Maturing Leadership

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Maturing Leadership: How Adult Development Impacts Leadership

EDITED BY

JONATHAN REAMS

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Foreword

This is a book that deserves to be widely read by people interested in leadership education, research, and practice. Understanding leadership requires an understanding of those engaged in leadership, most of whom are adults. From this perspective, it seems obvious that having a better understanding of adult development could provide insights into leadership performance. This applies not only to positive leadership performance but also to understand factors contributing to negative aspects such as toxic leadership, abusive leadership, and leader derailment that may have its origins in adult development processes.

It is also the case that many developing leaders are embedded in ongoing adult development. The point is that for the most part developing leaders are also developing adults. We cannot fully understand the former without some insights into the latter. The need for a better understanding of adult development can potentially help provide better insights into how to design and deliver more effective leader development interventions and other related initiatives.

These are just a couple of reasons why the present edited volume is especially welcomed and useful. Leadership is enacted as part of a system that includes someone exercising leadership, others supporting that leadership, and the interpersonal context in which this is occurring. Adult development theory and research can help shed light on each of these three areas: the leader, those participating in leadership as followers, and the context in which shared work is happening. More fully considering various aspects of adult development processes has the potential of bringing light to each of these facets of leadership and its development that has been for the most part overlooked.

I encourage you to delve deeply into the various perspectives on adult development and leadership contained in this volume. Doing so should help promote new understandings of this age-old conundrum called leadership. It is also hoped that this is not the end of your journey in the integration of adult development and leadership, but the mere beginnings of a movement to understand the myriad ways in which developing as an adult can facilitate or impede effective leadership and its development.

David V. Day
August 2019
Professor of Psychology, Academic Director
of the Kravis Leadership Institute,
Steven L. Eggert '82 P'15 Professor of Leadership
and George R. Roberts Fellow
Kravis Leadership Institute | Claremont McKenna College,
Claremont, CA, USA

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Introduction

Jonathan Reams

For those of you picking up this anthology, I can imagine a number of anticipations and expectations that are both explicit and implicit. These lead me to open with a few questions to hold in mind and orient your frame of reference as you embark on encountering this book.

What has been your experience of leadership? How has that experience informed your perception of it? How have various encounters with theories of leadership helped you understand (or confuse) these experiences?

What is implied in the idea of maturity for you? Does it relate to ideas of growth and even development? Is there a normative aspect in it, a sense of something inherently good about maturing? Do you have a sense of longing to experience yourself as acting more mature in some situations?

How do these two constructs, leadership and maturity connect (or not) for you?

I recognize that in my case, there has been a long history of relating these two words and a dynamically evolving relationship between them. From childhood experiences of my father as a leader in different settings that provided early modeling and implicit perceptions, through my encounters with leadership in various life contexts, into my formal graduate studies of leadership and linking those with parallel studies of developmental theory, there has been an ongoing process of maturing my conception (and hopefully practice) of leadership. That journey has allowed me to connect with scholars who research and widen the horizons of understanding of how leadership matures. It has also led me to practitioners who deploy both implicit and explicit understandings of leadership and how to develop it. I have also been blessed with opportunities to engage in both worlds, as an academic and practitioner or "pracademic."

This intersection has fueled a series of action research engagements and the presentation of one of these at a conference led to interest from a publisher in allowing me to put together an anthology on the intersection of adult development and leadership. The case I presented was that while there has been a significant amount of research over the past years linking these, the field had not yet gained sufficient credibility, nor clarity, to make what I perceived as the appropriate degree of inroads into contributing to the broader understanding of leadership overall. While I was not ready to really take this on at that time, eventually the opportunity ripened and the current anthology is a result of the evolving process of connecting with an ever widening network of researchers, practitioners and pracademics for the purpose of bringing together a robust set

of contributions that can serve to showcase the depth and breadth of contribution this field can make to the practice of leadership development.

Recently, I was invited to participate in an event in Stockholm, *Dare to Develop*. This gathering of coaches and consultants using adult development with leaders and business HR leaders implementing these ideas was linked to initiating a manifesto. The organizers published an editorial in the main Swedish newspaper calling for adult development to receive the same kind of societal attention and support as gender equality and sustainability. The premise put forward was that the scope of societal issues faced today requires an explicit investment in adult development (https://www.dn.se/debatt/societal-challenges-require-investments-in-adult-development/). This is just one example of how the ideas behind adult development are breaking through thresholds of public awareness and making claims related to the need for a specific kind of maturity of leadership.

As this is happening, I have felt, along with the contributing authors of this volume, that there is a need to let people know that there is more to adult development than a simple model of stair step progression through clear, well-defined stages. While there are some basic principles involved that can be seen as a red thread through the various theories, research and practices, anyone presented with a simplistic model of adult development will easily poke holes in what is presented, intuitively knowing that reality is more complex, messier and more dynamic.

To meet this need, in this anthology, I have attempted to bring together a diverse range of research and practice to showcase, inform and inspire what is going on at the intersection of leadership and adult development as an emerging field. While there is a concentration of certain theoretical models of adult development (primarily the ego development theories), there is also a broader range of theoretical lineages presented here. As well, I have been able to engage authors who have inquired deeply into how these theories impact different facets of leadership and its development.

I imagine at least two main audiences for this book. One is a community of researchers, practitioners and others already familiar with the ideas presented here. Thus, many of you reading this book will likely already have a significant degree of familiarity with one, some or many theories of adult development, leadership and even how they come together. My hope is that the diversity of chapters here broadens your horizons and brings a greater depth of understanding. The degree of rigor in the research and applications presented here might serve as inspiration, clarification or insight into the finer grained details at the edges of our collective understanding of this phenomenon.

My hope is that there is also another audience, one with less familiarity with the models of adult development, possibly coming more from familiarity with the field of leadership studies. Here the hope is to make a robust case that there is research and applications that demonstrate the importance of these adult developmental theories to leadership. While there is no simple magic wand to enable better leadership, there are aspects of human growth and development that can have a higher leverage impact on the quality and effectiveness of leadership, with all the consequences coming from that. It is our aim to show that the field of adult development can make such a high leverage contribution to leadership.

Turning to the book in front of you, as a reader you will notice a degree of overlap or appearances of repetition in some areas, where basic descriptions of some common theories are described by different authors as part of the context for their work. How adult development is described will have varying framings, layers of granularity, focal aspects, implicit contextualization and more. I have encouraged this, based on my own experience that ongoing repetition of exposure, articulation and reflection, coupled with the nuance that the subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) differences in how the theories are presented, has led to a much richer, deeper and applicable understanding of development as a whole. The various combinations of linkages, contexts and descriptions, taken together, only begin to do more justice to the infinite complexity, mystery and even sacredness that the maturing of the human condition truly offers. Thus, I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to take a much more succinct journey than I have through the rich sets of discourse, research and reflection on adult development as it applies to leadership.

This rich diversity of theories, how they are contextualized, presented and related in this book is intentional. Adult development is not a unified field of study, with one clear way of understanding the phenomenon. The history of the field goes back 125 years, to James Mark Baldwin's seminal work in the early days of psychology and has been evolving into a rich and diverse tapestry of models, methods and frameworks to understand the core phenomenon – that while we have an almost infinite variety of paths in our growth as human beings, we can look at, measure and support this growth through many different lenses. Each of these lenses offers insight into different facets of this phenomenon. Some have specific domains of focus (e.g., moral development, ego development, cognitive, reflective, etc.) while others attempt to focus on underlying or core structures and patterns independent of content and context.

In a similar vein, leadership and its study has undergone a developmental trajectory, going from simple concepts like the great man approach, theories focused on traits and styles of individual leaders, then widening the horizon to consider group dynamics, situational contexts, leader follower relations, with the emergence of theories like servant leadership, transformational leadership and a host of other models. Today, we see models that attempt to integrate as comprehensive an array of the above factors as possible, plus newly emerging facets of how we conceptualize human experience, into our understanding of what leadership is and how to develop it.

A further word of framing. This anthology delves deeply into some of the current edges of our understandings of adult development. Five of the chapters are based on doctoral dissertations. Others aim to synthesize years of action research. Some delve more extensively into specific topics (coaching, trust and education) and a couple are more application focused. Many address multiple facets of action research, theory, practice and reflection.

Thus, there is not simple, clear answer to the topic of this book. Rather, it invites readers into a maze, where the repeated navigation of the territory, crossing and re-crossing it in ways that move from varying degrees of confusion to a possible set of connections and links to enable a much more robust picture of leadership and adult development.

It is not my place as editor of this anthology to sort out and provide a definitive description of either adult development or leadership theory. Invoking notions of adult development itself, the notion that we all construct meaning in ways that can evolve, or mature over time, means that how we encounter or understand human evolution will be filtered by the perspectives we have been enculturated into, the theories we have been exposed to, how early modeling provided implicit knowledge, and so on. This is what the opening questions in this introduction aim to activate in you as a reader. Thus, the diversity of narratives, on both a broad theoretical level and even in some of the descriptions of details, naturally arise as part of the process of emerging a greater social consensus on something that is more abstract.

It is my hope as editor that you will find something of value in this collection. I know that the encounter with each chapter has enriched my understanding. I come away from this process humbler than before, seeing the depth of knowledge, experience and craft of articulation that has come from each author.

Overview of the Chapters

Marianne Roux begins this anthology with a section of her doctoral work, where she outlines her development of an integrative model of leadership, Leadership 4.0. This extensive study takes an array of past and current models of leadership, combined with research into leader insights into current needs and practices, and describes a rich and robust model for understanding leadership in a manner adequate to twenty-first century challenges.

Myself, Jonathan Reams, along with my colleagues, Camilla Fikse and Ottar Ness, present a combination of applying many of Roux's elements of leadership 4.0 into a leadership laboratory. This chapter describes the context for experimenting with a rich set of ideas, tools and methods, how this influenced the design of the program as well as its implementation. Focus group research during and after the program is presented to give a rich picture of the impact this approach had on participants, allowing for reflections on the value of a developmentally informed approach to leadership development.

Chuck J. Palus, John B. McGuire, Sarah Stawiski and William R. Torbert from the Center for Creative Leadership, drawn on decades of action research into how vertical development can move beyond talk about ideas and models, and addresses limitations encountered along their journey of application in order to help leaders navigate the territory. They introduce a set of polarities in theory and practice to help readers in their journey, explore how these affect the relationship between stages of development and states we experience, and look at cultural aspects and describe specific tools they have developed and tested to enable leadership to grow.

David McCallum takes us on a journey to delve into developmental diversity, specifically, how do conditions that stress us create regression in our level of performance and how does our developmental level of maturity affect our range of skills for coping and recovering? His doctoral research examined a developmentally diverse set of group dynamic participants and focused on situations where

they experienced "fallback," or regression. He found that this affects all of us, that coping capacity evolves as we mature, and that the environment plays a significant role in all of this.

Harriette Thurber Rasmussen and Mohammed Raei take the impact of adult development and explore the relationship between it and trust. Drawing on research from the field of education on the phenomenon of trust, they examine how leaders can work with creating holding environments that consider the differing developmental needs to enable and even accelerate building trust. They provide us with a description of the glue of relational trust, as well as its drivers.

Penny Potter explores how the process of becoming a coach can facilitate adult development. There are many parallels with leadership development, and she reports on her doctoral research involving a six-month mixed methods study examining the typical patterns of regression when undertaking new skill acquisition and the micro-developmental moves that are the focus on her research. These moves involve transformative learning and the use of a developmental assessment.

Nancy C. Wallis delves into the relational process of leadership. Utilizing Leader Member Exchange, individualized leadership, transformational leadership and adult cognitive development theories, she explores how strong dyadic leadership relationships can support the transformation of leaders along cognitive and spiritual lines of development. She draws on a model of spiritual development to bring in how bridging the head and heart through spiritual formation as a developmental journey can contribute to expanding the population of wise leaders.

Abigail Lynam, Geoff Fitch, and Terri O'Fallon present ongoing work from 15 years of experience with Pacific Integral's Generating Transformative Change leadership development program. The chapter emphasizes lessons learned supporting a specific developmental transition they commonly encounter, going from strategist to construct aware and the implications this has for leadership capacities and behaviors. As a part of this, they present Terri O'Fallon's STAGES model of adult development and the results of longitudinal research on participants' development.

Aidan P. Harney presents his doctoral research into the differences between conventional and postconventional leaders' conative capability. Conation is described as including the motivation behind goal setting, the will-power to persist and the cognizance to reflect on and learn from these processes. Profound differences are seen between levels of leaders in terms of their conative capability, made up of conative intelligence and conative complexity. Implications and recommendations for practice in leader development programs are also described.

Iva Vurdelja presents her doctoral research on applying dialectical thinking to leading change initiatives. Her chapter provides a rich background informing us about the field of dialectical thinking and how it relates to our understanding of adult development, describing its evolution and refinements. She gives us a fine-grained understanding of the thought form tools leaders use in sponsoring successful change initiatives and describes her subsequent refinements of the method that can be used for practical applications in supporting leadership development.

George F. Sharp and Joseph J. Marchetti describe their journey of creating a leadership development program in the context of a doctoral degree program.

The challenge of integrating more traditional horizontal aspects of leadership development with vertical development went well beyond typical corporate program designs. They wrestled with applying the developmental continuum not only in terms of the what of leadership development, but also the how, as it applied to pedagogy, through andragogy and into heutagogy. Their chapter provides specific illustrations of how adult development principles can be applied in higher education.

Finally, Jimmy Parker provides some background for and discussion of his work in applying developmental ideas behind an executive leadership program at The Home Depot. He explores a rich set of ideas behind the design of this program, a brief description of the journey of creating it, some details of how it operates, and the impact it has been having. This provides an example of how the ideas behind adult development can be applied in an elegantly simple way to make a real impact on leaders' effectiveness.

Chapter 1

Leadership 4.0

Marianne Roux

Introduction

Digitalization is often seen as the most essential factor in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (World Economic Forum, 2016) and is powerful enough to have implications on current and future leadership practices. A study by Artley (2018) also warns that we continue to underestimate the scale and speed of change leaders have to navigate and lead in in an integrated, positive, human and impactful way in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Schwab, 2016). For the purpose of this chapter, I will talk about new world of work as 4.0 (Kreutzer, Neugebauer, & Pattloch, 2018; Lund, Manyika, & Ramaswamy, 2012) and about the concept of leadership for this as Leadership 4.0 (Kelly, 2019).

Leadership scholars have certainly noted this significant increase in the challenges leaders face in the new world of work 4.0 (Gratton, 2010, 2011; Lund et al., 2012). The question is whether our thinking as scholars and practitioners have significantly evolved to ensure we present models and practices of leadership that truly address the complexity leaders face. It seems not.

The Confédération Européenne des Cadres (CEC) Report (2017) notes that despite of, or even partly due to a growing leadership industry with an estimated $130–$356 billion spent per year on leadership development alone, there seems to be a profound conceptual confusion about what leadership and leadership development is about. According to a Harvard Business School survey, only 19% of business-line managers believe the programs they are taking are relevant to the issues they face.

Bormann and Rowold (2018) also call out the continued increase in new leadership models and approaches and suggest in their paper that "newly" designed constructs are too similar to those that already exist and consequently lack discriminant validity. Veldsman and Johnson (2016) describe the dilemma we find ourselves in as such:

> Leadership is in an overheating crucible of a reframed world in the throes of fundamental and radical transformation. The search is on for better and different leadership. Without any doubt leadership is the critical strategic capability of nations, communities and

organisations, making them sustainably future-fit. To the best of our knowledge, no overall, systemic, integrated and holistic view of leadership exists, and few organisations adopt a systemic, integrated approach to leadership. (pp. 1 and 2)

I propose that, instead of further proliferation and confusion, time is better spent integrating models and discerning appropriateness of concepts for the new context leaders lead in, otherwise we will suffer further from conceptual redundancy and fragmented approaches. This chapter therefore considers the changing nature of organizations, work and leadership in the new world of work (4.0). It calls out the disparity in leadership theories and analyzes recent attempts to develop integrated and holistic leadership models. In reviewing these, we then attempt to create an updated and holistic model of leadership in the new world of work or what we call Leadership 4.0 (Kelly, 2019).

Research Questions and Methodology

In order to make sense of the new way of leadership required in the 4.0 context, we will work through three main research questions. I have researched and I will explain how leadership has evolved alongside the evolution of organizations and work. I will then identify some criticisms of the suitability and effectiveness of previous and current approaches as it is applied in the 4.0 context and look for emerging themes and solutions in the new context of 4.0. Finally, I will propose an integrated and updated model of Leadership 4.0 to answer some of the criticisms of redundancy and proliferation and bring some of the newer concepts into the mainstream discussion about leadership.

Research Questions

Q1. How has leadership evolved in the context of the evolution of organizations and work, what are the major themes relating to the context of the time/era they were developed and used in and what are criticisms or research outcomes of the application of these earlier concepts of leadership against the requirements of the new world of work 4.0?

Q2. What are the emerging themes of research and practice of leadership in the new world of work 4.0 and how do these research and practice themes help us to assess and develop Leadership 4.0?

Q3. What would an updated and integrated model of leadership look like that takes into account the complexity of the environment leaders lead in and how can current attempts to be enhanced with new concepts or research to update these models to a Leadership 4.0 model of leadership?

Methodology

Broadly, I have integrated practice in the field with academic insights to build up the model presented here. To do this, I used thematic analysis and word clouds to