gender in the leader identity construction process

In addition to issues of culture, gender also had a significant role in the chapter five data. On a whole there were also significant gender differences in the teams with regard to task distribution. In all six teams, the female team members were either explicitly asked to fill out the team's paperwork or volunteered to do so. Often male team members would say something like, "you have good hand writing" or "I saw that you enjoyed doing it last week".

For example, in team six, Bill asked Brenda to fill out the team task sheet, saying that he noticed she had enjoyed doing so last time. Team two also has a similar interaction where Sara was nominated by her male team members to fill in the task sheet. These gendered perceptions of women as secretaries is an indication of how the social construction of gender roles impacts the claiming and granting of leader and follower identities. The literature on leader emergence has focused almost exclusively on attempting to explain why certain individuals emerge as leaders by focusing on the traits, characteristics or behaviours of the individual (Eagly & Karau, 1991; Eagly & Wood, 1991; Ensari, Riggio, Christian & Carslaw, 2011; Ritter & Yoder, 2004; Ridgeway, 2001). The chapter five data could be used to challenge these assumptions and reframe the arguments around leader emergence to suggest that it may not entirely be down to individual traits or characteristics. Rather, I argue that there needs to be more attention paid to the role of leader and follower identity claims and grants and how they contribute to the social and interactional dynamics of leader emergence.

More specifically, it brings to question how these micro level interactions reproduce gendered conceptions of leadership. It was clear from the chapter five data that many of the team members had gendered conceptions of their roles in the team. In some teams, the female team members had no issue with taking on the arguably gendered role of managing the paperwork. In the case of team one, I would argue that Katie claimed this task and made it part of her claim for a leader identity. I would assess this kind of action as empowering, but still very much in line with gender norms.

However, in the case of team two, where Sara initially resisted the gender norm being placed on her, the social pressure of having three males directly or indirectly compelling her to take on the task is a classic example of how women are silently steered into perpetuating gender roles. It is exactly these kinds of seemingly mundane interaction that place women in positions that reduce and take up their time and mental resources, while their male team members are free to brainstorm and discuss, arguably allowing them more time and space to make leader identity claims. In this way, although it might be argued that asking a female team member to take on the task of filling in forms or doing the paperwork may seem like they are being included in the team project, I would argue that these types of task take their time and energy away from the larger team task and might impact their ability to make claims for a leader identity. In this way, we can see how gendered conceptions of leadership are reproduced through micro level interactions, producing and perpetuating discriminatory and unequal practices that reduce the participation of women in leadership.

I would also like to highlight the issue of resistance to gender norms that took place in team five. As outlined in chapter five, Brenda was asked to take on the role of filling out the team task sheet. When she resisted this task, her resistance was met with a mix of support and rejection from her male team members. I feel that this example is highly illustrative of how women are treated when they resist gender norms. They may find some supporters but will most likely be met with very negative feedback in response. I found it especially interesting to juxtapose the team two and team five examples, because in one instance the female team member resisted but received no support for her resistance and eventually relented, while the other female team member received support for her resistance and was successful.

This is a powerful example of how the claiming and granting process works. Supporting another person's resistance to gender normative roles is critical. It may not always be possible to resist without others' support. Therefore, I found the fact that Brenda secured support for her resistance important. Ultimately, the support from others is a key component of resisting gender normative conceptions of leadership that perpetuate the gender divide which is so commonly lamented, yet still seems to persist. I would argue that in light of the LICT framework, it is important to encourage and provide opportunities for women to make claims for a leader identity, but it is also important that they find supporters (granters) for the claims and their resistance.

### 8.2.4. The role of eye gaze in identity claiming and granting

Another finding from the chapter five data focuses on the role of eye gaze in the identity construction process. Eye gaze has been implicated in social interaction as a means of communication at several levels (Ellsworth & Ludwig, 1972; Kendon, 1967; Mehrabian, 2008; Pfeiffer et al., 2013). It is well established that individuals are capable of discriminating direction of eye gaze in others and are capable of knowing when others are engaging in eye gaze (Hoffman & Haxby, 2000). Therefore, although the role of eye gaze in human interaction is well established, what remains underexplored is the role that eye gaze may have in the leader and follower identity construction process. As noted in chapter five, what stands out as conceptually interesting about the first two meetings of team one is the role of interaction partners and gaze. I observed that in the early team meetings, and across the meetings as a whole, Katie displayed a preference to make her claims for a leader identity and to focus her talk towards Keith. I observed that Katie frequently gazed and verbally interacted with Keith and that Keith reciprocated these same behaviours back to Katie. Furthermore, it was also found that Katie gazed at Keith much more than she did any of the other team members.

I argue that beyond simply functioning as a means of social communication, gaze as observed in the chapter five video data has a very important function in the leader identity construction process due to its role in facilitating identity claiming and granting. It would appear that gaze may have an important function in signalling to others to whom the intended claim or grant is directed. It may also be the case that gaze is indicative of a larger interaction pattern. It would appear that individuals may perceive certain others as highly receptive to their claims and may therefore focus their claims towards this person or persons in the hope that they will grant said claims. It may also be the case that gaze facilitates the reciprocal nature of the identity construction process. Gazing at someone while making a claim is only one part of the social interaction, but when someone gazes back, the individual will know that their claim has been recognized and acknowledged. Therefore, gaze may be a critical non-verbal indication that the other person is participating in the identity construction and may foster the reciprocal nature of the identity construction process and may also be a facilitator of positive identity spirals. For example, it may be the case that if an individual makes a claim for an identity and observes that someone else is gazing at them in response, this may indicate that they are paying attention to the claim and may validate or encourage the individual to continue their identity claims.

In this way, I argue that gaze has a conceptually interesting and previously unknown role in the leader identity construction process. It may also be the case that other nonverbal forms of communication are also implicated in the identity construction process. In fact, it was found that participants would often move their upper body or torso over the tables in an effort to get closer to an interaction partner. This proximity could be a nonverbal cue to others that the individual is engaged and attending to the social interaction taking place. This could then signal to others that the person is receptive to the identity claims or grants the other person is making. In this way, the data from chapter five helps to bring to light the role that nonverbal forms of human communication have in the identity construction process.

#### 8.2.5. Active claiming and granting, passive identity construction - how individuals differ in their claiming and granting behaviours

The final key insight from chapter five focuses on the variability of claiming and granting behaviours. Across the video data, it was observed that individuals differed in both the quality (e.g. direct vs. indirect) and frequency (e.g. how often) of their identity claims and grants. More specifically, it was found that some individuals took a more active approach to identity construction, utilizing more direct forms of identity claim or grant, and also engaged in these claims and grants more frequently. Conversely, some individuals took more of an indirect route to claiming and granting while also engaging less frequently in identity construction. For example, in team one, it was observed that Katie and Tim made much more frequent and direct leader identity claims. In comparison, Bret made fewer claims and was more likely to use more indirect means of granting, such as not objecting to claims. Conversely, there were some individuals who chose to make claims for a follower identity by not participating. Furthermore, the data suggests that individuals also differ in how they claim a follower identity and that not all follower identity claims are made in the same way. For example, in team three, Beth took much more proactive steps to directly claim a follower identity. In contrast, James in team one took more of an indirect approach to his follower identity claims by, for example, not objecting to or challenging others' leader identity claims.

LICT proposes that individuals might utilize both direct and indirect means for claiming and granting leader and follower identities. What it does not address is whether individuals might consistently utilize one means over the other. The chapter five data suggests that there can be both active and passive/less active followers and that individuals can utilize more or less frequent claims and grants and still contribute to the identity construction process. In this way, this data brings further clarity to how individuals might differ in their identity construction behaviours. It also helps to illuminate how active followers might contribute differently to the leader identity construction process in comparison to passive or less active followers. It may be the case that the more active followers provide more validation of leader identity claims, while less active or passive followers might contribute though their lack of challenge to leader identity claims. Therefore, what I argue is not that one form of claiming and granting is better or preferred over the other. Rather, I wish to point out that the data suggests that individuals utilize different means of claiming and granting and that regardless of the frequency or quality, they still contribute to the identity construction process.

### 8.3. Leadership relationships and experiences: key insights from chapter six interview study

The data presented in chapter six focused on presenting several key sub-themes centred around leader identity construction, and answers research question one, which is "What kind of experiences, relationships, and interactions contribute to the construction of a leader identity?" and question three, which is: "what are the implications for leader identity construction in terms of who supports or does not support one's leader identity?" These research questions are answered by the data in the following ways. Firstly, the data helps to outline the types of relationship (e.g. role models, mentors, etc.) that contribute to the leader identity construction process. This data also provides understanding of the types of experience that are critical to leader identity by outlining the role of crystallizing events. The role of feedback is also outlined in terms of how it can help us to understand the types of interaction that facilitate leader identity. The data on identity rejection and identity uncertainty help to answer research question three by providing us with a greater understanding of the implications of receiving support or not receiving support for one's leader identity construction. The following section will outline in greater detail the key insights brought forward in chapter six and will demonstrate more effectively how they help to answer the research questions.

#### 8.3.1. Key experiences - crystallizing events

Crystallizing events helps to outline the types of key experience that can facilitate the leader identity construction process. Previous research suggests that challenging key events may be vital opportunities for leader development and learning (Daudelin, 1996; McCall et al., 1988). As was noted in chapter six, many of the study participants discussed how there were certain crystallizing experiences that really drove home to them the fact that they were leaders. These experiences were important because they not only signalled to the individual that they now thought of themselves as a leader (e.g. internalized leader identity), but that other people also saw them as a leader. What made these experiences so formative to the leader identity construction process was that they offered the individual opportunities to make claims and reactive grants of a leader identity. However, it appears that they also helped validate at the individual level that the individual was capable of leading. Therefore, crystallizing events provided opportunities for learning and refection on one's leadership while also providing opportunities for highly visible claims and likely more frequent grants in response to these claims.

### 8.3.2. The role of feedback in leader identity construction

The data on feedback helps to provide greater insight into the types of interaction that help individuals to gain insight into their leadership, which aids in the construction of a leader identity. As a concept, feedback has received much attention in the management literature, and its role in leader development is well documented (Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Cummings, 1985; DeRue & Wellman, 2009). However, there has been less attention paid to the role of feedback as a tool for identity construction. From the feedback data, it emerged that some individuals utilized feedback about their leadership as a means of self-monitoring. For some this meant monitoring to avoid an unwanted negative leader identity and for others this meant monitoring to maintain and/or improve upon their leader identity. It has also been suggested that individuals may utilize feedback-seeking as a form of impression management (Lam, Huang & Snape, 2007).

However, overall, the data suggests that feedback has two key roles in facilitating the leader identity construction process. Firstly, feedback functions as a form of reciprocal leader and follower identity claiming and granting process. If an individual solicits information from others under the context of leadership feedback, this signals to others that the individual perceives themselves as a leader (leader identity claim) and the other individual as a follower (follower identity grant). By giving feedback about their leadership, the reciprocal nature of the identity construction process is able to take place such that the feedback from the follower functions as a grant of the leader identity claim. Secondly, by providing the individual with feedback about their leadership success or failure, feedback functions as a means to self-monitor one's leader behaviours. This may therefore provide the individual with valuable means through which to maintain the tension between their desired leader identity and their feared leader identity. In this way, feedback is a multifaceted tool for leader identity construction.

8.3.3. Role of identity rejection

Additionally, the data in chapter six brings to light the impact that having one's leader identity rejected at the collective or organizational level can have on the leader identity construction process, and in doing so answers research question number three. The data suggests that having one's leader identity supported by others and receiving leader identity grants from individuals who are deemed important or salient to the individual, such as bosses, supervisors, and so on, can have a significant impact on the leader identity construction process. Furthermore, it seems that when the same individuals reject an identity claim, this can have a negative impact on the individual. Identity rejection, as a concept that is introduced in this thesis, was outlined in greater detail in section 8.2.1. of this chapter and I will therefore not go into further detail regarding how it is conceptualized in this thesis. However, in summary, the data suggest that it matters *who* rejects one's leader identity claims and that rejection from individuals with greater organizational status or standing is perceived to have a greater negative impact on the leader identity construction process than rejection from individuals with lower organizational status.

8.3.4. It matters who rejects or grants leader identity claims

However, the data on identity rejection goes beyond outlining identity rejection. It also indicates that individuals discriminate amongst the sources of their identity grants and rejections. More specifically, the data suggest that grants from certain individuals are valued more and therefore contribute more to the leader identity construction process. The data suggests that grants from individuals with higher status or organizational grade or role are perceived as being of higher value or contributing more positively to the leader identity construction process. It is possible that these individuals have more personal knowledge of the claimers' skills and abilities and are therefore better at identifying the value or credibility of the individuals' claims.

Research on interpersonal attraction suggests that individuals who like each other are more likely to engage in behaviours aimed at helping and supporting each other (Berscheid & Hatfield, 1969; Clark & Mills, 1979; Pandey & Griffitt, 1974). Linking this with the study findings, it could be that individuals who like each other may be more willing to reciprocate each other's identity claims and grants. In other words, if you like someone you might be more willing to grant them a leader identity. Considering that individuals identified that grants from their boss or supervisor (arguably close relationships) contributed more to their leader identity, it could be the case that in addition to organizational status and knowledge of the individual's ability, interpersonal attraction may also have a role in why individuals discriminate between the sources of their leader identity grants.

8.3.5. Role models in the leader identity construction process

According to Ibarra (1999), role models may serve as sources of identity information that new or developing leaders can observe and learn from during their identity construction process. Taking this argument to be true, it may therefore be possible that role models also serve as a source of identity claiming and granting behaviours that individuals can observe and learn from, and possibly adopt in their own leader identity construction process. Making this connection seems logical given the well-documented function of role models (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz & Lima, 2004). According to Shapiro et al. (1978), in professional settings the emulation and modelling of behaviours contribute to the construction of one's professional identity. Role models may therefore have a wide-ranging applicability for observing and learning successful leader identity claiming and granting behaviours, which individuals can then utilize in their own leader identity construction processes.

Gibson (2004) proposes that role models may serve as a source for both behavioural modelling as well as identification and social comparison. Individuals in organizations may look to leader role models as a source of leadership behaviours to observe and model, but they may also identify with aspects of the leader role model, drawing comparisons between the leader role model and themselves, resulting in a desire to increase similarity through imitation and some level of behavioural modelling (Ibarra, 1999; Sealy & Singh, 2010; Singh, Vinnicombe & James, 2006). Role models may demonstrate to new or developing leaders what it means to be a leader, and what is possible in terms of leadership role attainment and execution (Gibson, 2003; Ibarra, 1999; Sealy & Singh, 2010; Vinnicombe & James, 2006).

Drawing connections between role models as sources of identity modelling and the behavioural component of the claiming and granting process of LICT, it is possible that leader role models help to demonstrate what claiming and granting behaviours are successful in achieving the granting of a leader identity. Research by Bucher and Stelling (1977) further suggests that professionals create their identities by “picking and choosing” aspects of their role models in order to construct their ideal self, and the same may be true of leaders and leader identity construction. Individuals may observe certain behaviours from their leader role models, picking and choosing the behaviours that are most successful in helping the individual to make claims for a leader identity, and in doing so work to construct their leader identity. Bucher and Stelling (1977) also suggest that individuals may look to multiple role models, identifying and modelling behaviours that they assess to be useful or meaningful to their development in their role. This provides further indication that role models may serve as behavioural resources for new and developing leaders to look to as banks for successful leader identity claiming behaviours, which they can then replicate during their own leader identity construction.

#### 8.3.6. Negative Role Models

Although role models are commonly thought of as sources of positive behavioural modelling, it is becoming increasingly accepted by researchers that individuals learn from both positive and negative aspects of role models and that role models may not always be sources of positive behaviours (Gibson, 2004). Research suggests that role models may also serve as models of negative behaviours to be avoided (Bucher & Stelling, 1977; Gibson, 2004; Ibarra, 1999). The concept of a negative role model is one in which individuals observe role models in order to learn what behaviours or attitudes to avoid (Bucher & Stelling, 1977; Gibson, 2004). Like positive role models, negative role models provide the individual with opportunities to learn and define themselves through observing possible identities to avoid. In this setting, the individual observes the leader role model and actively attempts not to model the behaviours they have identified as possibly harmful, uncharacteristic of effective leadership, or as being inauthentic to how the individual wishes to lead. In this way, the negative leader role models serve as a warning of how not to lead or how not to be a leader and help to shape the individual's leader identity by providing them with information that may help them identify how they wish to be in the future (Ibarra, 1999; Markus & Nurius, 1986). Making a connection back to LICT, negative role models may also serve as examples of how not to make claims or may show developing leaders what identity claims do not result in leader identity grants. Negative role models were also identified as playing an important role in helping participants identify possible leader identities to avoid. Although negative role models have been identified as acting as an identity catalyst, it should be understood that their role as a form of role model is what allows individuals to learn from them and therefore serve as a catalyst to the leader identity construction process. It is important to point out that not all "bad" leaders or bad leadership experiences will act as a catalyst. It is just as likely that a bad leader could be a barrier to the leader identity construction process. However, what should be taken away from these examples is the ability of individuals to reflect on negative situations and learn from them.

### 8.3.7. Mentors

Mentors are individuals who often hold senior or high-level positions and help lower level individuals to navigate career or other related issues in organizations (Gibson, 2004). Shapiro et al. (1978) suggest that more than role models, mentors may play a valuable role in the development of professionals. They suggest that unlike role models, who may or may not be aware of their role model status and therefore may not be knowingly involved in the development of the individual who views them as a role model, mentors do play an active role in helping to develop the individual they mentor. Leadership mentors have been well documented in regard to their role in both leadership development as well as in leader identity development (Muir, 2014; Propst & Koesler, 1998; Wright & Wright, 1987).

Mentors may also act as role models, while at the same time serving as a source of access and support (Gibson, 2004). The literature on role models and mentors suggests that these two roles may be utilized differently. While role models may be utilized primarily for vicarious learning of leadership skills, mentors may be used more for help with career advancement. Mentors may help to promote and shape the career of the leader, by providing advice, support, guidance, career and leadership development opportunities, and at times, opportunities for advancement (Malmgren, Ottino & Amaral, 2010; Muir, 2014). Therefore, it is likely that mentors may aid the leader identity construction process in different ways to role models. Because mentors actively provide developmental opportunities to their mentees, it may be possible that mentors support the leader identity construction process of their mentees, by providing the mentee with opportunities to make claims for a leader identity, perhaps by providing opportunities to take the lead on a project. Mentors may also provide a sense of legitimacy to the identity claims of their mentees through their support and status in the organization.

### 8.3.8. Barriers to leader identity construction

As noted in previous sections, although the leadership literature has begun to address issues of identity with greater frequency in recent years, much of the literature still continues to focus on what might be considered as the more positive aspects of identity construction, with a focus on understanding what leaders do, or can do to construct an effective and authentic leader identity (Dutton, Roberts & Bednar, 2010; Klenke, 2007). Far fewer studies have attempted to unpick the identity construction process of leaders by taking a closer look at the barriers they may face during their identity construction process. I argue that understanding the hurdles and obstacles individuals may encounter during their leader identity construction process is as important as understanding what leaders do to successfully construct a leader identity.

Previous research looking at the challenges individuals face during identity construction has identified several factors that might act as a barrier to constructing one's identity in the workplace more broadly, and as a leader more specifically. A significant body of research has identified role transitions as a common difficulty when it comes to organizational identities (Bebb, 2009; Ibarra, 1999). For example, Maurer and London (2015) found that leaders may struggle to make the necessary mental transition from the identity they had constructed in their previous role into a leader identity. In this case, the transition may be necessitated as a result of a role change, but the role change does not necessarily facilitate the required identity change, resulting in retention of the previous identity.

Skill and experience may also act as a hurdle to identity construction for some leaders. Ibarra, Snook and Guillén Ramo (2008) found that new leaders may struggle in their new role due to a lack of experience and skill with regard to leading, and this may have a negative impact on their leader identity construction process by causing feelings of inadequacy and inauthenticity. Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010) propose that organizational factors may play a role in the broader identity construction process. They suggest that demotions, job loss, project reassignment and other organizational and occupational changes may present individuals with identity transitions that may act as points of identity uncertainty, which may or may not be successfully overcome through the construction of a new identity (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010).

Further still, as with any change to one's life circumstances, individuals may struggle with uncertainty and identity loss as they transition from old job roles into leadership positions, shedding along with them their previously held identity (Ibarra, 1999). Nyberg and Sveningsson (2014) found that the disconnect between one's personal identity and one's leader identity can also act as a barrier to the construction of an authentic leader identity. In summary, linking the concept of identity barriers to constructing a leader identity with LICT, the issues outlined above act as barriers to the construction of a leader identity because they in some way impair, inhibit or challenge individuals in making claims for a leader identity, or because they prevent grants of a leader identity. However, they help to answer research question one by providing further insight and contextual insight into the types of interactions, relationships and experiences that facilitate leader identity construction.

8.3.9. Follower identity

Recent theorizing by Larsson and Neilson (2017) suggests that constructing a follower identity is just as important and vital to leadership as constructing a leader identity. There has been much less attention paid to issues around follower identity in the leadership literature (Carsten at al., 2010; Larsson & Neilson, 2017). There were at least three participants in the study who stated that they saw themselves as a follower rather than a leader. Additionally, there were participants who stated that they struggled to see themselves a leader but did not have any issue with viewing themselves as a follower. Although there were comparatively few participants who rejected a leader identity in favour of identifying themselves as a follower, there remain significant theoretical implications to arguing that not all individuals might wish to construct a leader identity. Linking the arguments laid out by Larsson and Nielson (2017), they argue that there may be situations in which the social risks might be too significant to make claims for leader identity and that a follower identity presents a viable alternative identity to seek out in organizational environments. Taking these arguments a step further, I argue, based upon the findings in chapter six, that some individuals may reject a leader identity in order to avoid unwanted stress or anxiety, or even additional workload. In this case, the leader identity represents a cognitively or emotionally taxing identity that they wish to avoid, and as such choose to construct their identity as a follower.

## 8.4. Organizational control: key insights from chapter seven

The chapter seven data provides vital contextual detail regarding the identity construction process, and in doing so answers research question three, which is: "what role do individuals perceive their organization as having in their leader identity construction process?" Chapter seven was broken up into two sections. The first section outlined how certain organizational structures were perceived as facilitating the leader identity construction process. More specifically, it was found that organizational structures such as job role, grade and hierarchy were all outlined as examples of catalysts controlled by the organization. However, in the second section of chapter seven, these same structures were also reported by participants as acting as barriers to leader identity. Additionally, other mechanisms were also identified as forms of identity control, such as organizational culture, affect regulation, opportunities to make claims, organizational rewards and leadership training. In this way, the data presented in this chapter helps to shed light on the contextual parameters and forms of control that regulate the leader identity construction process. From this data, it is possible to argue that even though in theory, individuals can make claims for a leader identity in any situation, the findings suggest that there are many ways in which one's leader identity may be controlled. For example, even though organizational leadership titles might be perceived by some individuals to aid the leader identity construction process, it could be questioned whether organizational leadership titles work in the way LICT proposes they do.

### 8.4.1. Organizational control through organizational structures

As noted previously in chapter seven, LICT proposes that organizational leadership titles may act as a form of identity grant, therefore facilitating the leader identity construction process. The chapter seven data would appear to support this, but I would also question this and argue that perhaps an alternative account could be that rather than being a catalyst, these organizational structures are masking other aspects of the leader identity construction process, resulting in individuals perceiving that it is the role or grade that has contributed to their leader identity rather than the relational and interactional components of the claiming and granting process. Furthermore, it may be the case that people rely upon these titles to discern who is a leader, rather than relying upon leadership actions (e.g. claims). In this case, although leadership titles may act a form of identity grant and may provide individuals with a certain level of credibility, they may be overly relied upon as true indicators of leadership and may negatively impact the leader identity construction process. For example, if the leadership title is not officially conferred upon an individual, they may feel that leadership is unattainable and therefore not engage in or end engagement with leader identity construction. It can also be argued from the data that organizations might control leader identity in less obvious ways.

### 8.4.2. Leadership training as a form of control

Examples from the data regarding leadership training show subtle yet still very powerful forms of control that may be less understood as forms of control. Arguably, there is a significant preference for leadership training, and yet, it brings to question whether leadership training is about aiding leaders to develop, or whether it is more about producing the right kind of leader. The data from chapter seven clearly outline how leadership training and development were used as a means to produce the right type of leader. In this way, it is less about the development of the individual so that they can be the best leader possible, and more about controlling the leadership development of the individual to be in line with what the organization views as being the right type of leader.

### 8.4.3. Time allocation as a form of control

Furthermore, the control of time allocation is yet another powerful form of organizational control. Most, if not all organisations have some means of allocating the time of their workforce, for example through a workload allocation framework. However, it was clear from the chapter seven data that how the organization allocated time had a significant impact on the leader identity construction process of some participants. Having one's time allocation managed can place significant restrictions on how and when individuals have opportunities to make claims for a leader identity. In this way, time allocation is a form of organizational control of leadership that may not be recognised as such by either the organization or its members.

#### 8.4.4. Organizational barriers as control

Furthermore, with regard to the discussion of agency versus control that was outlined in section 7.2 of chapter seven, it would appear that although individuals might be perceived as having agency in making claims from an outsiders' perspective, the participants actually perceived that their organizations produced tangible barriers that worked to limit not just how they made claims, but also the number of claims they made. For example, organizational structures such as job roles create barriers by dictating how one works, where one works, and with whom one works, all of which impact how, when and with whom people make claims for a leader identity. Thus, organizations would appear to have a very high level of control over the leader identity construction process.

However, participants not only reported organizational barriers, they also reported that organizational structures helped to facilitate thinking of oneself as a leader, and therefore contributed to the leader identity construction process. However, again, although these organizational titles were viewed positively by participants, as noted before, it could be argued that they are in fact another form of organizational control. This would suggest that actual individual agency might be challenged by the reality of organizational control. Thus, it is argued in this chapter that even though organizations can have both positive and negative roles in the leader identity construction process, this does not negate the control they appear to have in this process. Therefore, in addition to outlining the role of the organization in the leader identity construction process, it is also important to take a deeper look at how these seemingly contradictory explanations might be accounted for and in what way they inform our understanding of the larger issue of organizational contribution to the leader identity construction process.

### 8.4.5. Granting as a form of following and leading

An additional insight from the chapter seven data is the duality of granting. As outlined in the findings from chapters five, individuals may differ in how they grant identity claims. For example, it was found that some individuals might grant more or less directly. Additionally, in chapter six, it was found that it matters *who* grants a leader identity. This would indicate that there is quite a bit of variation in both the application and scope of granting. However, an additional insight from the chapter six and seven data regarding granting is that granting is not just a form of following; it can also function as a form of leadership. For example, in chapter seven, one of the study participants named Louis reported that he had received grants of a leader identity from his boss. Other examples of this were evident across the chapter six and seven data. Louis' example of receiving a grant of his leader identity demonstrated that grants can also function as a form of leadership in specific contexts and is also a good example of how grants can precipitate claims.

It is important to make a distinction between grants of a leader identity from supervisors or bosses and other forms of granting outlined in the chapter five data, for example. In this case, the granting from supervisors, bosses, and so on, is a form of followership, in that they are indicating to the individual receiving that grant that they are viewed as a leader, and they are being given the support for their leadership actions and their leader identity claims. However, these types of grant also function as a form of leadership, in that they are coming from an organizationally recognized leader and may be seen as a form of leadership. Grants from these types of individual indicate to others that an individual is viewed as possessing leadership ability and therefore signals to others that they should also follow this individual. In this sense, the grant causes others to follow the identified individual, which is one reason why this type of grant also functions as a form of leadership. However, it is also the case that individuals granting the leader identity claims may not also have to follow. They may simply act as a form of validation or approval for the leader identity claims being made by another individual. In this way, I argue that identifying and signalling leadership in others through granting may be a powerful leadership action in and of itself.

Making the distinction between the two types of granting outlined in this thesis helps to bring greater clarity and understanding to the findings regarding why it might matter who is granting a leader identity. As noted in the discussion of the chapter six data, it matters who grants a leader identity, with individuals such as bosses or supervisors having more impact on the leader identity construction process when they granted a leader identity. Given that these types of grant may function not only as a form of followership but also as a form of leadership, it would make sense that these grants would hold more weight in the leader identity construction process. Furthermore, outlining how granting in this form may function as a form of both followership and leadership helps to further bring to light the intertwined nature of leadership and followership.

An important theme I have also brought up in the discussion of the chapter five data is that individuals can lead through following. Without the followership of others, leaders are meaningless. However, it may also be the case that the leadership of other leaders in the construction of a leader identity is also of critical importance. I believe that this distinction helps to highlight the important ways that leaders can follow, by granting other people's leader identity, but still lead at the same time. I believe that if more leaders are made aware of how their support for others' leader identity construction process can have a positive impact on leadership and identity, they might become more active participants in this process.

### 8.5. Broader understanding of the findings in regard to social construction

There are a number of concepts and issues brought up across this thesis that emerged during the data collection process. These need to be put into further context in order to be fully understood in terms of how they help to provide a greater understanding of the leader identity construction process. In the first instance, there were issues brought up across the thesis suggesting that under certain circumstances, some individuals may face challenges to their leader identity construction process. Issues such as gender differences and identity rejection from the chapter five data, identity rejection and uncertainty in the chapter six data, and organizational control in the chapter seven data, all represent challenges to the leader identity construction process. Understanding how these issues contribute to leader identity construction is important and I argue that addressing them helps to provide a more representative and accurate picture of the leader identity construction process. However, this also brings to question why these alternative accounts exist and why they emerged from the data. I would argue that an explanation can be found when these issues are looked at from the perspective of social construction.

As I noted in chapter seven, the opposing findings that organizational structures can both facilitate and hinder leader identity construction, gives a divergent account of the same structures. I believe this divergent account is an important perspective to outline given the nature of the organizational setting in which the leader identity construction process is set.

Arguably, large organizations will likely be more bureaucratic in nature and will necessitate greater structure and division of work. I believe that the divergent accounts presented in chapter seven may be less a representation of organizations overall, and more an issue of how some organizations have socially constructed organizational understanding of what leadership is and what it means to be a leader in their specific context, and therefore created and maintained certain organizational structures. It may be the case that these same issues regarding organizational structures might be experienced differently by individuals in smaller and less structured organizations in comparison to individuals in larger or more structured organizations.

I also believe that the issues fundamentally link back to organizational culture. For example, it was identified in chapter seven that organizational roles and grades both facilitated and hindered identity construction. It is up to the organization to decide how roles and grades are both structured and perceived in the organization. In the case, where having the role or grade was facilitative of leader identity construction, it was the case that this occurred because of the organizational discourse around leadership being associated with certain grades. Therefore, achieving a certain grade was seen as achieving leadership. The organization is therefore creating and maintaining this perception that leadership is associated with grade. If the organization changed their cultural practices and understanding to no longer associate leadership with grade, this element would be removed, and leadership would be assessed in different ways. This is perhaps one of the clearest examples of how socially constructed understandings of leadership can permeate identity construction. It is also an exemplar of how the social construction of leadership held at the organizational level can perhaps permeate down to the individual level and how individual level conceptions collectively shape organizational culture.

From a social constructionist perspective, the context in which one operates will arguably have an impact on how one socially constructs definitions such as leader and follower, as well as how these are enacted (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 1995; Weick, 1995). Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (2005) argue that who we think we are shapes how we act and how we interpret information around us. Further, according to Carsten et al. (2010), there may be a number of issues that are implicated in how leader and follower identities are socially constructed in organizations, such as organizational climate or culture. Therefore, as I argued above, individuals socially construct their understandings of what is a leader and what is a follower, and in doing so construct leader and follower identities, and it is therefore culture that can account for the apparent disconnect in some of the data of this thesis.

I argue that how some individuals have socially constructed their understanding of leadership and what it means to be a leader informs how they make claims of a leader identity or grant claims. Similarly, the socially constructed understanding of leadership and what it means to be a leader in a specific organization will likely have an impact on how the organization facilitates or controls the leader identity construction process of its organizational members. I believe that the issues brought up by the study participants with regard to the barriers they experienced in their leader identity construction process are the result of a disconnect between the social construction of what it means to be a leader according to the organization and the social construction of what it means to be a leader at the individual level.

For example, in chapters five and six, there was data suggesting that certain individuals experienced rejection of their identity. At the team level it could be argued that individuals may withhold grants or actively reject another individual's identity claims. I believe that this is taking place due to social construction. For example, if an individual's socially constructed understanding of leadership is not in line with how another individual is making claims for their leader identity, this will likely result in holding back of grants or identity rejection. In the case of the chapter six data in which individuals experienced organizational level identity rejection, it could also be the case that their claims for a leader identity were not in line with the socially constructed understanding of what it means to be a leader in their organization. This may also be the case in the example from chapter seven, where one individual experienced rejection of their leader identity claims due to how their organization constructed leadership around team size. If individuals are making claims in a way that is in line with their social construction of what leadership is, and these claims are also recognized as a congruent socially constructed understanding of how to make claims for a leader identity, then those claims are likely to result in grants.

Additionally, in chapter seven, there were significant issues brought up regarding the plausibility of LICT to explain how individuals in organizationally sanctioned leadership roles successfully navigated this process. As noted in chapter seven, according to LICT, organizational leadership roles or titles are not necessary for an individual to make claims for a leader identity, but they do help by providing visibility for future claims and may also provide some measure of credibility to the individual making the claims. LICT also proposes that having an organizational leadership role or titles may be the result of past successful leader identity claiming and granting cycles. However, there was some evidence to suggest that individuals perceived that in their organization, they would be unable to make claims for a leader identity unless they already had a leadership role. This negates the possibility that gaining the role is the result of successful past leader identity claiming cycles.

This could suggest a critical missing link in addition to what is already outlined by LICT. I would argue that the missing connection could be organizational culture. From the interview data, it is clear that individuals who were employed in organizations that were more bureaucratic in nature, with cultures stressing hierarchy or narrow definitions of what it meant to be a leader, were more likely to report experiencing organizational barriers to their leader identity (Blau, 1968; Carsten at al., 2010; Schein, 2010). This could suggest that the role of organizational culture is not fully accounted for both in terms of LICT as a theory overall, but also specifically in understanding how individuals successfully navigate the hurdles of obtaining an organizational leadership role.

## 8.6. Issues of organising in the face of power and control

As noted in chapter two of this thesis, organizations are viewed as both a product of and producer of organizational members. This interwoven nature of organising is something of a challenge to reconcile, and this was a significant issue brought up in chapter seven. How is it that individuals can be organisers and yet still be controlled? I believe that ultimately, this is a question of power and control at the individual and organizational level. One of the features of the chapter six and seven data was how individuals internalized organizational control of their leader identity construction process, which is a question of individual identity at the organizational level. For example, one of the participants from the study two data had internalized organisational control to such a degree that she felt she would never be a leader unless her organization made her one. This internalization of control of the organization over her identity effectively took the agency over her identity construction out of her hands and placed it in the hands of the organization.

This issue of internalization of organizational control brings into question the basic premise of leader identity as a personal identity versus a social identity. According to DeRue et al. (2009), a leader identity is a personal identity. This places significant agency in the hands of the individual in constructing what is arguably an ambiguous identity. The ambiguous nature of the identity allows significant deviation from others' conceptions of what a leader is, and therefore to some degree would mitigate organizational control of the leader identity construction process, because the individual would have significant leverage in defining their own identity and deciding for themselves what it means to be a leader. However, if a leader identity is in fact a social identity, this could explain why organizations have more control over the identity construction process. Ashforth and Mael (1989) note that one's personal identity is comprised of one's evaluation of individual differences, while one's social identity is based on social categorization of oneself as a member of a particular group. Therefore, if some individuals perceive leaders to be a social group or class rather than an individual identity, this would explain why organizations might exercise some degree of control over identity processes.

Hogg and Terry (2000) note that individuals derive at least part of their identity from their work organization, and that these types of social group are often highly defining and of critical individual importance. Therefore, if one's identity is tied, at least in part. to a particular organizational group, this could provide a better understanding of why some individuals internalize that they are (or are not) a leader. Being a member of this social group facilitates identity construction, while lack of group membership leads to a lack of identity construction. Specifically, I would argue that if one's identity is tied to membership of a social group, this perspective would have significant implications regarding membership. If one's psychology identifies as a group member, identity construction may occur. However, if others in the group do not support their individual membership in the group, will they then fail to construct an identity as a member of said group? This reliance on group membership as a precursor to identity construction certainly brings with it obvious limitations for identity construction, which some of the data from the thesis seems to support. In other words, it would appear that if individuals believe that a certain identity is in fact tied to a specific group membership, and this membership is denied them, they will be unable to construct their identity as a leader. However, I would argue that this is an entirely psychological state, which can be overcome.

From this analysis, I would argue that it is possible that the distinction of whether a leader identity is a social identity or a personal identity could be a more complex discussion than the black and white distinction suggested by much of the identity literature. Perhaps in some cases, certain individuals perceive a leader identity to be a personal identity, while others perceive it to be more of a social identity. The data from chapters six and seven of the thesis seems to support that this could be true. This delineation could also be drawn from the organizational structure itself. In organizations where individuals have less bureaucratic control over their work life, they perceive that constructing a leader identity is more a function of individual development, while organizations that dictate high levels of control over the work life of their organizational members might create more categories and boundaries around one's identity, constructing a leader identity as a category of organizational member rather than an identity to be developed and worked upon as part of one's personal development as an individual.

In this way, I would argue that organizational control, while tied to the culture of the organization, in some ways also controls how leader identities are socially constructed, either as a personal identity with much opportunity for individual agency, or as a social identity with less leverage in gaining access to said identity if one is not a member of the "leader" group.

## 8.7. Conclusion

This chapter has provided further context and discussion of the analytical chapters of this thesis. Specifically, this chapter drew out the details around how each of the three research questions were answered by the various findings from each of the three chapters. As was noted, the data in chapter five helps to answer research question one by illustrating what types of interaction and relationship contribute to the leader identity construction process. It does this by outlining the ways in which individuals may differ in how they make claims or grants of an identity. It also outlines how micro level behaviours contribute to identity construction by demonstrating how eye gaze and body proximity may contribute to identity construction. Finally, by bringing to light issues around gender and national origin with regard to identity rejection, this data also helps to contribute to our understanding of how these issues might be implicated in identity construction and leader emergence. In this way, the data from chapter five can inform our understanding of how individuals construct a leader identity at the team level.

The chapter six data answered research questions one and three by outlining the types of experience, interaction and relationship that are facilitative of leader identity. It also brought out issues reading how individuals discriminate between sources of identity claims and grants and in doing so provides a greater understanding of how individuals make sense of and understand how different sources of identity information contribute to their leader identity construction. Finally, chapter seven answered research question three by outlining how individuals perceived their organization as contributing to the leader identity construction process. This chapter also addressed how the apparent divergent information regarding the challenges participants reported in their leader identity construction process might be accounted for by the socially constructed understandings of leadership and what it means to be a leader. In the final chapter of this thesis, the contributions outlined by the findings here and in the analytical chapters will be addressed.

# Chapter 9: Conclusion

## 9.1. Introduction

In this thesis, I set out to conduct research that would provide a greater understanding of the leader identity construction process as well as drawing out the ways in which other people contribute to this process. In the three analytical chapters, I outlined my data and presented my analysis and interpretation. In chapter eight, I presented further discussion of the research findings and how they answer the three research questions of this thesis. In this final chapter of the thesis, I will focus on drawing final conclusions regarding the contributions and implications of the study findings. I will also outline how the study findings may have practical implications and discuss the limitations of the thesis along with a discussion of the possible avenues for future research.

## 9.2. Contributions of the thesis

The following sections of this chapter will outline the contributions this thesis makes to theory and methods, and the practical implications of the findings. These topics were alluded to in chapter one of this thesis; however, this section of the chapter will provide further details and insights. The contributions to theory will be outlined first, followed by the contributions to methods, and finally the practical implications will be presented.

### 9.2.1. Contributions to theory

This thesis makes several notable theoretical contributions, both in terms of providing greater insights to LICT, but also to the broader identity and leadership literatures. The contributions this thesis makes help to better inform relational aspects of leadership and identity by providing a greater understanding of how role models impact the leader identity construction process, as well as how negative role models can also contribute to this process. This thesis also provides a contribution by introducing the concept of identity rejection. This thesis also makes a contribution to LICT by demonstrating, through the data, that individuals discriminate between sources of their identity grants, thus indicating that not all grants are perceived in the same way. It also addresses how LICT might benefit from incorporating the role of organizational culture. In the following sections I will outline the four theoretical contributions this thesis makes.

*9.2.1.1. Contribution of role models to the leadership literature*

The first proposed theoretical contribution of this thesis is that it extends theorizing on role models in the leader identity construction process (Ibarra, 1999; Gibson, 2004). According to Ibarra (1999), role models may serve as sources of identity information for individuals who are attempting to make an identity transition, by allowing these individuals to observe and learn from these role models during their identity construction process. Although Ibarra’s (1999) paper on provisional selves was quite influential, her research does not specifically address leader identity. Rather, she placed her focus on professional identity, which is both a conceptually and theoretically different identity to that of leader identity. More specifically, professional identity has to do with what it means to be a professional, while leader identity has to do with what it means to be a leader (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000; DeRue, Ashford & Cotton, 2009; Pratt et al., 2006). According to Ibarra (1999), having individuals that one can look to for guidance and social interaction during times of identity transitions can be incredibly important for identity construction. These individuals aid in social learning and act as guides for the practice of actions and behaviours in the social community. Role models can play a critical part in aiding individuals to identify new possibilities (i.e. new ways of enacting a leader identity).

However, although this line of research would seem to implicate role models as key drivers of leader identity construction, much of the extant literature on role models and leadership has focused less on how role models might contribute to leader identity construction and more on aspects of leadership, such as how to be an ethical or moral leader or how role models can increase aspirations in women and girls (Beaman, Duflo, Pande & Topalova, 2012; Brown & Treviño, 2014; Morgenroth, Ryan & Peters, 2015; Sims & Brinkman, 2002). In this way, this previous research helps to inform our understanding of the ways in which role models might impac aspects of leadership or aspects of identity (e.g. being a moral person), but it does not fully inform how they impact the overall identity construction process. Given that role models were identified by study participants as acting as sources of possible future selves or possible identities, it is likely that role models may help to motivate individuals to engage in actions or behaviours with the goal of constructing a leader identity. Further, role models may also provide concrete identities against which individuals can compare their own identities to assess how much they match their desired role model identity.

However, beyond these functions, role models may also offer valuable insights into the reciprocal claiming and granting process. As the data would suggest, role models may act as behavioural banks from which to draw successful identity claiming behaviours. More specifically, as outlined in greater detail in chapter six, the data would suggest that role models display behaviours and actions that individuals learn from, practising and re-enacting them in their own claiming and granting processes. At this point in the thesis, it is well understood that other people are critical to the leader identity construction process.

However, LICT does not elaborate upon the possible behavioural learning component of these other individuals. This is where role models become especially critical. The data of this thesis clearly illustrates that there is a learning component of the leader identity construction process, such that individuals look to others to learn what it means to be a leader and how this is both achieved and enacted as identity claims or grants. Arguably, it may be the case that observing successful identity claims may enable others to make their own successful identity claims. The alternative may also be true. Observing unsuccessful identity claims may also aid individuals to avoid making similar unsuccessful claims for a leader identity, therefore preserving their positive identity cycles. I would therefore argue that it is possible that part of the positive claiming cycles involves the observation of other successful claims.

Taking these findings and applying them to extend the provisional selves literature, I argue that it might be possible that individuals engage in practising leader identity claiming, whereby after observing other successful claims from their leader role models, individuals might try out provisional leader identity claims in situations with fewer possible negative outcomes. Interestingly, the data would suggest that mentors may have a function as individuals through whom practice claiming, or low-stakes leader identity claiming, can take place. In this way we can see how, although conceptually separate, mentors and role models may be linked in the leader identity construction process. Applying this to LICT, it is possible to argue that successful practice claims may contribute to the positive claiming cycles that LICT suggests are key to the internalization of a leader identity.

*9.2.1.2. Contribution of negative role models to the leadership literature*

As noted previously in chapter six, role models may also serve as models of negative behaviours to be avoided (Bucher & Stelling, 1977; Gibson, 2004; Ibarra, 1999). Findings from chapter six suggest that individuals learned about their own identity as a leader by observing and interacting with individuals who they viewed as being a “bad” or negative leader. Identifying these target individuals as sources of bad or negative leadership and then actively attempting to avoid modelling these same behaviours is what I argue makes these individuals negative role models. Further, I argue that negative role models can also be linked to the concept of feared self (Markus & Nurius, 1986).

The concept of a feared self has been linked to motivation and change, among other things. This suggests that clearly identified and articulated feared selves can motivate us to act in certain ways in order to avoid a feared self and can motivate us to make changes to our behaviour in order to avoid unwanted outcomes. As such, it is theoretically possible to draw the connection that negative role models can display unwanted behaviours which in turn can help us to formulate an idea of what it means to be a bad leader, and present us with a means of changing our behaviour to avoid this unwanted feared self. The interview data supports this connection. For example, when participants talked about their experiences with bad leaders, many of them reported becoming aware of a feared future self, the "bad leader", which motivated them to change their behaviours or engage in behaviours designed to avoid this unwanted bad leader identity. Linking the behavioural as well as motivational aspects of the self helps to ground and orient the role of negative role models in aiding leaders to identify what they do not want to be, and as such contributes to their leader identity construction process.

There has been very little research conducted on the role of negative role models in the leader identity construction process. This research therefore makes a contribution in this regard. Further, providing an integration of the concept of negative role models with the theorizing on feared selves also provides a theoretically grounded explanation of how negative role models can act as drivers of the leader identity construction process and makes a significant theoretical contribution.

*9.2.1.3. Contribution of identity rejection to the identity literature*

This thesis makes a further theoretical contribution by providing insight into the concept of identity rejection. There were two conceptions of identity rejection identified in chapter six, one being an individual not wishing to identify as a leader and therefore rejecting the identity, and the second having to do with having one's identity as a leader rejected by others. It is this second conception that I argue is a contribution of this thesis. The research findings suggest that having one's claims for a leader identity rejected may have a significant impact on one's ability to construct a leader identity. LICT does currently give some limited insight into the idea that not having one's identity claims granted might result in negative identity spirals, ultimately resulting in not constructing a leader identity. However, the concept of identity rejection goes beyond simply not receiving grants for one's claims. Rather, this concept represents the knowing and active steps other people take to sabotage or end another person's identity construction process. Previous research suggests that it is important for others to recognizes one's true and authentic identity and that this is especially difficult when entering new job roles or situations (Cable & Kay, 2012; Meister, Jehn & Thatcher, 2014; Swann et al., 2009). This same previous research demonstrates that there are significant psychological consequences of having other people disaffirm one's identity.

Therefore, I argue that this theorizing could be extended to the leader identity construction process. It is possible that it may also be important that others recognize one's leader identity and one's attempts at constructing a leader identity. If others do not recognize this identity and/or this process (e.g. reject the identity), this could lead to significant psychological discomfort. Thus, by introducing the concept of identity rejection, this thesis contributes to existing theorizing on the need for our identities to be accepted and validated by others. In doing so, this concept informs our understanding of how the leader identity construction process can be negatively impacted.

### 9.2.2. Contributions to LICT

The data from chapter six also suggests that not all contributions to the leader identity construction process are perceived as having the same value in terms of granting or not granting an individual's leader identity claims. These findings appear to indicate that not all grants are perceived to have the same value and that not all instances of identity rejection are perceived in the same way, suggesting that it matters who grants claims and who rejects claims. In the first instance, the data from chapter six indicates that individuals appear to differentiate the identity grants they receive. Individuals reported that identity grants from perceived high value individuals (e.g. boss, supervisor, head of department, etc.) were perceived as having greater value to their leader identity construction process. Specifically, I argue that in situations where the individual doing the granting is a boss or supervisor, it may be the case that one might value this grant more than those from individuals with lower status due to the organizational credibility that the supervisor or boss would likely have, but also due to the fact that the individual may perceive that their boss or supervisor is a better judge of the value of the claims than other individuals, who might have less knowledge of or familiarity with the individual making the claims. Therefore, in summary, I argue that it matters who grants a leader identity claim, and that not all grants hold the same value in terms of how individuals perceive them.

Currently, LICT does not specifically suggest that grants from specific individuals might be perceived as having greater value than others. LICT does propose that when claims or grants are clear, meaning that it is understood that a grant or claiming is being made, or when they are visible, meaning that other people are aware of them, and credible, meaning that the claim or grant is representative of the group, this is more likely to result in reciprocal claims and grants. I extend this thinking by proposing that individuals perceive that receiving grants of their leader identity claims from higher status individuals is of greater value to their leader identity than receiving grants from individuals with lower organizational status.

Secondly, it was also found that individuals further differentiate between who rejects their identity claims. The data suggests that individuals discriminate between receiving rejections of their leader identity claims from individuals who are perceived to have higher status in the organization than from individuals who are perceived to have lower organizational status. In fact, it was found that having one's leader identity claims rejected by individuals with lower perceived organizational credibility, for example a direct report or someone further down the hierarchy, had less of an impact than identity rejections from people higher up in the hierarchy. For example, the findings suggest that identity rejection from one's boss or supervisor may have more of a negative impact on one's identity construction. In summary, this would suggest that it matters who grants or does not grant a leader identity claim. I therefore argue that LICT would benefit from further development of the theorizing around the origins of identity grants. Overall, the findings from the interview study suggest a much more nuanced understanding of the role of others in the leader identity construction process than currently outlined by LICT. By delineating the perceptions around identity grants, this thesis can help illuminate how individuals differentiate between grants as well as providing insights into the way these differentiations are perceived by the target individual making the claims, and what impact these have on identity outcomes.

As was outlined in chapters seven and eight of this thesis, it would appear that the role of organizational culture is an important contribution that could be made to LICT. I argue that due to the socially constructed nature of leadership and what it means to be a leader, the role of organizational culture in driving the leader identity construction process through driving definitions and understandings of leadership at the organizational level has very real consequences for identity construction. If individuals are making claims for a leader identity in a way that is incongruent with the organizational definition of leadership, those claims are not likely to be granted at the organizational level. It is still possible that these claims can be granted at the dyadic or team level if the other individuals understand the claims to be congruent with their social construction of leadership. However, according to LICT, one cannot fully construct a leader identity if the identity is not internalized at the individual level, recognised at the relational level and collectively endorsed. Therefore, if the leader identity needs to be collectively endorsed at the organizational level and one's claims are not recognized as being in line with the organizational understanding of leadership, it is unlikely that one's leader identity will be collectively endorsed. Therefore, in light of the findings, I believe that LICT would benefit from including or incorporating an understating of the role of culture in the leader identity construction process.

Currently, LICT orients itself within the context of organizations, but it does not account for the role of organizations or organizational differences in terms of structures or size, and also does not give any consideration to organizational culture. I believe that neglecting the organizational context is a limitation and oversight of this theory. I would therefore argue that it would be useful to incorporate some acknowledgement that there might be cultural or structural differences in organizations that may have some implications for identity construction. However, I am cautious about outlining exactly what this would look like because I believe that further research is needed in order to more fully understand the implications of culture in the claiming and granting process. In this way, the findings of this thesis make a contribution by outlining the need for addressing organizational culture in LICT but do so with the understanding that further insight is needed.

### 9.2.3. Contributions to methods

This thesis makes a significant contribution to methods through the use and incorporation of video methods as a means to investigate the leader identity construction process. It is important to point out that there is a significant area of research in the leadership literature that has utilized audio methods in order to study leadership and how it takes place. Audio methods in the study of leadership have grown in popularity recently and have also been integrated with great success (Clifton, 2006; Clifton, 2012; Clifton, 2014; Crenshaw, 2012; Hoogeboom & Wilderom, 2015; Larsson & Lundholm, 2010). There is also a long history of the use of video and audio methods in the identity literature (Bates, 2014; Gauntlett, 2008). I therefore argue that video represents an exciting area of further development to the leadership literature. By adapting and adopting methods that have been utilized to study leadership and identity separately and bringing these together, this research breaks ground into new areas, which has allowed me to study the micro level details of the leader identity construction process as it took place in a natural setting. This thesis therefore makes a significant contribution to the leadership literature by demonstrating how video methods can be applied to produce meaningful group and dyadic level data.

The second contribution to methods of the thesis is through the use of interaction analysis as a method of analysis. As noted in chapter four of this thesis, there have been calls to increase the use of these types of method in order to study leadership (Fairhurst & Uhl-Bien, 2012). However, by applying this method to understanding leader identity, this thesis makes a unique contribution. Interaction analysis provides a useful and highly adaptive framework for the integration of both verbal and nonverbal modes of communication. For example, this thesis incorporates both speech transcripts as well as static images from the live videos in order to demonstrate to the reader how people employ both verbalizations as well as body language and artefact manipulation to make claims for a leader or follower identity. Methodological advancements in leadership research are necessary in order to drive the field forward. Given that there is a recognized need for research that can address what leaders do rather than what followers think leaders do or what leaders report they do, video methods provide the right opportunity for researchers and practitioners alike to capitalize on being able to capture the real time actions that are indicative of what leaders actually do and therefore seems like a logical move forward for leadership research methods (Avolio, 2007; Gordon & Yukl, 2004).

### 9.2.4. Practical implications

This thesis makes two main practical contributions. Firstly, the findings of this thesis suggest that mentors and role models had a positive impact on the leader identity construction process. There are both organizational as well as individual level implications for these findings. Firstly, as noted before, there has been very little literature linking role models with the leader identity construction process, although the link with other identity processes is well established (Ibarra, 1999). Given this knowledge, it may be the case that organizations undervalue the role of mentors and role models as tools for developing leader identities in organizational members. Therefore, a practical implication for organizations would be to take note of the value of role models and mentors in adding leader identity and create formal mentoring or role modelling schemes in the workplace or on leadership development programmes in order to facilitate the leader identity construction process. Secondly, at the individual level, it may also be the case that new or developing leaders can utilize both formal and informal mentorship and role model schemes in order to facilitate their leader identity construction process.

However, this second point is predicated upon the assumption that individuals are made aware of the value of role models and mentors to their ability to positively impact their leader identity construction process. Therefore, it is also vital that this information be disseminated, therefore indicating that individual development initiatives should be linked with the organization so that individuals can be both made aware of the value of mentors and role models to their leader identity construction and be given access to these resources. Organizations, department heads and line managers could all facilitate access to role models and therefore play an active role in aiding the leader identity construction process.

The second contribution that this thesis makes in terms of practical implications is through the organizational level analysis of the issues that facilitate or hinder the leader identity construction process. The findings of this thesis indicate that individuals face significant organizational level barriers to constructing a leader identity. For example, organizational structures such as job roles can create situations where individuals face significant challenges in being able to make claims for a leader identity and receive grants. These findings therefore indicate that there is a significant loss of agency in the identity construction process. However, there is an added level of complication that also appears to factor into this issue.

According to the thesis findings, participants also found that individuals perceive that having an organizationally sanctioned leadership role is in some cases solely indicative of having a leader identity and therefore link their ability to identify as a leader with having a leadership title. The implications of this are that if individuals are unable to obtain these titles or are in some way held back from advancing into them, this has a very negative impact on their leader identity. It is possible that organizations can take steps to restore agency to the leader identity construction process. However, this would require that organizations be able to identify and address the organizational level issues that may impair leader identity construction. This is said with the understanding that such changes would likely be quite challenging to implement. However, if leader identity construction is an issue organization’s take seriously and wish to facilitate as part of their wider organizational leadership development, then working to address these issues could be part of a larger change programme to steer the organization towards creating a culture of leader identity with organizational and individual congruence between the socially constructed understandings of leadership. As noted in chapters seven and eight of this thesis, organizations do have some level of control over the identity construction process, however, there has been very little research attempting to outline how organizations actually contribute to leader identity construction. Therefore, by providing an organizational level understanding of the factors that can create barriers to leader identity construction, this thesis makes a significant practical contribution.

## 9.3. Impact of the study findings

Addressing issues of impact is a significant consideration for any research output. Although most research projects utilize journal publications as a means of disseminating the research findings and therefore contribute to impact, currently there have been no journal publications accepted for publication from the research of this thesis. However, I argue that this thesis makes its own contribution to impact through engagement with an organizational partner in the UK government, which provided access to study participants. In exchange for providing access, the UK government department requested that I produce a report of the study findings and conduct a presentation for the department regarding leadership and identity. I conducted this presentation on August 8th, 2017. During this presentation I had the opportunity to explain my research to a wide range of individuals from across the UK. After the presentation, I was able to answer questions and provide additional insights regarding the leader identity construction process. In this way, I was able to engage with a significant number of individuals and tell them about my research, which considering the number of people logged into the teleconference, meant that I was engaging with over one hundred people through this presentation, but also likely impacting many more though my report and through the spillover that likely occurred as people shared the research with colleagues.

Following this, in October 2017, I produced the requested departmental report outlining all of the findings from the research that were applicable to the department. This report is confidential, and I am therefore unable to include it in this thesis. However, the report consisted of a succinct seven-page outline of the findings, which were anonymized in order to protect the identity of the participants, but still outlined the findings in a way that was applicable to the department. The report and presentation were impactful because they allowed the government department to gain further insight into the perceptions of its members regarding leadership and identity. The report also allowed the department to be able to assess the outcomes of its culture of leadership initiative. In this way, although I am still working towards publication of the thesis findings, I believe that this thesis has already had some impact on the wider community.

## 9.4. Avenues for future research

Future research building on this initial qualitative study might engage further with the key findings of the study. For example, future studies might investigate the concept of negative role models further through quantitative methods in order to better understand their ability to influence and drive leadership development outcomes. It may be possible that providing developmental opportunities offering individuals the ability to observe and reflect on the implications of both positive and negative leader behaviours can help new and developing leaders build and establish behavioural parameters within which to exercise leadership and navigate their leader identity. A study of this nature might have applications for leader development by providing greater insight into the types of training that might better enable leaders both to develop leadership skills and gain greater proficiency in exercising leadership while also likely contributing to their leader identity construction.

Secondly, future studies could further engage with identity uncertainty and identity rejection in order to better understand how these factors impact leader development and leadership outcomes. For example, it may be important to understand the effect of perceived identity rejection on leadership outcomes such as engagement with subordinates.

Furthermore, it may be worth investigating the implications of leader identity rejection for seeking leader development and leadership opportunities. Day and Harrison (2007) suggest that one's leader identity is vital to the ongoing development of a leader. However, DeRue and Ashford (2010) propose that individuals may disengage from the leader identity construction process if their claims for a leader identity are not granted. Therefore, understanding the implications of identity rejection for leader development and leadership development could be a fruitful avenue of future research to pursue.

Furthermore, future research could also be conducted that investigates how individuals perceive and differentiate between the source and value of identity grants. As noted before, the findings from chapter six indicate that individuals discriminate between sources and value of identity grants. Therefore, further research is needed in order to gain a better understanding of how these function at the individual and dyadic levels. Further research aimed at engaging with this might seek to conduct interviews with management teams. In this situation, the claiming and granting actions of the team could be monitored over a certain period of time. After each measurement period, the team members could be interviewed in order to establish whether or not they perceived that certain individuals (e.g. boss/supervisors) granted claims more frequently or more consistently and whether individuals who received these grants perceived these grants as valuable or impactful to their leader identity construction process.

There is also some indication that interpersonal attraction may have a role in the claiming and granting process. The study participants often reported that their relationships with individuals they considered friends or close to them were positively linked with their leader identity construction. They reported that these individuals were sources of support and also granted them leader identity claims. Previous research has indicated that individuals who have a high level of interpersonal attraction are more likely to help each other (Berscheid &

Hatfield, 1969; Clark & Mills, 1979; Pandey & Griffitt, 1974). Therefore, it may be that interpersonal attraction might be linked with granting identity claims. Support from supervisors or other individuals in line management positions has also been linked to job satisfaction (Griffin, Patterson & West, 2001), which could suggest that this support may also translate to identity support. Future research could link ratings of interpersonal attraction in groups or teams with the number of claims and grants made in a specific period of time or over the duration of the team or group relationship. Therefore, further research that can establish a relationship between interpersonal attraction and the frequency or likelihood of claims and grants could provide further insight into the parameters around which identity claims and grants are made and received.

Finally, it may also be the case that alternative methods of understanding the role of organizations in the leader identity construction process may also shed further light on how they impact leader identity. It is possible that utilizing an ethnographic approach and adopting a case study method for an in-depth study of one organization and how the leader identity construction processes differ across the organization could provide new areas of insight into the issue (Martin, Currie & Finn, 2008; Finn & Waring, 2005).

## 9.5. Limitations of the studies

As with any research project, there are always limitations or ways in which the study was not carried out as originally intended. Although every effort was made to meticulously plan and execute each stage of the research with the highest level of attention and care, there were instances when, due to factors outside of my control, things did not go quite right. This resulted in the research project having to be altered in some ways or for changes to be made to the parameters of the research or how the research was carried out. This resulted in a number of limitations to the overall research for this thesis, but also specifically to the two studies individually. In the following two sections, I will outline the limitations of each study.

### 9.5.1. Limitations of the video study

As outlined in chapter four of this thesis, a limitation of this study was the restrictions the ethics board placed on the type of data I could collect from the study participants. As I outlined before, I was requested by the ethics board not to collect any form of personal information from the video study participants. This significantly impacted the way in which I collected the data as well as the type of data I could collect. I had intended to ask participants questions regarding their own leadership actions. However, this was barred by the ethics board. It would have made for a more in-depth and insightful study had I been able to collect additional data form the participants, but I faced a situation of either not receiving ethical approval and not collecting any data or agreeing to their limitations and being able to collect data that would still be useful.

Another limitation of the video study is the context or setting in which it took place. The video study was carried out in small teams of individuals who may or may not have been necessarily concerned with addressing issues of leadership and followership in their teams. Although I viewed the phenomenon of leader and follower emergence in the teams as an emergent phenomenon that occurs as individuals negotiate their roles in order to complete a task, it is possible that in this context, the need for leader and follower roles was quite blurred or overlapping, or possibly even unnecessary in the view of some individuals. Had the context changed such that the students were required to focus their attention on negotiated leadership roles more directly, I might have observed different interaction sequences. I believe that it is possible that certain team members could have focused more on collaboration and teamwork because of the nature of the setting, and as a result, displayed more distributed leadership behaviours or more followership overall. Had the student been asked to negotiate leader and follower roles or had the task been different or less collaborative, the participants may have interacted differently. Therefore, I believe that some limitation of context is placed on the video study.

Additionally, the logistical issues with transporting significant quantities of video equipment, coupled with the difficulty of being able to gain access to a significant number of individuals willing to agree to be video recorded, presented significant challenges to conducting a second video study. Therefore, although I fully admit that the video study did not go as planned in some ways, it still proved valuable. However, I would like to articulate the limitations of this study in order that they might provide a better understanding of how and why the research was carried out in the way it was.

Due to my limited research budget, I had to purchase low cost audio and video equipment, which at times did not function properly, resulting in audio or video files being deleted or becoming corrupted, resulting in lost data. Additionally, I also borrowed equipment from the audio-visual department at my university. Sadly, the equipment often came to me uncharged or with completely full memory cards. This resulted in some issues with video cameras turning off during recording sessions or some cameras being unusable because I did not want to erase other people's data. As I noted in chapter five of the thesis, I had certain limitations with regard to the amount of data I collected from some teams, and this is the reason I was not able to record the whole of the first meeting for team six. Although I made every effort to prepare myself for each data collection session, there were limitations regarding getting equipment, which limited my ability to change the cameras before the data collection sessions. Going into the data collection, I had assumed that the department who rented out the equipment would provide the cameras in working order, but this was not the case. These, however, are the limitations of working with technology, in most cases.

Finally, given the limitations of space in consideration of the volume of video data, and in consideration of issues of audio quality, only the best quality and most relevant data from the data corpus were presented in chapter five. There were times when some participants spoke so softly that the multiple audio devices were unable to pick up their speech clearly. In these cases, I relied upon the response and reactions of other team members to interpret what was said. This is not an ideal method of being able to uncover what was said in these instances, but it is better than excluding these sections of video completely or omitting the contribution of a soft-spoken participant. However, in extreme cases, when conducting the data analysis, I truly had no way of knowing what was said and as a result I acknowledge that I had a less than clear picture of the identity construction process taking place in that instance. However, I could only present a small fraction of the video data in chapter five, and I therefore feel that even though I had some issues with the audio on some videos, this did not impair my overall ability to review the videos and make sense of what was happening overall.

### 9.5.2. Limitations of the interview study

This study provides a valuable contribution to the leader identity literature. It also contributes to the growing body of qualitative research in the field of leadership. However, this study does have a number of limitations. Firstly, qualitative research is ill-suited to issues of "prevalence, generalizability, and calibration" (Lee, 1999 as cited in Murphy & Ensher, 2008). Therefore, caution is needed in generalizing these findings. Furthermore, given that these findings are the result of non-randomized sample selection and due to the fact that these findings are drawn from a small sample of individuals, further research is needed to be able to establish with greater certainty the role the catalysts and barriers outlined in chapters six and seven have in the leader identity construction process.

Lastly, although the sample did exhibit diversity in its representation in terms of almost equal gender distribution while also representing individuals from across the UK and the US, the organizations represented in the sample were predominantly large organizations with established norms around leadership. It is therefore unknown whether these same issues are prevalent in smaller organizations or in organizations with different norms around leadership (e.g. distributed leadership or cultures of leadership). There is also an issue of the types of role represented in the study. There were a significant number of HR professionals included in the study. It is therefore possible that some of the findings say more about their experience in their large and hierarchical organizations than about the experience of leadership overall. I would therefore argue that further research is needed in order to provide further support for the findings.

## 9.6. Final summary and conclusion of the thesis

In this final section of the thesis, I would like to provide my own thoughts and insights on what I have taken away from my study of leadership and identity and from my thesis findings. I would also like to discuss how my doctoral studies have contributed to my development, resulting in my becoming an independent researcher. In chapter one, I stated that the goal of this thesis was to produce a better understanding of the leader identity construction process. I believe this has been achieved. The chapter five data provided new insights into leader identity by taking a micro level approach. The chapter six and seven data provided insight by outlining how individuals experience the leader identity construction process.

An additional element I was able to incorporate into the data collection which was important to me at the start of my doctoral studies was to account for or incorporate the role of followers and other individuals in the leader identity construction process. As I outlined in chapter one of this thesis, I believe that leadership fundamentally necessitates that the role of both leaders and followers is addressed. I therefore set out to conduct research in such a way that would place the analytical lens on the identity construction process rather than as a purview of the individual. I achieved this first through the video data. This data allowed me to observe and document how individuals engage in social interaction in order to construct their own and each other's identities. In this way, we can discern with greater detail and understanding how followers are involved in the leader identity construction process. Secondly, in the interview data, I was able to tap into the perceptions and past experiences of interactions and relationships with followers. Although the interviews were based upon retrospective accounts, they still allowed me to uncover the role of followers in leader identity construction. Furthermore, I argue that the insights gained from the data and from all three analytical chapters of this thesis provide a more nuanced understanding of leader identity construction. I was able to achieve this because I was sensitive to new issues arising from the data.

Further, I believe that the issues of control brought out in chapter seven were the most unexpected findings of the thesis for me. Although I was not originally focusing on organizational issues in the leader identity construction process at the very start of my doctoral studies, in the end I believe that the findings from chapter seven have helped me to better understand the organizational level issues holding individuals back from being able to make claims for and receive grants of a leader identity. In this way, I am very grateful that I took a flexible and inductive approach to my data analysis, because it is this approach that allowed me to incorporate new topics and issues as I went along. Furthermore, my understanding of qualitative research is that it should allow one to be open to new and emergent concepts. Therefore, I have conducted my thesis in a way that is in line with my own personal understanding of how qualitative research is to be conducted.

Furthermore, I also stated in chapter one of this thesis that I wanted to gain a better understanding of the relational aspects that might facilitate the leader identity construction process. What I envisioned is that I would be able to uncover ways that other individuals contribute to the leader identity construction process. I believe that I have achieved this. I was quite curious at the start of my doctoral studies regarding how individuals such as direct reports or supervisors would facilitate the leader identity construction process, because individuals are often leaders and followers (Jaser, 2017). I was also curious about how leader and follower relationships might play a role in the leader identity construction process. In this way, I have met my aim of investigating leadership from both interactional and relational perspectives. I also believe that I have generated significant and new knowledge both through the focus of my research, but also through the methods I employed. Video methods in leadership are still underutilized and I have made a significant contribution by showing that they can be successfully used as a method to study leadership, and by demonstrating the level of detail that video methods can provide. In this way, I believe that my thesis is both original and makes a significant contribution.

Furthermore, I am grateful to have had the opportunity to conduct qualitative research. As I outlined in chapter one of this thesis, I was originally planning to conduct a quantitative study of leadership. However, at the end of these three plus years, I am very grateful for the growth and challenges I have experienced while taking a qualitative approach and learning how this is done. I have truly grown as a researcher in ways I could not have predicted at the start of my doctoral studies. I now feel that I am qualified and also able to conduct research on my own, at a level and calibre that is expected of a PhD student. I am also happy that I have adapted and grown to meet the challenges of research publication. As of the submission of this thesis in November 2018, I have submitted the chapter six data as a journal article and it is currently under review. I also have plans to submit the chapter five data as a methodical paper and the chapter seven data as a single author paper. In this way, I have successfully created my own research agenda and have prepared myself to meet the challenges of an academic career, which was the motivation for undertaking a PhD in the first place.

I believe that this thesis makes timely contributions to understanding the relationships, interactions and experience that are constructive of one's leader identity. I also feel that it has provided a greater understanding of the role and impact of the claiming and granting behaviours of others as well as outlining the implications for leader identity construction in terms of who supports or does not support one's leader identity? Finally, I believe that the findings also provide insight into what role individuals perceive their organization as having in their leader identity construction process, and in doing so I have achieved the research goals I set out to achieve at the start of my doctoral studies.

References

Abdelal, R., Herrera, Y. M., Johnston, A. I. & McDermott, R. (Eds.). (2009). *Measuring identity: A guide for social scientists*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Ainsworth, S. & Grant, D. (2012). Revitalizing scholarship in identity studies. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *28*(1), 60-62.

Albert, S. & Whetten, D. A. (1985). Organizational identity. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 7,* 263-295.

Allen, B. J. (2005). Social constructionism. *Engaging organizational communication theory and research: Multiple perspectives*, 35-53.

Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., Poteet, M. L., Lentz, E. & Lima, L. (2004). Career benefits associated with mentoring for protégés: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*(1), 127-136.

Althusser, L. (1971). *Lenin and philosophy and other essays* (Modern Reader Paperbacks, PB-213). New York ; London: Monthly Review Press. Alvesson, M. (2000). Social identity and the problem of loyalty in knowledge-intensive companies. *Journal of Management Studies*, *37*(8), 1101-1124.

Alvesson, M. (2000). Social indentity and the problem of loyalty in knowledge-intensive companies. *Journal of Management Studies, 37*(8), 1101-1124.

Alvesson, M. & Deetz, S. (1999). Critical theory and postmodernism: Approaches to organizational studies. *Studying organization: Theory and method*, 185-211.

Alvesson, M. & Spicer, A. (2014). Critical perspectives on leadership. *The Oxford handbook of leadership and organizations*, 40-56.

Alvesson, M. & Sveningsson, S. (2003). Managers doing leadership: The extra-ordinarization of the mundane. *Human Relations*, *56*(12), 1435-1459.

Alvesson, M. & Willmott, H. (1992). On the idea of emancipation in management and organization studies. *Academy of Management Review*, *17*(3), 432-464.

Alvesson, M. & Willmott, H. (2002). Identity regulation as organizational control: Producing the appropriate individual. *Journal of Management Studies*, *39*(5), 619-644.

Alvesson, M. & Willmott, H. (2012). *Making sense of management: A critical introduction*. London: Sage.

Alvesson, M., Ashcraft, K. L. & Thomas, R. (2008). Identity matters: Reflections on the construction of identity scholarship in organization studies. *Organization*, *15*(1), 5-28.

Anderson, C. & Kilduff, G. J. (2009). The pursuit of status in social groups. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *18*(5), 295-298.

Antonakis, J. & Day, D. V. (Eds.). (2017). *The nature of leadership*. Sage publications.

Argyle, M. (2017). *Social Interaction: Process and Products*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Arnold, J. A., Arad, S., Rhoades, J. A. & Drasgow, F. (2000). The empowering leadership questionnaire: The construction and validation of a new scale for measuring leader behaviours. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *21*(3), 249-269.

Ashford, S. J. (1986). Feedback-seeking in individual adaptation: A resource perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, *29*(3), 465-487.

Ashford, S. J. & Cummings, L. L. (1985). Proactive feedback seeking: The instrumental use of the information environment. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, *58*(1), 67-79.

Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. A. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, *14*(1), 20-39.

Ashforth, B. E. & Mael, F. A. (1996). Organizational Identity and Strategy as a Context for the Individual. *Advances in Strategic Management*, *13*, 19-64.

Ashforth, B. E. & Schinoff, B. S. (2016). Identity Under Construction: How Individuals Come to Define Themselves in Organizations. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *3*, 111-137.

Avolio, B. J. (2007). Promoting more integrative strategies for leadership theory-building. *American Psychologist*, *62*(1), 25.

Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O. & Weber, T. J. (2009). Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *60*, 421-449.

Bailliard, A. (2015). Video methodologies in research: Unlocking the complexities of occupation. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 82*(1), 35-43.

Balkundi, P. & Kilduff, M. (2006). The ties that lead: A social network approach to leadership. *The leadership quarterly*, *17*(4), 419-439.

Bartel, C. A. & Dutton, J. E. (2001). Ambiguous organizational memberships: Constructing organizational identities. *Social identity processes in organizational contexts*, 115-130.

Bartel, C. A., Saavedra, R. & Van Dyne, L. (2001). Design conditions for learning in community service contexts. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *22*(4), 367-385.

Bass, B. M. (1981). From leaderless group discussions to the cross-national assessment of managers. *Journal of Management*, *7*(2), 63-76.

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. London: Collier-Macmillan.

Bass, B. M. & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational leadership*. London: Psychology Press.

Bass, B. M. & Stogdill, R. M. (1990). *Bass & Stogdill's handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Bass, B. & Bass, R. (2008). *The Bass handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications* (4th ed., Free Press hardcover ed.). New York: Free Press.

Bates, C. (Ed.). (2014). *Video methods: Social science research in motion*. London: Routledge.

Bathurst, R. & Cain, T. (2013). Embodied leadership: The aesthetics of gesture. *Leadership*, *9*(3), 358-377.

Beaman, L., Duflo, E., Pande, R. & Topalova, P. (2012). Female leadership raises aspirations and educational attainment for girls: A policy experiment in India. S*cience*, 335 (6068), 582-586.

Bebb, S. S. (2009). The structure of role transition: A phenomenological study of successful executives from five countries. *International Journal of Leadership Studies*, *4*(2), 223-243.

Bedeian, A. G. & Hunt, J. G. (2006). Academic amnesia and vestigial assumptions of our forefathers. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *17*(2), 190-205.

Beijaard, D., Verloop, N. & Vermunt, J. D. (2000). Teachers' perceptions of professional identity: An exploratory study from a personal knowledge perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *16*(7), 749-764.

Benson, J. K. (1977). Organizations: A dialectical view. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 1-21.

Berg, B. (2006). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Berger, P. & Luckmann, T.. (1967). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge* (Penguin social sciences). London: Penguin.

Berger, R. (2015). Now I see it, now I don't: Researcher's position and reflexivity in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, *15*(2), 219-234. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Berscheid, E. & Hatfield, E. (1969). *Interpersonal attraction* (pp. 46-51). Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Bezemer, J. & Mavers, D. (2011). Multimodal transcription as academic practice: a social semiotic perspective. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 14*(3), 191-206.

Blau, P. M. (1968). The hierarchy of authority in organizations. *American Journal of Sociology*, *73*(4), 453-467.

Boshyk, Y. (Ed.). (2002). *Action learning worldwide: Experiences of leadership and organizational development*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bott, E. (2010). Favourites and others: reflexivity and the shaping of subjectivities and data in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, *10*(2), 159-173.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Brewer, M. B. & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this "We"? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *71*(1), 83.

Brower, H. H., Schoorman, F. D. & Tan, H. H. (2000). A model of relational leadership: The integration of trust and leader–member exchange. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *11*(2), 227-250.

Brown, A. (2018). Human Relations virtual special issue: Identities in organizations. *Human Relations*, *71*(4), 611-613.

Brown, A. D. (2015). Identities and identity work in organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *17*(1), 20-40.

Brown, M. E. & Treviño, L. K. (2014). Do role models matter? An investigation of role modeling as an antecedent of perceived ethical leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *122*(4), 587-598.

Bryman, A. (1984). The debate about quantitative and qualitative research: a question of method or epistemology?. *British Journal of Sociology*, 75-92.

Bryman, A. (2004). Qualitative research on leadership: A critical but appreciative review. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *15*(6), 729-769.

Bucher, R. & Stelling, J. G. (1977). *Becoming professional* (Sage Library of Social Research; v.46). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Burke, C. S., Stagl, K. C., Klein, C., Goodwin, G. F., Salas, E. & Halpin, S. M. (2006). What type of leadership behaviours are functional in teams? A meta-analysis. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *17*(3), 288-307.

Burke, P. J. (1980). The self: Measurement requirements from an interactionist perspective. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 18-29.

Burke, P. J. & Stets, J. E. (2009). *Identity theory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Burke, R. & McKeen, J. (1990). Mentoring in organizations: Implications for women. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *9*(4), 317-332.

Burke, S. & Collins, K. M. (2001). Gender differences in leadership styles and management skills. *Women in Management Review*, *16*(5), 244-257.

Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. London: Routledge.

Cable, D. M. & Kay, V. S. (2012). Striving for self-verification during organizational entry. *Academy of Management Journal*, *55*(2), 360-380.

Carnabuci, G., Emery, C. & Brinberg, D. (2018). Emergent leadership structures in informal groups: A dynamic, cognitively informed network model. *Organization Science*, *29*(1), 118-133.

Carroll, B. & Levy, L. (2010). Leadership development as identity construction. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *24*(2), 211-231.

Carson, J. B., Tesluk, P. E. & Marrone, J. A. (2007). Shared leadership in teams: An investigation of antecedent conditions and performance. *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(5), 1217-1234.

Carsten, M. K., Uhl-Bien, M., West, B. J., Patera, J. L. & McGregor, R. (2010). Exploring social constructions of followership: A qualitative study. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*(3), 543-562.

Chang, C.H., Johnson, R. E. (2010). Not all leader–member exchanges are created equal: Importance of leader relational identity. *The Leadership Quarterly, 21*(5), 796-808.

Chapman, A. (2017). Using the Assessment Process to Overcome Imposter Syndrome in Mature Students. *Journal of Further and Higher Education, 41*(2), 112-119.

Chiaburu, D., Smith, T., Wang, J. & Zimmerman, R. (2014). Relative Importance of Leader Influences for Subordinates’ Proactive Behaviours, Prosocial Behaviours, and Task Performance. *Journal of Personnel Psychology, 13*(2), 70-86.

Clance, P. & Imes, S. (1978). The imposter phenomenon in high achieving women: Dynamics and therapeutic intervention. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice, 15*(3), 241-247.

Clark, M. S. & Mills, J. (1979). Interpersonal attraction in exchange and communal relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social sychology, 37*(1), 12.

Clifton, J. (2006). A conversation analytical approach to business communication: The case of leadership. *The Journal of Business Communication (1973), 43*(3), 202-219.

Clifton, J. (2009). Beyond Taxonomies of Influence: “Doing” Influence and Making Decisions in Management Team Meetings. *The Journal of Business Communication (1973), 46*(1), 57-79.

Clifton, J. (2012). A discursive approach to leadership: Doing assessments and managing organizational meanings. *The Journal of Business Communication (1973)*, *49*(2), 148-168.

Clifton, J. (2014). Small stories, positioning, and the discursive construction of leader identity in business meetings. *Leadership*, *10*(1), 99-117.

Colbert, A. E., Judge, T. A., Choi, D. & Wang, G. (2012). Assessing the trait theory of leadership using self and observer ratings of personality: The mediating role of contributions to group success. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *23*(4), 670-685.

Collinson, D. L. (2003). Identities and insecurities: Selves at work. *Organization*, *10*(3), 527-547.

Collinson, D. L. (2005). Dialectics of leadership. *Human relations*, *58*(11), 1419-1442.

Collinson, D. L. (2006). Rethinking followership: A post-structuralist analysis of follower identities. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *17*(2), 179-189.

Collinson, D. L. (2010). *Managing the shopfloor: Subjectivity, masculinity and workplace culture* (Vol. 36). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

Collinson, D. L. (2011). Critical leadership studies. In A. Bryman, D. Collinson, K. Grint, B. Jackson, M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of leadership*, pp.181-194. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Collinson, D. L. & Hearn, J. (1996). Men managing leadership? Men and women of the corporation revisited. *The International Review of Women and Leadership*, *1*(2), 1-24.

Connelly, M. S., Gilbert, J. A., Zaccaro, S. J., Threlfall, K. V., Marks, M. A. & Mumford, M. D. (2000). Exploring the relationship of leadership skills and knowledge to leader performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *11*(1), 65-86.

Cooper, C. L. & Locke, E. A. (Eds.). (2000). *Industrial and organizational psychology: Linking theory with practice* (Vol. 1). Hoboken, NJ: Blackwell Publishing.

Cooper, S. & Wakelam, A. (1999). Leadership of resuscitation teams: ‘Lighthouse Leadership’. *Resuscitation, 42*(1), 27-45.

Coultas, C. W. & Salas, E. (2015). Identity construction in coaching: Schemas, information processing, and goal commitment. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, *67*(4), 298.

Coultas, C., Salas, E. & Kaiser, R. B. (2015). Identity construction in coaching: schemas, information processing, and goal commitment. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research, 67*(4), 298-325.

Coyne, I. T. (1997). Sampling in qualitative research. Purposeful and theoretical sampling; merging or clear boundaries?. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *26*(3), 623-630.

Crenshaw, J. T. (2012). Use of video-feedback, reflection, and interactive analysis to improve nurse leadership practices. *Nursing Administration Quarterly*, *36*(3), 260-267.

Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*. London: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (1998). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, *39*(3), 124-130.

Croft, C., Currie, G. & Lockett, A. (2015). The Impact of Emotionally Important Social Identities on the Construction of a Managerial Leader Identity: A Challenge for Nurses in the English National Health Service. *Organization Studies, 36*(1), 113-131.

Cromby, J. & Nightingale, D. J. (1999). What’s wrong with social constructionism? In D. J. Nightingale and J. Cromby (eds), *Social constructionist psychology: A critical analysis of theory and practice*, 1-19. Buckingham: Open University Press

Cunliffe, A. L. & Eriksen, M. (2011). Relational leadership. *Human relations*, *64*(11), 1425-1449.

Daft, R. L. & Lengel, R. H. (1986). Organizational Information Requirements, Media Richness and Structural Design. *Management Science*, *32*(5), 554-571.

Dansereau Jr, F., Graen, G. & Haga, W. J. (1975). A vertical dyad linkage approach to leadership within formal organizations: A longitudinal investigation of the role making process. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, *13*(1), 46-78.

Daresh, J. & Male, T. (2000). Crossing the border into leadership: Experiences of newly appointed British headteachers and American principals. *Educational Management & Administration*, *28*(1), 89-101.

Daudelin, M. W. (1996). Learning from experience through reflection. *Organizational Dynamics*, *24*(3), 36-48.

Davidson, C. (2009). Transcription: Imperatives for qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *8*(2), 35-52.

Day, D. V. (Ed.). (2014). *The Oxford handbook of leadership and organizations*. Oxford Library of Psychology, New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Day, D. V. & Dragoni, L. (2015). Leadership development: An outcome-oriented review based on time and levels of analyses. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *2*(1), 133-156.

Day, D. V., Gronn, P. & Salas, E. (2004). Leadership capacity in teams. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *15*(6), 857-880.

Day, D.V. & Harrison, M.M. (2007). A multilevel, identity-based approach to leader development, *Human Resource Management Review*, 17, 360-373.

Day, D. V., Harrison, M. M. & Halpin, S. M. (2012). An integrative approach to leader development. New York, NY: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Day, D. V. & Sin, H. P. (2011). Longitudinal tests of an integrative model of leader development: Charting and understanding developmental trajectories. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *22*(3), 545-560.

Dearnley, C. (2005). A reflection on the use of semi-structured interviews. *Nurse Researcher, 13*(1), 19-28.

Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive biography* (Vol. 17). London: Sage.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage.

DeRue, D. S. (2011). Adaptive leadership theory: Leading and following as a complex adaptive process. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *31*, 125-150.

DeRue, D. S. & Ashford, S. J. (2010). Who will lead and who will follow? A social process of leadership identity construction in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(4), 627-647.

DeRue, D. S., Ashford, S. J. & Cotton, N. C. (2009). Assuming the mantle: Unpacking the process by which individuals internalize a leader identity. In L. M. Roberts & J. E. Dutton (Eds.), *Exploring Positive Identities and Organizations: Building a Theoretical and Research Foundation*. New York, NY: Routledge.

DeRue, D. S., Nahrgang, J. D. & Ashford, S. J. (2015). Interpersonal perceptions and the emergence of leadership structures in groups: A network perspective. *Organization Science*, *26*(4), 1192-1209.

DeRue, D. S., Nahrgang, J. D., Wellman, N. E. D. & Humphrey, S. E. (2011). Trait and behavioral theories of leadership: An integration and meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Personnel Psychology*, *64*(1), 7-52.

DeRue, D. S. & Wellman, N. (2009). Developing leaders via experience: the role of developmental challenge, learning orientation, and feedback availability. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *94*(4), 859.

Dinh, J. E. & Lord, R. G. (2012). Implications of dispositional and process views of traits for individual difference research in leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 23*(4), 651-669.

Dinh, J. E., Lord, R. G., Gardner, W. L., Meuser, J. D., Liden, R. C. & Hu, J. (2014). Leadership theory and research in the new millennium: Current theoretical trends and changing perspectives. *The Leadership Quarterly, 25*(1), 36-62.

Dowling, M. (2006). Approaches to reflexivity in qualitative research. *Nurse Researcher*, *13*(3), 7.

Downing, S. (2005). The social construction of entrepreneurship: Narrative and dramatic processes in the coproduction of organizations and identities. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, *29*(2), 185-204.

Drury, B. J., Siy, J. O. & Cheryan, S. (2011). When do female role models benefit women? The importance of differentiating recruitment from retention in STEM. *Psychological Inquiry*, *22*(4), 265-269.

Duck, S. (1994). *Meaningful relationships: Talking, sense, and relating*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Durkheim, E. (1982). What is a social fact? In E. Durkheim, *The rules of sociological method* (pp. 50-59). New York, NY: The Free Press.

Dutton, J. E., Roberts, L. M. & Bednar, J. (2010). Pathways for positive identity construction at work: Four types of positive identity and the building of social resources. *Academy of Management Review*, *35*(2), 265-293.

Eagly, A. H. & Karau, S. J. (1991). Gender and the emergence of leaders: A meta-analysis. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *60*(5), 685.

Eagly, A. H. & Sczesny, S. (2009). Stereotypes about women, men, and leaders: Have times changed? In M. Barreto, M. K. Ryan & M. T. Schmitt (Eds.), *Psychology of women book series. The glass ceiling in the 21st century: Understanding barriers to gender equality* (pp. 21-47). Washington, DC:: American Psychological Association.

Eagly, A. H. & Wood, W. (1991). Explaining sex differences in social behavior: A meta-analytic perspective. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *17*(3), 306-315.

Eberly, M. B., Johnson, M. D., Hernandez, M. & Avolio, B. J. (2013). An integrative process model of leadership: Examining loci, mechanisms, and event cycles. *American Psychologist*, *68*(6), 427.

Ehrlich, S. B. (1998). Leader-centric and follower-centric research at multiple levels of analysis: Toward a balanced perspective. *Monographs in Organizational Behavior and Industrial Relations*, *24,* 303-310.

Ellemers, N., de Gilder, D. & Haslam, S. A. (2004). Motivating individuals and groups at work: A social identity perspective on leadership and group performance. *Academy of Management Review*, *29*(3), 459-478.

Ellsworth, P. C. & Ludwig, L. M. (1972). Visual behavior in social interaction. *Journal of Communication*, *22*(4), 375-403.

Ely, R. J., Ibarra, H. & Kolb, D. M. (2011). Taking gender into account: Theory and design for women's leadership development programs. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *10*(3), 474-493.

Ensari, N., Riggio, R. E., Christian, J. & Carslaw, G. (2011). Who emerges as a leader? Meta-analyses of individual differences as predictors of leadership emergence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *51*(4), 532-536.

Epitropaki, O., Kark, R., Mainemelis, C. & Lord, R. G. (2017). Leadership and followership identity processes: A multilevel review. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *28*(1), 104-129.

Epitropaki, O., Sy, T., Martin, R., Tram-Quon, S. & Topakas, A. (2013). Implicit leadership and followership theories "in the wild": Taking stock of information-processing approaches to leadership and followership in organizational settings. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *24*(6), 858-881.

Erlandson, D. A., Harris, E. L., Skipper, B. L., Allen, S. D. (1993). *Doing naturalistic inquiry: A guide to methods*. London: Sage Publications.

Evans, M. G. (1970). The effects of supervisory behavior on the path-goal relationship. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, *5*(3), 277-298.

Fairhurst, G. T. (2001). Dualisms in leadership research. In F. F. Jablin & L. L. Putnam (Eds.), *The new handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods*, 379-439. Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Fairhurst, G. T. (2008). Discursive leadership: A communication alternative to leadership psychology. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *21*(4), 510-521.

Fairhurst, G. T. (2009). Considering context in discursive leadership research. *Human Relations*, *62*(11), 1607-1633.

Fairhurst, G. T. & Cooren, F. (2004). Organizational language in use: Interaction analysis, conversation analysis, and speech act schematics. In D. Grant, C. Hardy, C. Oswick & L. Putnam (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational discourse*, 131-152. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Fairhurst, G. T. & Grant, D. (2010). The social construction of leadership: A sailing guide. *Management Communication Quarterly*, *24*(2), 171-210.

Fairhurst, G. T. & Uhl-Bien, M. (2012). Organizational discourse analysis (ODA): Examining leadership as a relational process. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *23*(6), 1043-1062.

Farris, G. F. & Lim Jr, F. G. (1969). Effects of performance on leadership, cohesiveness, influence, satisfaction, and subsequent performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *53*(6), 490.

Fereday, J. & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *5*(1), 80-92.

Fiedler, F. E. (1986). The Contribution of Cognitive Resources and Leader Behavior to Organizational Performance. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *16*(6), 532-548.

Fiedler, F. E. (1995). Cognitive resources and leadership performance. *Applied Psychology*, *44*(1), 5-28.

Fiedler, F. E. (1996). Research on leadership selection and training: One view of the future. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 241-250.

Fiedler, F. E. (2006). The Contingency model: Theory of Leadership Effectiveness. In J. M. Levine & R. L. Moreland (Eds.) (2006), *Small Groups: Key Readings in Social Psychology*, 369. New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Fiedler, F. E. & Garcia, J. E. (1987). *New approaches to effective leadership: Cognitive resources and organizational performance*. John Wiley & Sons.

Fiedler, F. E., McGuire, M. & Richardson, M. (1989). The role of intelligence and experience in successful group performance. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, *1*(2), 132-149.

Finlay, L. (2002). Negotiating the swamp: the opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research practice. *Qualitative Research*, *2*(2), 209-230.

Finn, R. & Waring, J. (2005). Ethnographic methods in patient safety. *Patient safety: Research into practice*, 161-172.

Fisher, G. A. & Chon, K. K. (1989). Durkheim and the social construction of emotions. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 1-9.

Fleishman, E. A., Mumford, M. D., Zaccaro, S. J., Levin, K. Y., Korotkin, A. L. & Hein, M. B. (1991). Taxonomic efforts in the description of leader behavior: A synthesis and functional interpretation. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *2*(4), 245-287.

Fleming, P. & Sturdy, A. (2011). 'Being yourself' in the electronic sweatshop: New forms of normative control. *Human Relations*, *64*(2), 177-200.

Flick, U. (2000). Episodic interviewing. In N. W. Bauer & G. Gaskell (Eds.), *Qualitative Researching with Text, Image and Sound: A Practical Handbook*, 75-92. London: Sage.

Flick, U., von Kardoff, E. & Steinke, I. (Eds.). (2004). *A companion to qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Fopp, R. (2008). Social constructionism and housing studies: A critical reflection. *Urban Policy and Research*, *26*(2), 159-175.

Fotaki, M., Long, S., Schwartz, H. S., Petriglieri, G. & Stein, M. (2012). The Unwanted Self: Projective Identification in Leaders' Identity Work. *Organization Studies, 33*(9), 1217-1235.

Foti, R. J., Knee Jr, R. E. & Backert, R. S. (2008). Multi-level implications of framing leadership perceptions as a dynamic process. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *19*(2), 178-194.

Foucault, M. (1972). Michel Foucault: The discourse on language. In D. Wood & J. Medina (Eds.) (2004), *Truth: Engagements across philosophical traditions*, 315-335. Hoboken, NJ. Wiley-Blackwell

French, R., Rayner, C., Rees, G. & Rumbles, S. (2011). Organizational behaviour (2nd ed.) New York, NY: Wiley.

French Jr, J. R., Raven, B. & Cartwright, D. (1959). The bases of social power. *Classics of Organization Theory*, *7*, 311-320.

Fusch, P. I. & Ness, L. R. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, *20*(9), 1408-1416.

Gardner, W. L., Avolio, B. J., Luthans, F., May, D. R. & Walumbwa, F. (2005). "Can you see the real me?" A self-based model of authentic leader and follower development. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *16*(3), 343-372.

Gauntlett, D. (2008). *Media, gender and identity: An introduction*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gecas, V. (1982). The Self-Concept. *Annual Review of Sociology, 8,* 1-33.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The interpretation of cultures*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Gentry, W. A., Griggs, T. L., Deal, J. J., Mondore, S. P. & Cox, B. D. (2011). A comparison of generational differences in endorsement of leadership practices with actual leadership skill level. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, *63*(1), 39.

Gergen, K. (1999). *An invitation to social construction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gergen, K. J. (2015). *An invitation to social construction* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Gergen, K. J. & Thatchenkery, T. J. (2004). Organization science as social construction: Postmodern potentials. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *40*(2), 228-249.

Gerpott, F. H., Lehmann-Willenbrock, N., Voelpel, S. C. & van Vugt, M. (2018). It's not just what is said but also when it's said: A temporal account of verbal behaviours and emergent leadership in self-managed teams. *Academy of Management Journal*.

Gibson, D. E. (2003). Developing the professional self-concept: Role model construals in early, middle, and late career stages. *Organization Science*, *14*(5), 591-610.

Gibson, D. E. (2004). Role models in career development: New directions for theory and research. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 65*(1), 134-156.

Gill, R. (2011). *Theory and practice of leadership*. London: Sage.

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G. & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology. *Organizational research methods, 16*(1), 15-31.

Gioia, D., Schultz, M. & Corley, K. (2000). Organizational identity, image, and adaptive instability. *Academy of Management Review, 25*(1), 63-81.

Glynn, M. A. (2000). When cymbals become symbols: Conflict over organizational identity within a symphony orchestra. *Organization science*, *11*(3), 285-298.

Goffman, E. (1959) *The presentation of the self in everyday life.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor.

Gordon, A. & Yukl, G. (2004). The future of leadership research: Challenges and opportunities. *German Journal of Human Resource Management*, *18*(3), 359-365.

Gordon, R. (2011). Leadership and power. *The Sage Handbook of Leadership. London: Sage*, 195-202.

Graeff, C. L. (1983). The situational leadership theory: A critical view. *Academy of Management Review, 8*(2), 285-291.

Graeff, C. L. (1997). Evolution of situational leadership theory: A critical review. *The Leadership Quarterly, 8*(2), 153-170.

Graen, G. B. & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years:

Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly, 6*(2), 219-247.

Griffin, M. A., Patterson, M. G. & West, M. A. (2001). Job satisfaction and teamwork: The role of supervisor support. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, *22*(5), 537-550.

Grint, K. (1997). *Leadership: Classical, contemporary, and critical approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grint, K. (2001). *The arts of leadership*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gronn, P. (2002). Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *13*(4), 423-451.

Guba, E. G. (1981). Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal (ECTJ)*, *29*(2), 75.

Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1982). Epistemological and methodological bases of naturalistic inquiry. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal (ECTJ)*, *30*(4), 233-252.

Guest, G., Bunce, A. & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods, 18*(1), 59-82.

Guillemin, M., and Gillam, L. (2004). Ethics, reflexivity, and “ethically important moments” in research. *Qualitative Inquiry* 10, no. 2 (2004): 261-280.

Gunter, H. (2009). Critical approaches to leadership in education. *The Journal of Educational Enquiry*, *2*(2).

Hacking, I. (1999). *The social construction of what?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hall, M. L. (2011). Sensing the vision: Sense making and the social construction of leadership in the branch office of an insurance company. *Atlantic Journal of Communication*, *19*(2), 65-78.

Hammond, M., Clapp-Smith, R. & Palanski, M. (2017). Beyond (just) the workplace: A theory of leader development across multiple domains. *Academy of Management Review*, *42*(3), 481-498.

Hannah, S., Lord, R. & Pearce, C. (2011). Leadership and collective requisite complexity. *Organizational Psychology Review, 1*(3), 215-238.

Harris, A. (2008). Distributed leadership: According to the evidence. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *46*(2), 172-188.

Harris, A. M. (2016). Video as method: Understanding qualitative research. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Harung, H. S., Heato, D. P. & Alexander, C. N. (1995). A unified theory of leadership: Experiences of higher states of consciousness in world-class leaders. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *16*(7), 44-59.

Haslam, S. A. & Platow, M. J. (2001). The link between leadership and followership: How affirming social identity translates vision into action. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *27*(11), 1469-1479.

Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D. & Platow, M. J. (2010). *The new psychology of leadership: Identity, influence and power*. London: Psychology Press.

Hatch, M. J. & Schultz, M. (2002). The dynamics of organizational identity. *Human relations*, *55*(8), 989-1018.

Heath, C., Hindmarsh, J. & Luff, P. (2010). *Video in qualitative research*. London: Sage.

Hernandez, M., Eberly, M. B., Avolio, B. J. & Johnson, M. D. (2011). The loci and mechanisms of leadership: Exploring a more comprehensive view of leadership theory. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *22*(6), 1165-1185.

Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. H. (1969). Life cycle theory of leadership. *Training & Development Journal*.

Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. H. (1977). Management of organizational behavior: utilizing human resources, 236-244. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Hill, L. & Wheat, C. (2017). The Influence of Mentorship and Role Models on University Women Leaders' Career Paths to University Presidency. *The Qualitative Report*, *22*(8), 2090-2111.

Hoffman, E. A. & Haxby, J. V. (2000). Distinct representations of eye gaze and identity in the distributed human neural system for face perception. *Nature Neuroscience*, *3*(1), 80.

Hogg, M. A. (2001). A social identity theory of leadership. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *5*(3), 184-200.

Hogg, M. A. (2003). *Social identity*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Hogg, M. A. (2006). Social identity theory. In P. J. Burke (Ed.), *Contemporary social psychological theories* (pp.111-136). Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Hogg, M. A. & Terry, D. I. (2000). Social identity and self-categorization processes in organizational contexts. *Academy of Management Review*, *25*(1), 121-140.

Hollander, E. P. (1985). Leadership and power. In G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (Eds.), *The handbook of social psychology, 2,* 485-537. Hillsdale, NJ: Random House

Hollander, E. P. (1993). Legitimacy, power, and influence: A perspective on relational features of leadership. In M. M. Chemers & R. Ayman (Eds.), *Leadership theory and research: Perspectives and directions* (pp. 29-47). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Hollander, E. P. & Offermann, L. R. (1990). Power and leadership in organizations: Relationships in transition. *American Psychologist*, *45*(2), 179.

Hollenbeck, J. R., Beersma, B. & Schouten, M. E. (2012). Beyond team types and taxonomies: A dimensional scaling conceptualization for team description. *Academy of Management Review*, *37*(1), 82-106.

Hong, Y., Catano, V. M. & Liao, H. (2011). Leader emergence: The role of emotional intelligence and motivation to lead. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *32*(4), 320-343.

Hoogeboom, M. & Wilderom, C. P. (2015). Effective leader behaviours in regularly held staff meetings: Surveyed vs. Videotaped and Video-Coded Observations. In J.A. Allen, N. Lehmann-Willenbrock & S. G. Rogelberg (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Meeting Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

House, R. J. (1971). A path goal theory of leader effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 321-339.

House, R. J. (1996). Path-goal theory of leadership: Lessons, legacy, and a reformulated theory. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *7*(3), 323-352.

House, R. J. & Aditya, R. N. (1997). The social scientific study of leadership: Quo vadis? *Journal of Management*, *23*(3), 409-473.

House, R. J. & Hanges, P., Ruiz-Quintanilla, S. A., Dorfman, P. W., Javidan, M., Dickon, M, Gupta, V. & Koopman, P. L. (1999). *Cultural Influences on Leadership and Organizations: Project GLOBE*. In M. J. Gesner & V. Arnold, Advances in Global Leadership. Stamford, CT: JAI Press.

House, R, J. & Mitchell, T. R. (1974). Path-Goal Theory of Leadership. *Contemporary Business, 3*, 81-98. House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W. & Gupta,

V. (Eds.). (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Howell, J. P., Bowen, D. E., Dorfman, P. W., Kerr, S. & Podsakoff, P. M. (1990). Substitutes for leadership: Effective alternatives to ineffective leadership. *Organizational Dynamics*, *19*(1), 21-38.

Hruby, G. G. (2001). Sociological, postmodern, and new realism perspectives in social constructionism: Implications for literacy research. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *36*(1), 48-62.

Hughes, J. A. & Sharrock, W. W. (2016). *The philosophy of social research*. London: Routledge.

Hughes, R. L., Ginnett, R. C. & Curphy, G. J. (1998). Contingency theories of leadership. In G. R. Hickman (Ed.), *Leading Organizations: Perspectives for a New Era*, 141-157. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Humphreys, J., Novicevic, M., Smothers, J., Pane Haden, S., Hayek, M., Williams Jr, W., Oyler, J. & Clayton, R. (2015). The collective endorsement of James Meredith: Initiating a leader identity construction process. *Human Relations*, *68*(9), 1389-1413.

Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional selves: Experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *44*(4), 764-791.

Ibarra, H. & Barbulescu, R. (2010). Identity as narrative: Prevalence, effectiveness, and consequences of narrative identity work in macro work role transitions. *Academy of Management Review*, *35*(1), 135-154.

Ibarra, H., Kilduff, M. & Tsai, W. (2005). Zooming in and out: Connecting individuals and collectives at the frontier of organizational network research. *Organizational Science*, 16, 359-371.

Ibarra, H., Snook, S. & Guillén Ramo, L. (2010). Identity-based leader development. In N. Nohria & R. Khurana (Eds.), *Handbook of leadership theory and practice* (pp. 657-678.). Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.

Ibarra, H., Wittman, S., Petriglieri, G. & Day, D. (2014). Leadership and Identity: An examination of three theories and new research directions. In Day, D. (Ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Leadership and Organizations* (pp. 285-301). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Indvik, J. (1986). Path-goal theory of leadership: a meta-analysis. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* 86 (1), 89-192.

Jaser, Z. (2017). Pulled in Two Directions. Being in Concert a Leader to Some and a Follower to Others. In *Academy of Management Proceedings* 2017(1), 160-186.

Johnson, R., Venus, M., Lanaj, K., Mao, C., Chang, C. & Kozlowski, S. W. J. (2012). Leader Identity as an Antecedent of the Frequency and Consistency of Transformational, Consideration, and Abusive Leadership Behaviours. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 97*(6), 1262-1272.

Johnson, S. D. & Bechler, C. (1998). Examining the relationship between listening effectiveness and leadership emergence: Perceptions, behaviors, and recall. *Small Group Research*, *29*(4), 452-471.

Jokinen, T. (2005). Global leadership competencies: a review and discussion. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, *29*(3), 199-216.

Jordan, B. & Henderson, A. (1995). Interaction analysis: Foundations and practice. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, *4*(1), 39-103.

Judge, T. A., Bono, J. E., Ilies, R. & Gerhardt, M. W. (2002). Personality and leadership: a qualitative and quantitative review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *87*(4), 765.

Judge, T. A., Colbert, A. E. & Ilies, R. (2004). A meta-analysis of the relationship between intelligence and leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *89*(3), 542-552.

Jung, D. I. & Sosik, J. J. (2002). Transformational leadership in work groups: The role of empowerment, cohesiveness, and collective-efficacy on perceived group performance. *Small Group Research*, *33*(3), 313-336.

Junker, N. M. & van Dick, R. (2014). Implicit theories in organizational settings: A systematic review and research agenda of implicit leadership and followership theories. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *25*(6), 1154-1173.

Karelaia, N. & Guillén, L. (2014). Me, a woman and a leader: Positive social identity and identity conflict. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *125*(2), 204-219.

Karp, T. & Helgø, T. I. (2009). Leadership as identity construction: The act of leading people in organisations: A perspective from the complexity sciences. *Journal of Management Development*, *28*(10), 880-896.

Katz, D. & Kahn, R. L. (1978). *The social psychology of organizations* (Vol. 2, p. 528). New York: Wiley.

Katz, R. (1955). Skills of an effective administrator. *Harvard BusinessReview*, 33, 33-42.

Kean, S., Haycock-Stuart, E.L., Baggaley, S. & Carson, M. (2011). Followers and the co-construction of leadership. *Journal of Nursing Management*, *19*(4), 507-516.

Kelly, S. (2014). Towards a negative ontology of leadership. *Human relations*, *67*(8), 905-922.

Kelman, H. C. (1958). Compliance, identification, and internalization three processes of attitude change. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *2*(1), 51-60.

Kendon, A. (1967). Some functions of gaze-direction in social interaction. *Acta Psychologica*, *26*, 22-63.

Kenny, D. A. & Zaccaro, S. J. (1983). An estimate of variance due to traits in leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *68*(4), 678-685.

Kerr, S. & Jermier, J. M. (1978). Substitutes for leadership: Their meaning and measurement. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, *22*(3), 375-403.

Kerr, S., Schriesheim, C. A., Murphy, C. J. & Stogdill, R. M. (1974). Toward a contingency theory of leadership based upon the consideration and initiating structure literature. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, *12*(1), 62-82.

Kim, H. & Yukl, G. (1995). Relationships of managerial effectiveness and advancement to self-reported and subordinate-reported leadership behaviours from the multiple-linkage mode. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *6*(3), 361-377.

Kirkpatrick, S. A. & Locke, E. A. (1991). Leadership: do traits matter? *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *5*(2), 48-60.

Kirscht, J., Lodahl, T., Haire, M. & Smith, M. B. (1959). Some factors in the selection of leaders by members of small groups. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, *58*(3), 406-408.

Kleinke, C. L. (1986). Gaze and eye contact: a research review. *Psychological Bulletin*, *100*(1), 78.

Klenke, K. (2007). Authentic leadership: A self, leader, and spiritual identity perspective. *International Journal of Leadership Studies*, *3*(1), 68-97.

Klenke, K. (2016). *Qualitative research in the study of leadership*. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.

Knights, D. & Willmott, H. (1989). Power and subjectivity at work: From degradation to subjugation in social relations. *Sociology*, *23*(4), 535-558.

Kobe, L. M., Reiter-Palmon, R. & Rickers, J. D. (2001). Self-reported leadership experiences in relation to inventoried social and emotional intelligence. *Current Psychology, 20*(2), 154-163.

Koerber, A. & McMichael, L. (2008). Qualitative sampling methods: A primer for technical communicators. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication, 22*(4), 454-473.

Komives, S. R., Longerbeam, S. D., Mainella, F., Osteen, L., Owen, J. E. & Wagner, W. (2009). Leadership identity development: Challenges in applying a developmental model. *Journal of Leadership Education*, *8*(1), 11-47.

Korman, A. K. (1973). On the development of contingency theories of leadership: Some methodological considerations and a possible alternative. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *58*(3), 384.

Kouzes, J. M. & Posner, B. Z. (2003). *Credibility*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Kreiner, G. E., Hollensbe, E. C. & Sheep, M. L. (2006). Where is the “me” among the “we”? Identity work and the search for optimal balance. *Academy of Management Journal, 49*(5), 1031-1057.

Ladkin, D. & Taylor, S. S. (2010). Enacting the ‘true self’: Towards a theory of embodied authentic leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *21*(1), 64-74.

Lam, W., Huang, X. & Snape, E. D. (2007). Feedback-seeking behavior and leader-member exchange: Do supervisor-attributed motives matter? *Academy of Management Journal*, *50*(2), 348-363.

Larsson, M. (2016). Leadership in interaction. In J. Storey, J. Hartley, J. L. Denis, P. 't Hart, D. Ulrich (Eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Leadership* (pp.173-193). New York, NY: Routledge.

Larsson, M. & Lundholm, S. E. (2010). Leadership as work-embedded influence: A micro-discursive analysis of an everyday interaction in a bank. *Leadership, 6*(2), 159-184.

Larsson, M. & Lundholm, S. E. (2013). Talking work in a bank: A study of organizing properties of leadership in work interactions. *Human Relations*, *66*(8), 1101-1129.

Larsson, M. & Nielsen, M. F. (2017). The Risky Path to a Followership Identity: From Abstract Concept to Situated Reality. *International Journal of Business Communication*, *1-28.*

Lawler, E. J. (2003). Interaction, emotion, and collective identities. In P. J. Burke, T. J. Owens, R. Serpe & P. A. Thoits (Eds.), *Advances in identity theory and research* (pp. 135-149). Boston, MA: Springer.

Learmonth, M. & Morrell, K. (2017). Is critical leadership studies 'critical'?. *Leadership*, *13*(3), 257-271.

Lipman-Blumen, J. (1996). *Connective leadership: Managing in a changing world.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Lockwood, P. (2002). Could it happen to you? Predicting the impact of downward comparisons on the self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 82*(3), 343.

Lockwood, P., Jordan, C. H. & Kunda, Z. (2002). Motivation by positive or negative role models: regulatory focus determines who will best inspire us. *Journal of Personality and Social psychology*, *83*(4), 854.

Lockwood, P. & Kunda, Z. (1997). Superstars and me: Predicting the impact of role models on the self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *73*(1), 91.

Lord, R. G. (1977). Functional leadership behavior: Measurement and relation to social power and leadership perceptions. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 114-133.

Lord, R. G. & Alliger, G. M. (1985). A comparison of four information processing models of leadership and social perceptions. *Human Relations*, *38*(1), 47-65.

Lord, R. G. & Brown, D. J. (2001). Leadership, values, and subordinate self-concepts. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *12*(2), 133-152.

Lord, R. G. & Brown, D. J. (2004). Organization and management series. *Leadership processes and follower self-identity.* Mahwah, NJ*:* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Lord, R. G., Brown, D. J. & Freiberg, S. J. (1999). Understanding the dynamics of leadership: The role of follower self-concepts in the leader/follower relationship. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, *78*(3), 167-203.

Lord, R. G., De Vader, C. L. & Alliger, G. M. (1986). A meta-analysis of the relation between personality traits and leadership perceptions: An application of validity generalization procedures. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *71*(3), 402.

Lord, R. G. & Hall, R. J. (2005). Identity, deep structure and the development of leadership skill. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *16*(4), 591-615.

Lührmann, T. & Eberl, P. (2007). Leadership and identity construction: Reframing the leader-follower interaction from an identity theory perspective. *Leadership, 3*(1), 115-127.

Macbeth, D. (2001). On "reflexivity" in qualitative research: Two readings, and a third. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *7*(1), 35-68.

Malmgren, R. D., Ottino, J. M. & Amaral, L. A. N. (2010). The role of mentorship in protégé performance. *Nature*, *465*(7298), 622-626.

Mann, R. D. (1959). A review of the relationships between personality and performance in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, *56*(4), 241.

Manz, C. C. & Sims Jr, H. P. (1980). Self-management as a substitute for leadership: A social learning theory perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, *5*(3), 361-367.

Marchiondo, L. A., Myers, C. G. & Kopelman, S. (2015). The relational nature of leadership identity construction: How and when it influences perceived leadership and decision-making. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *26*(5), 892-908.

Markus, H. & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, *41*(9), 954.

Marshall, B., Cardon, P., Poddar, A. & Fontenot, R. (2013). Does sample size matter in qualitative research?: A review of qualitative interviews in IS research. *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, *54*(1), 11-22.

Marshall, M. N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family practice*, *13*(6), 522-526.

Martin, G. P., Currie, G. & Finn, R. (2008). Leadership, service reform, and public-service networks: the case of cancer-genetics pilots in the English NHS. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *19*(4), 769-794.

Mason, C., Griffin, M. & Parker, S. (2014). Transformational leadership development: Connecting psychological and behavioral change. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *35*(3), 174-194.

Maurer, T. J. & London, M. (2015). From individual contributor to leader: A role identity shift framework for leader development within innovative organizations. *Journal of Management*, *44*(4), 1426-1452.

Mauthner, N. S. & Doucet, A. (2003). Reflexive accounts and accounts of reflexivity in qualitative data analysis. *Sociology*, *37*(3), 413-431.

McAdams, D. P. (1999). Personal narratives and the life story. In L. Pervin & O. John (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (2nd ed., pp. 478-500). New York: Guilford Press.

McCall G, J. & Simmons, J. L. (1978). Identities and interactions. *New York, NY: The Free*.

McCall, G. J. (2003). The me and the not-me. In P. J. Burke, T. J. Owens, R. Serpe & P. A. Thoits (Eds.), *Advances in identity theory and research* (pp. 11-25). Boston, MA: Springer.

McCall Jr, M. W., Lombardo, M. M., Morrison, A. M. (1988). *The lessons of experience: How successful executives develop on the job.* Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.

McInnes, P. & Corlett, S. (2012). Conversational identity work in everyday interaction. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *28*(1), 27-38.

McIntosh, M. J. & Morse, J. M. (2015). Situating and constructing diversity in semi-structured interviews. *Global Qualitative Nursing Research*, 1(12).

Mehrabian, A. (2008). Communication without words. *Communication theory*, 193-200.

Meindl, J. R. (1995). The romance of leadership as a follower-centric theory: A social constructionist approach. *The leadership quarterly*, *6*(3), 329-341.

Meinecke, A. L., Lehmann-Willenbrock, N. & Kauffeld, S. (2017). What happens during annual appraisal interviews? How leader–follower interactions unfold and impact interview outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *102*(7), 1054.

Meister, A., Jehn, K. A. & Thatcher, S. M. (2014). Feeling misidentified: The consequences of internal identity asymmetries for individuals at work. *Academy of Management Review*, *39*(4), 488-512.

Meister, A., Sinclair, A. & Jehn, K. A. (2017). Identities under scrutiny: How women leaders navigate feeling misidentified at work. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *28*(5), 672-690.

Miner, J. B. (2005). *Organizational Behavior 1: Essential theories of motivation and leadership*, (*1)*, 232., Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe Inc.

Miscenko, D. & Day, D. (2016). Identity and identification at work. *Organizational Psychology Review, 6*(3), 215-247.

Miscenko, D., Guenter, H. & Day, D. V. (2017). Am I a leader? Examining leader identity development over time. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *28*(5), 605-620.

Mondada, L. (2006). Video recording as the reflexive preservation and configuration of phenomenal features for analysis. *Video analysis*, 51-68.

Mondada, L. (2007). Commentary: Transcript variations and the indexicality of transcribing practices. *Discourse Studies*, *9*(6), 809-821.

Mondada, L. (2008). Using video for a sequential and multimodal analysis of social interaction: Videotaping institutional telephone calls. In *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 9(3).

Moorosi, P. (2014). Constructing a leader's identity through a leadership development programme: An intersectional analysis. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *42*(6), 792-807.

Morgenroth, T., Ryan, M. K. & Peters, K. (2015). The motivational theory of role modeling: How role models influence role aspirants' goals. *Review of General Psychology*, *19*(4), 465-484.

Morgeson, F. P., DeRue, D. S. & Karam, E. P. (2010). Leadership in teams: A functional approach to understanding leadership structures and processes. *Journal of Management*, *36*(1), 5-39.

Morris, R. T. & Seeman, M. (1950). The problem of leadership: An interdisciplinary approach. *American Journal of Sociology*, *56*(2), 149-155.

Morrisette, S. & Schraeder, M. (2010). Leadership development approaches. *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, *32*(4), 32.

Morse, J. M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K. & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *1*(2), 13-22.

Muir, D. (2014). Mentoring and leader identity development: A case study. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *25*(3), 349-379.

Mumford, M. D., Antes, A. L., Caughron, J. J. & Friedrich, T. L. (2008). Charismatic, ideological, and pragmatic leadership: Multi-level influences on emergence and performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *19*(2), 144-160.

Mumford, M. D., Zaccaro, S. J., Harding, F. D., Jacobs, T. O. & Fleishman, E. A. (2000). Leadership skills for a changing world: Solving complex social problems. *The Leadership Quarterly, 11*(1), 11-35.

Murphy, S. E. & Ensher, E. A. (2008). A qualitative analysis of charismatic leadership in creative teams: The case of television directors. *The Leadership Quarterly, 19*(3), 335-352.

Myers, M. D. (2013). *Qualitative research in business and management*. London: Sage.

Niessen, C., Mäder, I., Stride, C. & Jimmieson, N. L. (2017). Thriving when exhausted: The role of perceived transformational leadership. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *103*, 41-51.

Northouse, P. (2009). *Leadership : Theory and practice* (5th ed.). London: Sage.

Northouse, P. (2019). *Leadership : Theory and practice* (Eighth edition: International student ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E. & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *16*(1), 1609406917733847.

Nyberg, D. & Sveningsson, S. (2014). Paradoxes of authentic leadership: Leader identity struggles. *Leadership, 10*(4), 437-455.

Öç, B. & Bashshur, M. R. (2013). Followership, leadership and social influence. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *24*(6), 919-934.

Offermann, L. R., Kennedy Jr, J. K. & Wirtz, P. W. (1994). Implicit leadership theories: Content, structure, and generalizability. *The Leadership Quarterly, 5*(1), 43-58.

Ouchi, W. G. (1979). A conceptual framework for the design of organizational control mechanisms. In C. Emmanuel, D. Otley & K. Merchant (Eds.), *Readings in Accounting for Management Control* (pp. 63-82). Boston, MA: Springer.

Oyserman, D., Elmore, K. & Smith, G. (2012). Self, self-concept, and identity. In M. Leary & J. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of Self and Identity* (2nd ed., pp. 69–104). New York, NY: Guilford.

Pandey, J. & Griffitt, W. (1974). Attraction and helping. *Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society*, *3*(2), 123-124.

Parker, S. H., Flin, R., Yule, S. & McKinley, A. (2014). Factors influencing surgeons' intraoperative leadership: Video analysis of unanticipated events in the operating room. *World Journal of Surgery, 38*(1), 4-10.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two Decades of Developments in Qualitative Inquiry. *Qualitative Social Work, 1*(3), 261-283.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). Qualitative research and methods: Integrating theory and practice.

Paunova, M. (2015). The emergence of individual and collective leadership in task groups: A matter of achievement and ascription. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *26*(6), 935-957.

Pedersen, J. S. & Dobbin, F. (2006). In search of identity and legitimation: Bridging organizational culture and neoinstitutionalism. *American Behavioral Scientist*, *49*(7), 897-907.

Peräkylä, A. (2004). Two traditions of interaction research. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 43*(1), 1-20. Retrieved from https://search-proquest-com.sheffield.idm.oclc.org/docview/60493486?accountid=13828

Pezé, S. (2013). Controlling Managers' 'Becoming': The Practice of Identity Regulation. In F.-X. de Vaujany & N. Mitev, *Materiality and Space: Organizations, Artefacts and Practices* (pp. 240-260). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Pfeiffer, U. J., Vogeley, K. & Schilbach, L. (2013). From gaze cueing to dual eye-tracking: novel approaches to investigate the neural correlates of gaze in social interaction. *Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews*, *37*(10), 2516-2528.

Pierro, A., Raven, B. H., Amato, C. & Bélanger, J. J. (2013). Bases of social power, leadership styles, and organizational commitment. *International Journal of Psychology*, *48*(6), 1122-1134.

Pink, S. (Ed.). (2012). *Advances in visual methodology*. London: Sage.

Pittaway, L., Rivera, O. & Murphy, A. (2005). Social identity and leadership in the Basque region: a study of leadership development programmes. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *11*(3), 17-29.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Moorman, R. H. & Fetter, R. (1990). Transformational leader behaviours and their effects on followers' trust in leader, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviours. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *1*(2), 107-142.

Ponterotto, J. G. (2006). Brief note on the origins, evolution, and meaning of the qualitative research concept “thick description”. *The Qualitative Report*, *11*(3), 538-549.

Potter III, E. H. & Fiedler, F. E. (1981). The utilization of staff member intelligence and experience under high and low stress. *Academy of Management Journal*, *24*(2), 361-376.

Pratt, M. G., Rockmann, K. W. & Kaufmann, J. B. (2006). Constructing professional identity: The role of work and identity learning cycles in the customization of identity among medical residents. *Academy of Management Journal*, *49*(2), 235-262.

Propst, D. B. & Koesler, R. A. (1998). Bandura goes outdoors: Role of self-efficacy in the outdoor leadership development process. *Leisure Sciences*, *20*(4), 319-344.

Punch, K. (1998). *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Putnam, L. L. & Fairhurst, G. T. (2001). Discourse analysis in organizations. In F. M. Jablin & L. L. Putnam (Eds.), *The new handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research and methods*, 78-136. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rabionet, S. E. (2011). How I learned to design and conduct semi-structured interviews: An ongoing and continuous journey. *The Qualitative Report*, *16*(2), 563.

Ramarajan, L. (2014). Past, present and future research on multiple identities: Toward an intrapersonal network approach. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *8*(1), 589-659.

Ranson, S., Hinings, B. & Greenwood, R. (1980). The Structuring of Organizational Structures. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 25*(1), 1-17.

Ratner, R. K. & Miller, D. T. (2001). The norm of self-interest and its effects on social action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *81*(1), 5.

Rauch, C. F. & Behling, O. (1984). Functionalism: Basis for an alternate approach to the study of leadership. In *Leaders and Managers: International Perspectives on Managerial Behavior and Leadership,* 45-62.

Ridgeway, C. (2001). Gender, status, and leadership. *The Journal of Social Issues, 57*(4), 637-655.

Riggio, R. & Tan, S. J. (2013). *Leader interpersonal and influence skills : The soft skills of leadership* (1st ed., Leadership: research and practice). New York, NY: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Ritter, B. A. & Yoder, J. D. (2004). Gender differences in leader emergence persist even for dominant women: An updated confirmation of role congruity theory. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *28*(3), 187-193.

Robinson-Walker, C. (2011). The Imposter Syndrome. *Nurse Leader, 9*(4), 12-13.

Rost, J. C. (1995). Leadership: A discussion about ethics. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 129-142.

Rowland, P. A., Ignacio, R. C. Jr & de Moya, M. (2016). Protocol Standards for Reporting Video Data in Academic Journals. *Academic Medicine, 91*(4), 485-490.

Ruhleder, K. & Jordan, B. (1997). Capturing complex, distributed activities: Video-based interaction analysis as a component of workplace ethnography. In A.S. Lee, J. Liebenau & J. I. DeGross (Eds.), *Information systems and qualitative research* (pp. 246-275). Boston, MA: Springer.

Ruhleder, K. & Jordan, B. (1999). Meaning-making across remote sites: How delays in transmission affect interaction. In S. Bødker, M. Kyng & K. Schmidt (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Sixth European Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work 12–16 September 1999, Copenhagen, Denmark* (pp. 411-429). Dordrecht: Springer.

Ruhleder, K. & Jordan, B. (2001). Co-constructing non-mutual realities: Delay-generated trouble in distributed interaction. *Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW), 10*(1), 113-138.

Sanchez-Cortes, D. S., Aran, O., Mast, M. & Gatica-Perez, D. (2010). Identifying emergent leadership in small groups using nonverbal communicative cues. *International Conference on Multimodal Interfaces and the Workshop on Machine Learning for Multimodal Interaction, ICMI-MLMI 2010*. Martigny, Switzerland: Idiap Research Institute.

Sanchez-Cortes, D., Aran, O., Jayagopi, D. B., Mast, M. S. & Gatica-Perez, D. (2013). Emergent leaders through looking and speaking: from audio-visual data to multimodal recognition. *Journal on Multimodal User Interfaces, 7*(1-2), 39-53.

Sanchez-Hucles, J. V. & Davis, D. D. (2010). Women and women of color in leadership: Complexity, identity, and intersectionality. *American Psychologist, 65*(3), 171.

Sandberg, J. (2001). The constructions of social constructionism. In S.-E. Sjöstrand, J. Sandberg & T. Tyrstrup (Eds.), *Invisible Management: The social construction of leadership.* London: Thomson Learning.

Schafer, J. A. (2010). Effective leaders and leadership in policing: traits, assessment, development, and expansion. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, *33*(4), 644-663.

Schein, E. H. (1971). The individual, the organization, and the career: A conceptual scheme. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *7*(4), 401-426.

Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schnurr, S. (2009). Constructing leader identities through teasing at work. *Journal of Pragmatics*, *41*(6), 1125-1138.

Schyns, B. (2006). *Implicit theory of leadership*. London: Sage.

Schyns, B. & Riggio, R. E. (2016). Implicit leadership theories. In A. Farazmand (Ed.), *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance* (1-7). Cham, Switzerland: Springer

Scribner, J., Sawyer, K. R., Watson, S. T. & Myers, V. L. (2007). Teacher Teams and Distributed Leadership: A Study of Group Discourse and Collaboration. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 43*(1), 67-100.

Seale, C. (1999). *The quality of qualitative research* (Introducing Qualitative Methods series). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sealy, R. H. & Singh, V. (2010). The importance of role models and demographic context for senior women's work identity development. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *12*(3), 284-300.

Selenko, E., Berkers, H., Carter, A., Woods, S., Otto, K., Urbach, T. & De Witte, H. (2018). On the dynamics of work identity in atypical employment: Setting out a research agenda. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology,* 1-11.

Shamir, B. (2011). Leadership takes time: Some implications of (not) taking time seriously in leadership research. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *22*(2), 307-315.

Shamir, B., House, R. J. & Arthur, M. B. (1993). The motivational effects of charismatic leadership: A self-concept based theory. *Organization Science*, *4*(4), 577-594.

Shapiro, E. C., Haseltine, F. P. & Rowe, M. P. (1978). Moving up: Role models, mentors, and the “Patron System”. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, *19*(3), 51-58.

Shaw, R. (2010). Embedding reflexivity within experiential qualitative psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *7*(3), 233-243.

Silverman, D. (1993). *Interpreting qualitative data*. London: Sage.

Sims, H. P. & Gioia, D. A. (1986). *The thinking organization*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Sims, R. R. & Brinkman, J. (2002). Leaders as moral role models: The case of John Gutfreund at Salomon Brothers. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *35*(4), 327-339.

Singh, V., Vinnicombe, S. & James, K. (2006). Constructing a professional identity: how young female managers use role models. *Women in Management Review*, *21*(1), 67-81.

Skeggs, B. (2002). Techniques for Telling the Reflexive Self. In: T. May (Ed.),. *Qualitative Research in Action*, pp. 349-375. London: Sage.

Sluss, D. M. & Ashforth, B. E. (2007). Relational identity and identification: Defining ourselves through work relationships. *Academy of Management Review*, *32*(1), 9-32.

Snow, D. A. & Anderson, L. (1987). Identity work among the homeless: The verbal construction and avowal of personal identities. *American Journal of Sociology*, *92*(6), 1336-1371.

Sogunro, O. (2002). Selecting a quantitative or qualitative research methodology: An experience. *Educational Research Quarterly*, *26*(1), 3.

Somech, A. (2005). Directive versus participative leadership: Two complementary approaches to managing school effectiveness. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *41*(5), 777-800.

Spillane, J. P. (2005). Distributed leadership. *The Educational Forum* 69(2), 143-150.

Stets, J. E. & Burke, P. J. (2000). Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 224-237.

Stinson, J. E. & Johnson, T. W. (1975). The path-goal theory of leadership: A partial test and suggested refinement. *Academy of Management Journal*, *18*(2), 242-252.

Stivers, T. & Sidnell, J. (2005). Introduction: multimodal interaction. *Semiotica*, *2005*(156), 1-20.

Stogdill, R. M. (1948). Personal factors associated with leadership: A survey of the literature. *The Journal of Psychology*, *25*(1), 35-71.

Stogdill, R. M. (1974). *Handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stryker, S. (1968). Identity salience and role performance: The relevance of symbolic interaction theory for family research. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 558-564.

Stryker, S. & Burke, P. J. (2000). The past, present, and future of an identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 284-297.

Suri, H. (2011). Purposeful sampling in qualitative research synthesis. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *11*(2), 63-75.

Sveningsson, S. & Alvesson, M. (2003). Managing managerial identities: Organizational fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle. *Human Relations*, *56*(10), 1163-1193.

Swann Jr, W. B., Johnson, R. E. & Bosson, J. K. (2009). Identity negotiation at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *29*, 81-109.

Sy, T. (2010). What do you think of followers? Examining the content, structure, and consequences of implicit followership theories. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *113*(2), 73-84.

Tajfel, H. (1978). Intergroup behavior: II: Group Perspectives. In H. Tajfel & C. Fraser (eds.), *Introducing Social Psychology: An analysis of individual reaction and response.* New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Thomas, G., Martin, R. & Riggio, R. (2013). Leading groups: Leadership as a group process. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations, 16*(1), 3-16.

Thomas, G., Martin, R., Epitropaki, O., Guillaume, Y. & Lee, A. (2013). Social cognition in leader–follower relationships: Applying insights from relationship science to understanding relationship-based approaches to leadership. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *34*(S1), S63-S81.

Tunçdoğan, A., Acar, O. A. & Stam, D. (2017). Individual differences as antecedents of leader behavior: Towards an understanding of multi-level outcomes. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *28*(1), 40-64.

Turner, J. (1978). Social categorization and social discrimination in the minimal group paradigm. In H. Tajfel (Ed.), *Differentiation between social groups: Studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations.* Oxford: Academic Press.

Uhl-Bien, M. (2006). Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *17*(6), 654-676.

Uhl-Bien, M. (2011). Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. In P. H. Werhane & M. Painter-Morland (Eds.), *Leadership, Gender, and Organization* (pp. 75-108). Dordrecht: Springer.

Uhl-Bien, M., Riggio, R. E., Lowe, K. B. & Carsten, M. K. (2014). Followership theory: A review and research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *25*(1), 83-104.

van den Hoonaard, W. C. (2008). Inter-and intracoder reliability. *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods,* (1st ed., pp. 445-446). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

van Knippenberg, D., van Knippenberg, B., De Cremer, D. & Hogg, M. A. (2004). Leadership, self, and identity: A review and research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *15*(6), 825-856.

Van Maanen, J. (2010). *Identity work and control in occupational communities.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vanderslice, V. J. (1988). Separating leadership from leaders: An assessment of the effect of leader and follower roles in organizations. *Human Relations*, *41*(9), 677-696.

Vecchio, R. P. (1987). Situational Leadership Theory: An examination of a prescriptive theory. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *72*(3), 444.

Virtaharju, J. J. & Liiri, T. P. (2017). The supervisors who became leaders: Leadership emergence via changing organizational practices. *Leadership*. 15(1), 103-122.

Watson, S. T. & Scribner, J. P. (2008). Beyond distributed leadership: Collaboration, interaction, and emergent reciprocal influence. *Journal of School Leadership, 17*, 443.

Watt, D. (2007). On Becoming a Qualitative Researcher: The Value of Reflexivity. *Qualitative Report*, *12*(1), 82-101.

Weick, K. E. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing* (Topics in social psychology series). Columbus, OH: McGraw-Hill Humanities.

Weick, K. E. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations* (vol. 3). London: Sage.

Weick, K. E., Sutcliffe, K. M. & Obstfeld, D. (2005). Organizing and the process of sensemaking. *Organization Science, 16*(4), 409-421.

Weinberg, D. (2014). *Contemporary social constructionism: Key themes*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Wherry Sr, R. J. & Bartlett, C. J. (1982). The control of bias in ratings: A theory of rating. *Personnel Psychology*, *35*(3), 521-551.

Whiting, L. S. (2008). Semi-structured interviews: guidance for novice researchers. *Nursing Standard*, *22*(23), 35.

Wooten, L. (2016). Creating an Organization of Leaders: A Positively Deviant Approach. *Progress in Pediatric Cardiology*, *42*, 41-43.

Wright, C. A. & Wright, S. D. (1987). The role of mentors in the career development of young professionals. *Family Relations*, *36*(2), 204-208.

Wright, L. L. (2008). Merits and Limitations of Distributed Leadership: Experiences and Understandings of School Principals. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, *69*, 1-33.

Xiao, Y., Seagull, F. J., Mackenzie, C. F. & Klein, K. (2004). Adaptive leadership in trauma resuscitation teams: a grounded theory approach to video analysis. *Cognition, Technology & Work*, *6*(3), 158-164.

Yeager, K. L. & Callahan, J. L. (2016). Learning to lead: Foundations of emerging leader identity development. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, *18*(3), 286-300.

Yılmaz, K. (2013). Comparison of quantitative and qualitative research traditions: Epistemological, theoretical, and methodological differences. *European Journal of Education*, *48*(2), 311-325.

Yukl, G. (1989). Managerial leadership: A review of theory and research. *Journal of Management*, *15*(2), 251-289.

Yukl, G. (1997). *Effective leadership behavior: A new taxonomy and model.* Paper presented at the Eastern Academy of Management International Conference, Dublin, Ireland.

Yukl, G. (2008). How leaders influence organizational effectiveness. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *19*(6), 708-722.

Yukl, G. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed: Global ed.). Harlow: Pearson.

Yukl, G., Gordon, A. & Taber, T. (2002). A hierarchical taxonomy of leadership behavior: Integrating a half century of behavior research. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, *9*(1), 15-32.

Zaccaro, S. J. (2007). Trait-based perspectives of leadership. *American Psychologist*, *62*(1), 6.

Zaccaro, S. J. (2012). Individual differences and leadership: Contributions to a third tipping point. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *23*(4), 718-728.

Zaccaro, S. J., Kemp, C. & Bader, P. (2004). Leader traits and attributes. *The Nature of Leadership*, *101*, 124.

Zheng, W. & Muir, D. (2015). Embracing leadership: a multi-faceted model of leader identity development. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *36*(6), 630-656.

Zoller, H. M. & Fairhurst, G. T. (2007). Resistance leadership: The overlooked potential in critical organization and leadership studies. *Human Relations*, *60*(9), 1331-1360.

Appendix A

Final interview questions for study two.

1. Can you tell me what your job title is?
2. How long have you been working here?
3. What do you do in your job role?
4. Tell me what you do in your job role in an average day or week?
5. Do you line manage or have any direct reports?
6. Do you think of yourself as a leader? If so, how? And if not, why do you think that is?
7. What does being a leader mean to you?
8. Can you tell me about an important experience that you have had that you feel has had an impact on how you think of yourself as a leader?
9. Can you tell me about any important relationships that you have or have had, which you feel have had an impact on how you think of yourself as a leader?
10. Looking back at your time in this job role and in others, do you feel that your sense of self as a leader has changed, or grown over time? If so in what way? If not, why do you think that is?
11. Do you think there is anyone in your organization who identifies you as a leader? If so, how did you conclude that this person/these people see you as a leader?
12. Do you feel that your job role allows you to act as a leader? If so, how? If not, why do you think that is?
13. Are there any other experiences, or relationships or anything else that you would like to share that you think would be relevant?

Appendix B

Example of how data extracts generated codes, and how codes generated sub-themes.

| **Interview extract** | **First order code** | **Sub-theme** | **Global theme** |
|---|---|---|---|
| "I had an amazing boss who hired me because he saw potential and creativity and he knew I was good with people…but he himself modelled for me utter discipline and calm". | Learning from leader role model. | Positive role models.<br><br>This sub-theme encompasses learning from positive role models, having role models to look to for leader identity information, learning about identity claims. | Leader identity catalyst.<br><br>This global theme encompasses all the themes that in some way positively impacted leader identity. |
| "I was mentored by my leader, he was quite high up in the organizational hierarchy, but I was not his direct report, but he did see something in me and he started mentoring me…so that individual had a huge impact on my overall leadership, my style, how I would approach things". | Having a leadership mentor. | Mentors.<br><br>This sub-theme represents the use of mentors for gaining access to leadership and identity claim opportunities, learning about leadership, and gaining support. | Leader identity catalyst. |
| "I have had some poor experiences of being managed and that has influenced how I want to manage others". | Negative experience with leader. | Negative role models<br><br>This sub-theme represents learning from negative leader role models who helped to teach what bad leadership looked like. | Leader identity catalyst |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| "I get feedback from my direct reports and I always get feedback on things we could be doing better in our relationship, so I think there are different opportunities for me to learn and improve how I lead". | Seeking leadership feedback. | Feedback.<br><br>This sub-theme is representative of individuals seeking feedback or receiving feedback from others regarding their leadership, leader identity or leader identity claims. | Leader identity catalyst. |
| "the piece of work sticks with me as the best leadership work I have done and really cemented my view of myself as a leader". | Opportunities to develop as a leader. | Crystallizing event.<br><br>This sub-theme encompasses the identity reinforcing or identity informative events that aid in identity construction. | Leader identity catalyst. |
| "I have really sort of been blocked in my leadership aspirations in my current organization, and that was important to me…I am not in an organizational hierarchy position in terms of what matters most to me". | Lack of recognition of leadership. | Identity rejection.<br><br>This sub-theme represents the perception that others are actively working against one's leader identity construction process and do not recognize the individual as a leader. | Leader identity barrier.<br><br>This global theme encompasses all the themes that in some way negatively impacted leader identity. |
| "I don't see myself as a leader…some people at school are leaders, I was very much a follower, I have always seen myself as a follower". | Mismatch between self and leader identity. | Identity uncertainty.<br><br>This sub-theme regards perceptions that one's sense of self as a leader is variable. | Leader identity barrier |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| “I think it is the job role, some roles are just set up like that, we have some front facing staff who follow really rigid structures and scripts and the system is set up like that, it is fairly robotic, and I do not think that gives them the space and individuality they need to be a good leader”. | Perception that individuals have limited control over certain aspects of the leader identity construction process and that their organization has removed their agency. | Organizational control.<br><br>This sub-theme encompasses perceptions around the role of the organization in controlling the leader identity construction process. Although certain aspects of control might be perceived positively, this does not remove the fact that control remains. | Leader identity barrier. |

Appendix C

Informed consent sheet for the video study (study one).

The University Of Sheffield.

Title of Research Project: Making Ideas Happen: Teams in Action

Name of Researcher: Evelyn Lanka

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet provided to me explaining the research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

3. I agree to allow video and audio recordings of me to be made and understand that these recordings will only be seen/heard by the researcher and will not be used for any other purposes other than those stated on the participant information sheet.

4. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

5. I agree to take part in the above research project.

If you agree to all of the above statements, please initial the box

Appendix D

Informed consent sheet for the interview study (study two).

The University Of Sheffield.

**Title of project: Leadership Interview**

**Researcher's name and contact information:**
**Evelyn Lanka elanka1@sheffield.ac.uk**

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet provided to me explaining the research project, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw
at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline.

3. I agree to be interviewed by the researcher. I understand that I have the right for my interview to remain anonymous. I understand what the intended use of the interview data is and how my responses will be used.

4. I agree to allow **audio** recordings of me to be made and understand how these recordings will be used. I also understand that these recordings will not be used for any other purposes other than those stated on the participant information sheet.

5. I agree for the data collected from me to be used in future research.

6. I agree to take part in this research project.

If you agree to all of the above statements, please sign your name below.

Participant:
Please sign and date here:
Signature:________________________________________Today's Date:____________________

Researcher:
Please sign and date here:
Signature:________________________________________
Today's Date:____________________

Appendix E

Participant information sheet for study one.

The University Of Sheffield.

**Participant Information:** Making Ideas Happen: Teams in Action

Dear Participant,

My name is Evelyn Lanka and I am a doctoral researcher in the management school here at the University of Sheffield. As part of my PhD dissertation, I am conducting a pilot study and I would like to request your participation. This is an opportunity to participate in cutting edge research here at the University of Sheffield. This study is the first of its kind, and your participation means that you will be contributing to new and exciting research. If this sounds interesting to you, please continue reading to learn more about how you can contribute.

**Study Details**: This study is a pilot study designed to gain a better understanding of how teams work. This portion of the study involves the recording of teams in action. Participating teams of students will be audio and video recorded during the team work component of the module. Teams will be seated around a table with audio and video recording devices placed in several locations in order to capture the speech and behaviours of the teams as they work. These audio and video recordings will be a vital component to helping us better understand some aspects of group behaviour.

**What will happen:** Should you choose to participate; your group will be recorded during every group work portion of the weekly module. The exact content of your group project or details will not be used to create the list. Furthermore, the recordings will have no impact on your module marks or assessments.

**Time Commitment**: The recordings will be made only during the group work portion of the weekly module. The recordings will take place each week starting on week two and end on week ten. You will not be asked to make any changes to your group or personal behaviours, nor will you be asked to make any changes to your project as a result of participating in this study. All you will need to do is agree to be recorded and allow the researcher to do the rest.

**Participants' Rights:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, no questions asked. Should you choose to withdraw from the study, your data will not be used in any way. You have the right to ask questions about the study at any time.
**Benefits and Risks:** There is minimal risk associated with your participation in this study. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, with no questions asked. Participating in this study will give you the opportunity to contribute to the exciting research taking place here at the University of Sheffield. Your contribution may even lead to new discoveries about human behaviour.
**Confidentiality / Anonymity:** The video and audio recordings of your group will be kept strictly confidential. The video and audio recordings will not be seen or heard by anyone other than members of the research team and will not be used for any other purpose other than for academic research. Should your group wish to pause or end the recordings during a session, please let the researcher know and she will be happy to turn off or remove the recording devices.
If you would like to contact the researcher regarding this study, you may email me at elanka1@sheffield.ac.uk.
If you experience any distress as a result of your participation in this study, please contact student counselling services at any time by calling them on 0114 222 4134, or emailing them at UCS@sheffield.ac.uk.

Appendix F

Participant information sheet for study two.

The University Of Sheffield.

**Participant Information Sheet**

Dear Participant,

My name is Evelyn Lanka and I am a doctoral researcher in the management school at the University of Sheffield located in Sheffield, UK. As part of my PhD dissertation, I am conducting a study and I would like to request your participation. This study has received ethical approval through the University of Sheffield.

**Study Details**: This study is designed to gain a better understanding of the role of leaders and followers in organizations. The study involves one on one interviews between the researcher and participants. During the interview, the researcher will ask questions relating to your role in your organization and your personal thoughts and perceptions regarding your role. You will also be asked questions about previous experiences in your role as well as relationships with other organizational members. Your responses to the interview questions will be used to understand individual thoughts and perceptions of leadership in order to better understand specific roles and relationships in organizations which contribute to leadership. The interviews will be audio recorded.

**What will happen during the study:** Should you choose to participate in the study, you will be interviewed in person by the researcher and asked questions about your organizational role and your thoughts regarding this. You will **not** be asked questions regarding your personal life. You will only be asked questions regarding and related to your organization and your role in it.

**Time Commitment**: Interviews should last around 45-60 min each on average. Only one interview per participant will be needed.

**Participants' Rights:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, no questions asked. Should you choose to withdraw from the study, your data will not be used in any way. You have the right to ask questions about the study at any time. You have the right not to answer any questions you do not wish to answer during the interview. You also have the right to end the interview at any time.

**Benefits and Risks:** There is minimal risk associated with your participation in this study. However, if any of the questions asked during the interview cause your distress or make you feel uncomfortable, you are encouraged to ask the interviewer to move on to the next topic. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, with no questions asked. Participating in this study will give you the opportunity to contribute to the exciting research taking place at the University of Sheffield.

**Confidentiality / Anonymity:** The audio recordings and any notes made by the researcher during the interview will be kept strictly confidential. The interviews will not be heard by anyone other than members of the research team, and will not be used for any other purpose other than for academic research. Furthermore, should you wish for your interview to remain anonymous, please let the researcher know and she will be happy to accommodate this.

If you would like to contact the researcher regarding this study, you may email me at elanka1@sheffield.ac.uk.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding how this study was conducted, please feel free to contact my PhD supervisor Dr. Anna Topakas, a.topakas@sheffield.ac.uk

Appendix G

Example of email body for advertising study two.

Becoming a Leader: a study on leadership and identity

My name is Evelyn Lanka and I am a doctoral researcher in the management school at the University of Sheffield. As part of my PhD research, I am conducting a study and I would like to request your participation. This research has received ethical approval through the University of Sheffield.

I am currently researching leadership within organizations, in order to gain a better understanding of how individuals come to see themselves and be seen as leaders. The study involves one on one interviews between the researcher and the participants. During the interview, the researcher will ask questions related to, but not limited to:

- Your job role
- Your personal thoughts
- Relationships
- Experiences

Your responses to the interview questions will be used to understand your individual thoughts, experiences, relationships and perceptions of leadership and how these might contribute to the construction of a leader identity. Should you choose to participate in the study.:

- You will be interviewed by me at a convenient location and time of your choosing or over the phone.
- All of your responses will be kept anonymous.
- The interview should last around 30-45 mins on average.

If you would like to participate or ask further questions, please feel free to contact me via my university email (elanka1@sheffield.ac.uk). I thank you for your time and I look forward to discussing my research with you soon.

# Appendix H

## Debriefing sheet for study one.

Thank you for your participation in my study. Below you will find information regarding the study and how your responses and information will be used. Should you have questions about the study or your participation in it, please feel free to email me any questions you may have.

**What is the purpose of this research?**

The purpose of this research is to understand how individuals in leaderless groups organize themselves into leader and follower roles. Specifically, I am interested in understanding what behaviours people display that may signal to others in a group that they wish to take on a leader or follower role. Similarly, I am also interested in understanding what behaviours individuals display which may indicate support (or lack of support) for an emerging leader or follower. We still do not have a clear understanding of the interpersonal and relational behaviours that enable individuals to take on the roles necessary for leadership and followership in groups to take place. My research is attempting to address this.

**The Audio and Video Recordings**: the recordings of your team will be used to create a coding scheme which will be used for the documentation of the claiming and granting of leader and follower identities. The video recordings will be reviewed and specific behaviours and actions will be counted and recorded in order to create a list of behaviours. The audio recordings will be reviewed and specific words or phrases will be counted and recorded in order to create a list of words or phrases which can be used to document claims and grants of identities. All video and audio recordings will be kept in a secure location and will only be seen and heard by me, and will be destroyed on or before October 1, 2019.

**The Surveys**: Some of you may have completed a survey online at the start of the module. The purpose of the survey was to assess individual differences in motivation to lead, and schemas relating to leaders and followers. Schemas are mental short cuts people use to categorize information and may play a role in how people think of leaders and followers. The surveys will not be used for data collection purposes due to the low number of responses. If you did complete a survey, your responses will not be used for any studies or future research and will not be seen or given to anyone. They will be kept in a secure location and will be destroyed on or before October 1, 2019.

Should you have any questions about your participation in this study, please contact Lyn Lanka at the following email address (elanka1@sheffield.ac.uk).

If you experience any distress as a result of your participation in this study, please contact student counselling services at any time by calling them on 0114 222 4134, or emailing them at UCS@sheffield.ac.uk.

Thanks again for your participation.

Appendix I

Debriefing sheet for study two.

Thank you for your participation in my study. Below you will find information regarding the study and how your responses and information will be used. Should you have questions about the study or your participation in it, please feel free to ask me any questions you may have.

**What is the purpose of this research?**

The purpose of this research is to understand how individuals in organizations construct identities as leaders. Specifically, I am interested in understanding what people do that leads them to take on a leader identity, and the role that experiences and relationships may have in the identity construction process. We still do not have a complete understanding of the interpersonal and relational aspects of identity construction. My research is attempting to address this.

**The Interviews**: The responses to the interview questions will be analysed in order to understand the different ways individuals construct their identity as a leader. All interview recordings will be kept in a secure location and will only be seen and heard by me, the researcher. The interview data will be used for academic research only.

Should you have any questions about your participation in this study, please contact Evelyn Lanka at the following email address (elanka1@sheffield.ac.uk).

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding how this study was conducted, please feel free to contact my PhD Supervisor Dr. Anna Topakas, a.topakas@sheffield.ac.uk

Thanks again for your participation.

# Appendix J

Meaning of transcription symbols for data extracts.

| Transcription symbol | Meaning |
|---|---|
| 1. … | Short pause in speech |
| 2. [ ] | Word/s in brackets are the best guess of what was said or an indication that speech was inaudible |
| 3. ( ) | Additional detail added for context |

Appendix K

Participant pseudonyms and industries

| **Participant name** | **Industry and organizational position** |
|---|---|
| Jacklyn | Higher Education, Executive position |
| Ajay | Higher Education, Mid-level management |
| Martha | Higher Education, Mid-level management |
| Coco | Higher Education, Mid-level management |
| Amy | Consulting Firm, Mid-level management |
| Rowan | Charity, Executive position |
| Calvin | NHS, Mid-level management |
| Kanan | IT, Executive position |
| Rosie | Logistics Firm, Mid-level management |
| Debbie | Logistics Firm, Mid-level management |
| Logan | Logistics Firm, Mid-level management |
| Rohit | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Shelly | Social work, Executive position |
| Bret | IT, Mid-level management |
| Melody | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Steven | UK Government, Non-managerial |
| Margie | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Veronica | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Emily | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Matthew | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Patty | UK Government, Upper-level management |
| Binoy | IT, Executive position |
| James | UK Government, Non-managerial |
| Alistair | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Job | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Aditya | IT, Mid-level management |

| | |
|---|---|
| Poppy | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Olivia | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Jessica | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Parker | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Lily | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Claire | UK Government, Upper-level management |
| Cheryl | UK Government, Upper-level management |
| Teresa | Higher Education, Executive position |
| Kollin | Pharmaceutical Company, Executive position |
| Silvia | Higher Education, Executive position |
| Elizabeth | UK Government, Mid-level management |
| Lilia | Higher Education, Non-managerial |
| Dan | Higher Education, Executive position |
| Peter | Higher Education, Mid-level management |
| Patrick | NHS, Upper-level management |
| Jim | Higher Education, Upper-level management |
| Sadie | Higher Education, Mid-level management |
| Tim | Higher Education, Mid-level management |
| Maddie | Higher Education, Mid-level management |
| Robert | NHS, Upper-level management |
| Martin | NHS, Upper-level management |
| Ava | Local Government, Mid-level management |
| Patricia | Higher Education, Mid-level management |
| Louis | Higher Education, Mid-level management |

Appendix L

Participants by industry and organizational position

| Industry | Number of participants |
|---|---|
| Charity administration | 1 |
| Social work | 1 |
| UK government | 25 |
| Information technology | 5 |
| City government | 1 |
| Consulting | 1 |
| Organizational management/industry | 2 |
| Higher education faculty | 4 |
| Higher education administration | 7 |
| National Health Service | 3 |

| Organizational position | Number of participants |
|---|---|
| Executive position (e.g. dean, vice president, etc.) | 9 |
| Mid to upper level managerial position (e.g. manager, head consultant, etc.) | 38 |
| Non-managerial position (e.g. executive assistant) | 3 |