

THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

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THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

This book is dedicated to Dr Gamaliel Perruci. His legacy lives in his students, family and friends, and his wonderfully insightful books, like this one. Gama was a courageous and kind leader, and we are fortunate to have had him in our lives. Gama's mantra was "give back the gift." And he certainly did through his service as board chair for the International Leadership Association. This book was his last gift to the leadership field. In his native Portuguese, we say: 'Muito Obrigado, Gama!'

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CONTENTS

<i>About the Contributors</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>About the Editor</i>	<i>xvii</i>
<i>Introduction</i>	<i>xix</i>

PART I – THE CONNECTION BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

1. The Global Dimension of Leadership <i>Gama Perruci</i>	3
2. In Search of a Shared Narrative of Leadership <i>Beth Fisher-Yoshida</i>	19
3. Global Leadership is Shared Leadership: How Smart Global Leaders Build Cultures of Collaboration to Drive Results and Get Things Done <i>Amber A. Johnson, Tina Huesing, James D. Ludema and Brett Hinds</i>	35
4. Homo Ubuntu Leadership for the Twenty-first Century <i>Eliane Ubalijoro and Sean Lee</i>	51
5. Global Resonance and Global Leader Identity: Completing the Cycle of Knowing, Doing, and Becoming <i>Kathleen A. Curran</i>	67

PART II – THE STUDY OF GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

6. University-Based Leadership Education for Professionals Working in the Globalized Context 89
Wendy E. Rowe and Wanda Krause
7. Yin and Yang: Opposing Viewpoints on Western-Based Leadership Studies Programs in Mainland China 113
Jeff Bourgeois and Brett Whitaker
8. International Immersions for Graduate Students of Global Leadership 125
Jennie L. Walker and Yulia Tolstikov-Mast
9. Recent Developments in College Leadership Education in Japan 147
Mikinari Higano

PART III – THE PRACTICE OF GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

10. Leading Corporations in the US and Other National Settings: What Will Be Common to Their Leadership, and What Will Be Different? 159
Michael Useem
11. The Practice and Impact of Leadership in a Sub-Saharan Context 175
Brandon W. Kliewer, Trisha Gott, Kaitlin Long and Mary Tolar
12. The Impact of Globalization and the COVID-19 Pandemic on Leadership in International Development: The Need for Adaptive Transformational System Leadership and Expanded Consciousness 191
Randal Joy Thompson
13. Immigration as a Leadership Crucible Among Global Leaders 211
Marco Aponte-Moreno

14. From a Sea of Grey to a Sky of Blue: Global Women Leaders Providing Rays of Hope <i>Lorraine Stefani</i>	227
15. Leadership Challenges from the Edge of Experience in the Global Crisis Context <i>Michael Cox and James Warn</i>	245
<i>Index</i>	263

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INTRODUCTION

When we first began this book project, little did we know that it would be deeply impacted by a global epidemic. At the time, globalization seemed to be a giant seemingly unstoppable force changing the international state system (Stearns, 2020). Then the COVID-19 virus hit, borders closed, and the global market collapsed.

It would be tempting to see recent global health events as undoing all of our understanding of globalization in the past decades. However, even a global pandemic cannot hide the reality of a highly interconnected world. It took a ship running aground in the Suez Canal in March 2021 for us to be reminded that the world continues to be highly dependent on global trade and that the web of interconnectedness still shapes Global Leadership. The ship, *Ever Given*, was owned by a Japanese company, registered in Panama, operated by a Taiwanese transportation organization, managed by a Germany company, and at the time it ran aground, staffed by a crew of 25 Indians. For almost a full week (March 23–29), the *Ever Given* traffic jam dominated global news and led to – by one estimate – \$900 million in “damages,” including lost revenue and compensation for the labor and equipment used to free the ship (Farzan, 2021).

The global pandemic also accelerated the use of communication technology to challenge closed borders. Despite lockdowns, Zoom became a verb, and working remotely gained wide acceptance (Haag, 2021). While the pandemic disrupted air travel, organizations found ways to collaborate across borders in new and significant ways. It will be interesting to see whether the traditional view of working in the office will go back to “normal” after the global pandemic ends.

This book serves as a reminder that Global Leadership will continue to be relevant as an area of study and practice. The topics in this edited volume are broken down into three sections. First, we will examine how globalization is impacting human relations in the new millennium.

Leadership is examined as a process that has five components – leaders, followers, goals, context, and norms (McManus & Perruci, 2019). As a human phenomenon, it involves leaders and followers pursuing a goal. Since the 1950s, we have recognized that the organizational context shapes the character of the leader-follower relationship (Northouse, 2013). At the end of the twentieth century, our focus turned to the new global context that globalization has brought about. We are now paying close attention to the different cultural norms and values that are influencing the leader-follower relationship (Mendenhall et al., 2018). We can no longer assume that leaders and followers will be using the same cultural map when making decisions. Managing intercultural conflict has become a key issue in Global Leadership (Perruci, 2019).

We are now searching for a new shared narrative of leadership. Global leaders must find ways to increase the level of collaboration across the cultural divide. Technology can help by creating opportunities for collaboration. However, leaders still need to use communication skills to form effective bonds with their followers. We may need new modes of communication that will foster a sense of community among the leadership participants. In this volume, we suggest that maybe we are experiencing the rise of the “homo ubuntu,” a reference to the traditional African perspective of communitarianism.

Globalization is also giving rise to new sources of identity, as leaders seek to connect with their followers at the transnational level. Issues, such as climate change, resonate with individuals across continents. Leaders who have a global mindset are more apt to closely connect with followers from different cultures who share similar concerns about these issues. In this book, we do not assume that the development of this global mindset happens accidentally. That is the product of the study and practice of Global Leadership.

In the second section of the book, we focus on the study of Global Leadership. In recent decades, Western higher-education institutions have expanded the number of programs that are designed to prepare leaders for this new global context. Western-based leadership programs have been exported to different parts of the world. In this book, we highlight such an initiative in China. We also stress the importance of students having an international experience that allows them to expand their global-leadership skills. While the main focus has been on undergraduate study-abroad experiences, this

book takes a different view by examining the impact that study abroad has on graduate students. The study of Global Leadership is not solely a Western phenomenon. In this book, we explore the rise of leadership education in Japan, as an example of a non-Western development shaped by the rise of globalization.

The third section of the book focuses on the practice of Global Leadership. When examining the practice of large corporations from different cultural traditions, we notice that some common practices emerge that transcend local cultural traditions. However, the data also show that leadership also continues to reflect the national setting. In other words, we should not be ready to discard the local/national context because of globalization. The picture that emerges from this analysis is a complex combination of the new with the old. Global leaders must develop new skills that can incorporate an intercultural perspective as the “new language” of Global Leadership. We need to develop adaptive transformational systems, while at the same time exhibiting a complex “global consciousness.”

We use key issues as illustrative of how the Global Leadership agenda is shifting away from the Western-dominated individualistic perspective. Globalization is dramatically expanding the movement of both capital and human resources. Immigration is not just highlighted by refugee crises, but also the way technology is driving the rise of new industries that are shifting talent at a transnational level. Global women leaders also are emerging as important players on the global leadership stage. We conclude the book by highlighting some of the leadership challenges that global leaders will face in this century. We call this new crisis context “leadership at the edge of experience.”

The general picture that should emerge from the chapters in this edited volume is one of hope. While the challenges are immense, we do not disregard human ingenuity and our ability to transform our human systems to adapt to the new reality. For those who see the end of the global pandemic as a return back to “normality,” the following pages may come across as dissonant. When crises arise, the world is transformed – by design and by inevitability – to the extent that we never go back to the way it once was. Rather, a new world emerges, and we once again learn its “new language” and come to see it as the new normal (Ashton & Toland, 2021). For those who thrive whenever we move into a new normal, this book will serve as a path forward to explore the possibilities that await us!

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PART I

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

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THE GLOBAL DIMENSION OF LEADERSHIP

GAMA PERRUCCI

INTRODUCTION

We live in an increasingly interdependent world that pulls us together – through the forces of economic, political and cultural integration – while at the same time we battle the forces of fragmentation ([Barber, 2001](#)). While it is true that technological innovation builds connections across borders, leaders can also use new means of communication to divide and conquer through nationalist fervor. These are indeed conflicting times for the study and practice of Global Leadership. We laud leaders who create a compelling vision for their followers, but quite often those aspirations create an “us” versus “them” dynamic that challenges peace and stability.

This chapter provides an overview of the global dimension of leadership. The rapid pace of globalization is forcing us to confront the growing influence of the cultural context on the leader–follower relationship. We can no longer assume that the two sides (leaders and followers) will use the same cultural map. Global leaders must transcend local and national cultures and lead at the transnational level ([Perrucci, 2018](#)).

The first section of the chapter reviews the empirical study of leadership. Over the past century, there has been an evolution of our thinking about the word “leadership” – moving from being synonymous with “leader,” to a complex process that involves many components, including the cultural context. Following this historical overview, the chapter introduces the Five Components of Leadership Model, which serves as a framework for studying Global Leadership. We will use this model to discuss the interplay between the historical context and the influence of cultural values and norms in

the leader–follower relationship. The chapter ends with an examination of key historical developments (e.g., the rise of the Westphalian international system; globalization) and how they have created four different scopes of leading (local, national, international, global). We live in a challenging new century in which all four scopes are vying for relevance. We are only beginning to grasp the full meaning of these conflicting forces of collaboration and competition.

THE EMPIRICAL STUDY OF LEADERSHIP

Why is Global Leadership a thriving academic area today? There are two ways of looking at this question and their concomitant answers – one focused on the evolution of the theoretical field, and the other focused on the practice of leadership. In this section, we will look at the first perspective (the theory), while the next section will look at the practice (the historical forces that are shaping our interest in Global Leadership).

The Evolution of Theory-Building

When we trace the evolution of the empirical study of leadership, an interesting pattern emerges. It has gone from a simplistic focus on the leader, all the way to a consideration of the complex influences of context and culture. The traditional leadership literature breaks down this evolution into five general phases. In the late 1800s, leadership was associated first with the traits of leaders – the Trait Approach (e.g., [Ferris, 1889](#)). To study leadership meant the identification of the ideal characteristics of great leaders (The Great Man Theory). In practice, aspiring leaders hoped to find ways to imitate these ideal traits. Bibliographies were a common way to promote leadership development. We expected leaders to be well versed in the lives and accomplishments of historical figures from the ancient (Western) world.

By the 1930s, scholars were frustrated by the lack of consensus around those ideal traits. Great leaders seemed to come in many forms and shapes. After all, how could one reconcile the “empirical” observation of a leader’s height (suggesting that leaders tended to be taller than non-leaders) with

Napoleon Bonaparte's successful military campaigns? By putting great leaders on a pedestal, did leadership scholars paradoxically make them inaccessible? How could anyone possibly become the next George Washington? From a theory-building standpoint, these great leaders may have had common traits – e.g., fortitude, calmness under pressure, clear communication, integrity – but how do we translate them into maxims? Do they work in all circumstances?

The Behavioral Revolution in the 1940s and 1950s widened the scope of the leader-centric approach by considering the interaction between leaders and followers (e.g., [Stogdill & Coons, 1957](#)). Scholars, in this second phase of the empirical study of leadership, began to pay attention to how leaders behaved (leadership styles) and the impact that their behavior had on outcomes (goal achievement). During the second phase, followers began to appear in the literature as an actor (albeit limited and secondary) in leadership. Another aspect of the Behavioral Approach was the consideration of the goal in leadership. As leaders motivated followers to accomplish certain goals, a common definition of leadership emerged – albeit still leader-centric.

By the 1950s and 1960s, scholars introduced the importance of context in the leader–follower relationship – the third phase in the empirical study of leadership. [Fiedler \(1967\)](#), one of the best-known Contingency Approach theorists, argued that there is no single best leadership style, as proposed by the trait and behavioral approaches. Rather, effective leaders are able to adapt their styles according to different situations. Fiedler's research yielded three situational variables – the strength of the relationship between leaders and followers (leader–member relations), the clarity of the task (task structure), and the degree to which a leader has legitimate power (position power). The interplay of these three variables, Fiedler argued, defined the degree of a leader's effectiveness. Ideally, effective leaders have a strong relationship with their followers, are able to define clear tasks and structures, and hold strong legitimate power.

By the 1970s, scholars paid closer attention to the leader–follower relationship – the fourth phase in the empirical study of leadership. They moved away from a leader-centric approach to consider the ways both leaders and followers contributed to successful outcomes. [Burns \(1978\)](#) became a pioneer in the study of Transformational Leadership, in which both leaders and followers play a significant role in the leadership process.

The growing importance of followers in leadership gave rise in the 1980s to the study of Followership as a legitimate theoretical inquiry in the literature (e.g., [Chaleff, 2009](#)). Followers were now full participants, endowed with power and fully capable of contributing to the leader–follower relationship.

By the end of the 1980s, leadership was no longer viewed through the eyes of the leader. Instead, leadership was conceptualized as a “process” in which different components played a role. But we were not finished with the evolution. The 1990s brought on the fifth phase of the empirical study of leadership – the focus on how cultural norms influence the leader–follower relationship. Globalization played a significant role in this new preoccupation on culture ([Braman & Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1996](#); [Rhinesmith, 1996](#)). As economic and cultural integration intensified, intercultural conflict also became salient. Scholars became not only interested in comparing how different cultures viewed leadership, but also on the skill set that leaders needed in order to become effective at the global level (e.g., [Lustig & Koester, 1993](#)).

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, the study of Global Leadership had become a critical subfield of Leadership Studies ([Mendenhall et al., 2018](#)). Leadership could no longer be studied without considering the cultural context of the leader–follower relationship ([Henson, 2016](#)). This book is a product of the global processes that have given rise to the importance of using culture as a variable in our understanding of leadership. We can no longer assume that leaders and followers are using the same cultural map in their leadership. In fact, many of the conflicts between the two arise from their different cultural perspectives.

It may seem obvious at the beginning of our new century that the world is made up of many cultures, but for the scholar living at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Western world was treated as the standard for examining leadership. We have moved away from the Western leader-centric approach. The study and practice of leadership has become a complex, multifaceted tapestry that invites a wide variety of theories, models, and interpretations. This explosion of intellectual exploration may seem daunting and hopeless for those who would hope for the development of a cohesive theory of leadership, but on the bright side, the rise of Global Leadership has opened the field to creativity, innovation, and deep learning. The West has much to learn from non-Western approaches, and vice-versa.

The Five Components of Leadership Model

In the previous section, we were able to trace the evolution of our understanding of leadership from a simplistic approach (leadership as synonymous to leader), to a more complex perspective (leadership as a process). During each phase, we noted that different components were added to the equation. By the time the new millennium rolled around, five components had emerged as important ingredients of the leadership process – leader, follower, goal, context, and cultural norms/values.

Burns (1978), highlighted in the previous section, offered a clear definition of leadership involving leaders, followers, and goal. McManus and Perruci (2015) expanded on it and included two more – context and cultural norms. The emerging definition ties all the five components together into a single definition:

Leadership is the process by which leaders and followers develop a relationship and work together toward a goal (or goals) within an environmental context shaped by cultural norms and values.
(McManus & Perruci, 2015, p. 15)

There are some key aspects of this definition that are important to highlight. First, there are arrows pointing both directions from the leaders' and followers' circles – emphasizing the mutuality of the relationship. Two circles, representing leaders and followers, were also deliberately made the same size. Power differentials between the two would dictate the relative sizes of each, but that depends on the context, which surrounds all three components – leaders, followers, and goals. In a crisis situation, we expect the leader to exert more control of the situation. However, in a democratic election, we assume that power flows from the voting constituents (followers) to the candidates (aspiring leaders). In that case, the circle representing the followers would be larger than that of the leader.

Second, the contextual circle enveloping the leaders, followers, and goals captures the idea that leadership does not take place in a vacuum. A few years back when I was co-teaching an International Business course with the CEO of a global enterprise based in Canada, we asked our students to develop a business plan for a new product to be introduced in a particular country. As part of the assignment, we asked our students to research (and incorporate the information into their business plan) the historical, economic, and political context of the chosen country. The students seemed troubled by that request. After all, in their minds, they were taking an international

business course. The CEO was adamant – how can you understand the local market without uncovering the historical forces that are shaping the country today? Furthermore, how can you consider the likelihood of success without taking into consideration the political and economic climate of that country? The lesson became clear – we cannot look at one issue (introducing a product to a new market) in isolation. We have to connect several dots in order to gain a deeper understanding of the context.

Third, the context circle is enveloped by yet another circle – representing cultural norms and values. Everything we do involves culture. We in the West sometimes fail to recognize this important linkage between leadership and culture. I am always amused when my students are studying abroad and say – and meaning it – how much culture that country has. All countries, including theirs, are “culture rich.” From our perspective, our behavior is “normal”; therefore, it is often seen as devoid of cultural roots. When we step out of that cultural setting and enter another cultural environment, the degree of difference clouds our judgment as to how much culture a country “has.” In reality, the biggest culture shock for many of my students takes place not when they go abroad, but when they come back to the United States and begin to interpret their own behavior through a new set of cultural lenses.

Global Leadership pays close attention to the two enveloping circles – context and cultural norms. On the context side, there is the recognition that transnational forces in the new millennium are changing the global context. The emergence of China, for instance, as a dynamic economic power has considerably changed the political and economic environment at a global level. The move toward political and economic integration among the European countries has had a significant impact on transnational migration and business enterprises. The rise of high technology mega-corporations, such as Google, Facebook, and Amazon, affects communication, commerce, social interaction, and information sharing across the globe. The climate change debates are not taking place in a geographical vacuum. They are part of dramatic shifts in biodiversity, climate patterns, and health, among other issues, that transcend national borders.

Based on these changes, I have slightly modified the McManus and Perruci definition of leadership to offer a definition of Global Leadership:

Global leadership is the process by which global leaders seek to develop a relationship with their followers in order to accomplish common goals shaped by a global context with competing cultural norms and values. (Perruci, 2018, p. 33)