"Attributes of Embodied Leadership: A beginning in the next chapter of Leadership Development"

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Abstract

Research and guidance on leadership behaviour has been documented throughout history, from the epics to more recent leadership theories, evolved over the last century. However, despite ample research and practice, leadership failures continue in being typical. A review of literature in leadership studies reveals that recommendations have often been descriptive, assumptive and prescriptive without considering various individual differences. Additionally, leadership development often utilises methodologies in which individuals are trained to 'act' as leaders rather than fully embody leadership behaviour. This paper explores the generic attributes that describe embodied leadership behaviour. Semi-structured interviews were performed on a panel of individuals from different backgrounds and analysed using a grounded theory approach. Along with the interviews, the works of Scharmer (2008) and behavioural traits identified in leadership by Derue, Nahrgang, Wellman and Humphrey (2011) were taken into consideration. A final consensus was reached using a set of ten attributes that potentially contribute to embodied leadership behaviour; being non-judgemental, embracing uncertainty, active listening, congruence (morals and ethics), intuition, reflective practice, sense of meaning/purpose, holistic decision making, authentic presence and intention.

Keywords: leadership, holism, embodied behaviour

1. Leadership theories

The beginning of the 21st century was trepiditious for the world due to the fear of collapsing markets, the diminishing value of organisations and inept governance. Some of the blame lay in the questionable leadership [2, 4] of some organisations and governments [6, 24]. Classic examples are the cases of Enron, Tyco, Halliburton, Satyam Computers, Hackgate and 2G Spectrum Scam etc. This situation has led to a decline in public trust on corporations [15, 52] and governments [23]. Today many organisations claim to be behaving more ethically, but is this really so? This question goes beyond corporate social responsibility to the ethics of leadership and how these impact the organisation. It is about increasing the philosophical and moral stance of the organisation and the way in which this is interpreted and embodied by their leaders. However, while the academic library on the subject of ethical and responsible leadership is vast, many leaders are still being educated in a disembodied way [10], following a process that does not allow the ethics of leadership to be instilled and embodied into the "self-concept" [20] in the way for instance, that breathing is. As a disembodied leadership approach cannot have a significant impact on individuals and organisations [47] it would help to examine the basic premise of what constitutes a good leader.

Leadership comes from its root word, *lead*, which means *to guide*. Its origins can be found in the Latin word *Leith*, which

also has a similar meaning. Extensive research on the origins of leadership identified that inspiration, mobilisation, boldness and playing as a role model, as key features [25]. This is supported by various leadership theories that arose from the mid 20th century, although there was leadership guidance in various texts even before this period. Perhaps the oldest is the writings in the Bhagavadh Gita, an ancient Hindu text which describes the duties that a man is bound to in his life [35]. Stern manuscripts such as Chanakya's *Arthashastra* and Sun Tsu's *The Art of War* looked at leadership behaviour from the perspective of war, dynasty, invasion and personal mastery. Plato's *Republic* could be argued as the first manuscript in Western literature dedicated to leadership studies [49] as it describes in writing the required nature of a just man in a just society. A more modern reference is Principe by Niccolo Machiavelli which is defined as a text that glorifies authoritarian rule with regular diminutive humane interventions to satisfy the masses [17], adding that Machiavelli suggests the Prince's behaviour should switch between dictatorial and legislatorial [17]. Immanuel Kant followed with the Idealistic works of the Enlightenment. In the first two of his *Critique's*, Kant notes how humans take decisions and describes the basis of those decisions [30]. This is followed by Wittgenstein's works on the philosophy of the mind, psychology and action in his *Philosophical Investigations* [34].

Although the philosophical works do not directly emphasise understanding or cultivation of leadership behaviour, they certainly advance conceptualisations which could be extrapolated [28]. Prior to the World Wars, the recognised leadership traits were borrowed from stories of heroes, legends, mythological figures and 'Gods'. More mainstream leadership theories evolved with the **Great Man Theory**, which arguably, is the first of the mainstream leadership theories [39]. The post-war period produced space programs, continental and economic reconstructions, manufacturing booms and revolutions. These were times when people looked to someone to lead them to a better standard of living. Leaders were thought to be born with innate talents (Pierce & Kleiner, 2000) and there was a common consensus amongst working people that if you followed a few positive adjectives, you were destined to become a leader.

Following the Great Man Theory rose the **Trait Theories** of leadership. On the whole, the theories were purely descriptive and did not include any developmental aspects [3]. Neither were they able to address concepts such as values and motives [19]. These were personality based theories, where studies were based on leaders with historical significance and their personalities emulated. These theories proved futile as good leaders had varied personalities and strong leaders without good values were those who drove the world into crises [52].

The trait theories only made a slight advancement over the basic great man theory, but these advancements proved to be essential as they've been used in later theories as interpretative variables. Herbert Spencer first criticised these theories for being highly fundamental and lacking in recognising the social environment influence on individuals. In the *Influence Era*, leadership theories made progress by recognising the relationship between individuals rather than leadership as being a phenomenon confined to a singular being [39]. During this period significant efforts were made by Stogdill, Yukl and Bass etc. to understand leadership through the indicators of power, source, social relationship and effectiveness. It was clearly noted that authoritarian, autocratic and a monopolised style of leadership was ineffective [46]. Also acknowledged were the inconsistencies of a coerced approach [38], although the leader was still viewed as a central figure governing the organisation, as is still the case.

The **Behaviour based theories** were considered to be the first 'scientific' leadership theories as they were action based, objective and were backed by concrete empirical data. These theories were able to distinguish different patterns of behaviour and styles [32] which allowed leaders to reflect on their behaviours, in addition to improve their leadership effectiveness by following patterns that were recognised by researchers [50]. The *Leadership Behaviour Development*

Questionnaire [40, 41] was also devised in this period. It basically plots patterns in three areas: the leader's self-evaluation, the subordinate's evaluation of the leader and the subordinate's expectations of a leader. *Theory X & Theory Y* were also proposed in this period. Theory X described an organisation as a passively motivated structure that requires direction and motivation from the leadership front; Theory Y describes an organisation as a self-motivated structure that requires the leader to provide proper working conditions [50]. It was then pointed out that leadership and subordinate behaviour are not directly proportional [1], that people's motivations are completely different and that subordinate behaviour is the result of a catalyst (action) from the leader who has a completely different motivation, alternatively known as prescriptive leadership. Prescriptive methods, along with assumptive patterning, encouraged conditioned behaviour that paved the way for disembodied behaviour in leaders [44, 47] and actions resulting from disembodied behaviour tend not be effective [20]. Successive research raised the situational and contingency leadership theories.

The **Situational Theory** first introduced the way in which determinants or events outside the leader and subordinate circle can be influential in effective or ineffective leadership [1]. The **Contingency Theory** emerging from the situational theory [3], was the first to identify the different elements of influence,

personality and behaviour that affect the outcome of leadership behaviour. Although there was strong empirical data to support these two theories, the magnitude of determinants affecting the leader-subordinate interaction were enormous, leading to conjectures. The assumptive nature of both theories centred on the external environment [26]. Though the contingency theory built models to predict circumstances [3], it generated conditional behaviour further inciting disembodied behaviour. These theories differentiated directive and supportive behaviour rather than converging both to create a holistic action. Moreover, both theories were rejected [50] as they were reactionary [1], addressing causality of the leader with respect to time, and insufficiency in terms of proven leadership development training plans [45].

In 1978 the Pulitzer Laureate, James McGregor Burns came up with the most influential leadership theories, the **Transactional** and **Transformational** types. Both theories to date concur that human relations drove interactions and accommodated areas like cognition and psychology [1]. The former claimed that leadership was governed solely by social dynamics and distinction in portrayal. This totally eradicated the concept of a leader possessing uniform behaviour, thus leaving no space for developmental aspects [39]. Transactional leadership is power driven and creates a 'give and take' environment. This potentially gives rise to conditional behaviour and thus

disembodied behaviour, meaning to act from a superficial level. Additionally 'carrot and stick' environments can amplify negative emotions [5]. Emotions play a great role in an organisation's performance [20], however, and there is an urgent need to address issues relating to them.

Transformational leadership evolved from a period of ambiguity where researchers postulated that there was nothing called leadership; that after a culture has been established in an organisation, employees could handle themselves [38]. Transformational leadership set more emphasis by human values, morality, meaning driven work and a distributed vision [16]. It made promising changes in leadership theory with regard to understanding and improving leadership behaviour through an inherent change in individuals, which was completely in opposition to the previous theories that dealt with extraneous motivations. Attributes such as proactive thinking, positive influence, strong vision and commitment etc were requisitioned for improvement. Transformational leadership theory, while useful in defining the leader's effect on followers, overlooked the evaluation of the leader itself and along with solutions for improving the attitudes, beliefs and behavioural attributes of that individual. A few management theorists came up with the idea of **Transcendental** leadership [7] to address this gap as seen in Figure 1.

These theories commonly state that it is the leader's level of awareness or consciousness [27] that determines whether he/she is effective. Is the leader aware of his/her actions and the events taking place around him/her? Awareness being a cognitive capability [11, 12, 13, 31], hugely depends on neural activity [11, 13] and there are many studies confirming that the quality of awareness is linked to certain dynamics of neural activity, thus making it an embodied process. Jane Anderson's current work in sociospacial reciprocity recognises widespread lack of awareness prevalent in some people, not just leaders, of impact on the environment (including humans) and the effects they produce. But these theories overlooked the fact that within an organisation, people are different and operate from different paradigms [48, 53]. Scharmer's 'Theory U' [36] on uncovering the blind spot in leadership, is another attempt to rekindle leadership studies to discover the reason for failure of the institutional leadership. This theory was adept in understanding leadership from a personal perspective asking 'How can an individual pass through the thresholds to become a good leader?' It also gives structure to the proposed concept of embodied leadership, an approach built on the relationship between body, mind and social environment. Further exploration is required in Scharmer's work in the area of evaluation of the leader's impact on the organisation and vice versa, as the organisation itself will have an impact on the

leader. A generative understanding of the attributes that constitute embodied leadership behaviour is also necessary [40].

2. Research approach

2.1. Phase 1

Secondary Data

A Delphi study was carried out for this research work [18]. An initial template of leadership attributes was built based on previous leadership theories. In effect, leadership research was primarily initiated on what separates or differentiates leaders from non-leaders. Consequentially, many leadership scholars were able to identify several individual attributes that come under the trait theories of leadership. The descriptive nature of these theories had led to several critiques as discussed earlier. The behavioural paradigm was subsequently established. The behavioural and trait theories acted as precursors to further leadership research, but drew much criticism as there was no integration between a leader's traits, behaviour and the ensuing action at a particular situation. In a recent meta-analytic study, leadership was categorised into traits and behaviours established during the trait and behaviour era [14]. The five generally divided categories are functional effectiveness,

interpersonal characteristics, functional motivation, transformative abilities and relationships. All the traits and the behaviours identified through numerous research works fall under these categories. To integrate trait, behaviour and action [14] also ensured the effectiveness of action as a result of a behaviour performed due to the possession of a certain trait. Derue et al.'s [14] was a landmark study. As this work constitutes with regards to the embodiment of traits and behaviours, only a few aspects were extrapolated. The two phase research approach is described in Figure 2.

Following this, it became necessary to look into new paradigms of leadership research, thus Scharmer's work was explored as it comes under the transcendental perspective of leadership [15, 38]. It should first be understood that Scharmer looks at leadership from a radically different paradigm that is completely introspective. The way in which a leader observes, thinks, acts and behaves is constructed on the quality of awareness of the leader. A key concept that can be taken out from one of the interviews is the statement made by William O'Brien, the former CEO of Hanover Insurance; 'the success of any intervention depends on the internal state of the intervener.'

In Scharmer's interviews, the interviewer wants to understand the interviewee from the core. This prompts questions about their childhood, background and work, challenges and how their life has shaped them to what they are now. Scharmer's

analysis led to the paper titled 'Illuminating the Blind Spot of Leadership', where he states 20 challenges and potential solutions (Table 1.) that the future holds for leaders. Further research based on previous experiences led Scharmer to come up with seven leadership capabilities: Holding the space, observing, sensing, presencing, crystallising, prototyping and performing. Following the above mentioned chronologically, one learns to associate with the essential Self.

This forms the basic essence of Scharmer's book *Theory U: Leading from the Future as it Emerges* [36]. Altogether, the identified indicators, corresponding attributes from the theories and Scharmer's work were tabulated (Table 2). This was used as an initial template before the panel discussion stage.

2.2 Phase 2

Panel Selection

As the research question is to explore the attributes of embodied leadership behaviour, it is important that it takes different perspectives into consideration [29]. A panel was chosen on the grounds of work experience, success, area of work, demographics and cultural background. Out of the seven members in the panel, three agreed to be recorded; however detailed notes were taken down from all of the participants.

Anonymity was requested from all the participants, hence their identities were coded. Necessary consent and ethical approvals had been taken prior to the discussion phase.

Panel Interviews

Due to logistical constraints it was not possible to have a group discussion with the entire panel. All the participants were individually interviewed. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted based on the initial questions 'What makes you a good leader?' and 'What does it take to be a good leader?' The initial template assisted in further questioning during the conversation. A list of the questions, quotes and corresponding indicators are attached in the Appendices. The recorded interviews were transcribed using *ExpressScribe*, an open source free application.

Analysis of interviews

A grounded theory based analysis process was used. It should be clarified that this is not a grounded theory study, rather it uses the coding technique, where the results are grounded in the data. Open coding was performed to understand the initial concepts of the data. The data and the corresponding codes could be found in Table 2. These codes were implemented in

the axial coding process from the interviews, where the focus was to find similar and broad themes in the interview data. The axial codes could be found in Figure 4. This was followed by a thematic analysis with all the available data (primary and secondary) and the codes are segregated into broad themes, which were used in the *Panel Consensus* stage. The final agreed themes were further theorised and explained. The confluence of the codes into general themes could be found in Table 4. Memos were taken while analysing the themes to keep track of the subtle semantic nature of the themes.

The researchers used thematic analysis to study the interviews and secondary data, but the exploratory nature of this research work would need flexible analysis techniques in order to expect novel findings to make a generalisation in an area where there is a lack of research focus. Although this method of research is new, it has been used successfully in the past to apply codes into case studies [43]. It is necessary to mentioned that this is a constructivist version of grounded theory where the themes built are not only based on the researcher's interpretations, but also upon the research participant's perspective, which ensures credibility and rigor. This analysis follows a more Straussian way of performing analysis [43].

MS Excel, a popular is a spreadsheet application developed by Microsoft Corporation is used for the analysis of data using the coding template to determine leadership attributes. Excel was

preferred over Nvivo as it gives more control over the limited data and themes that are identified from the interview recordings [8]. Nevertheless, the team has been trained in Nvivo. As there was no overload of data, quality wise, it was a good decision to use Excel as it allowed a more rigorous look into the data. This makes the data less prone to superficial interpretation and fragmentation, integrating the data between the researcher and participant construction [8]. There have been similar suggestions from researchers who perform qualitative studies that Excel offers more control when dealing with limited data [33].

Interpretation of Opinions

As this work is interpretative by nature it is essential to gain consensus during the interviews as to what the participants meant during the conversation. This ensures the reliability of the research data. Two methods were employed in gaining a consensual interpretation. The first method involved clarifying the answer in the interview process by asking deeper questions and asking if the researcher was right in interpreting a response from the participant in a particular way. The second method involved taking conceptual factors drawn from the narrative and confirming the meaning with the participant [29]. As the panel was small, it was convenient to approach the participants and engage in a corroboratory conversation.

Initial Findings

The initial findings are the result of axial coding of the interviews, using the codes from the initial research phase as references. These findings could be found in Figure 4. A more detailed version of the table along with their supportive quotes from the interviews can be found in the Appendices.

The findings in Figure 4 are characteristics the researchers perceived are related to leadership keeping reference the characteristics identified in the initial template, mentioned in Table 2. The findings are further used in the *Panel Consensus* phase to build generic themes of embodied leadership behaviour.

Panel Consensus

Finally, all the coded indicators were bracketed with regards to their compatibility and meaning. This can be found in Table 4. The leadership attributes that have emerged from this confluence of indicators are more explicit and could be put into further practice or training. This was done by sharing of meaning and compatibility with all the members of the panel. Following this phase the final set of attributes identified are finalised and are described.

Final Findings (10 attributes)

The following are the final set of attributes which the participants believe that contribute towards embodied leadership behaviour, which could be trained into individuals. Also presented below are some of the quotes from the interviews.

Being non-judgemental

Scharmer notes the importance of being non-judgemental by creating a space for inquiry and coming to a knowing [36]. Being non-judgemental could be described as a process of not taking pre-conceived mental models into consideration while functioning, rather, analysing using present conditions. This attribute could also be described as learning from the past whilst at the same time being open to new experiences; an acknowledgement and acceptance of multiple worldviews and creating space for inquiry to reach a common consensus. In Theory U it is defined as the open heart, open will and open mind process.

"Being judgemental is necessary at a certain point, but I make sure that the judgement is made on other things (functionalities rather than demographics)*"*

"Its judgements that create complex situations, you should rather be intuned to understand the other person in what state they are in and discourse as required"

"I will be offended by people making quick judgements"

The interview data suggested finding neutral ground while listening or processing information through the senses was useful. Compassion-based decision making was another recommendation. In relation to trait and behavioural theories, similarities are found in terms of cultivating a sense of acceptance and emotional intelligence. Excerpts from Scharmer's interviews, too, suggest letting go of conceptions, stereotyping and bias, while simultaneously seeking an unconditional outlook.

Embracing Uncertainty

The acceptance of uncertainty is an integral part of nature was common. The data showed a strong presence of trust during uncertain periods allowed for and enable divergent thinking. Theory U is an example of how to practice it.

"We need to teach the concept of abstract because how can you take the leap of faith that that number is of any value. We then give it a name (boundary)*"*

"There is a lot of opportunity in uncertainty"

"With time and experience you will notice that there is a lot of uncertainty and you can recognise the patterns that brings us close to manage it partially"

"Obscurity forces us to think. It enhances creativity and thus must be embraced. "

Adaptation, emotional stability, different levels of thinking and being in the present are what is needed during uncertain times, according to the panel. In Scharmer's interviews, one of the suggestions was to experiment using different levels of thinking across the organisation.

Active Listening

The findings suggested that active listening should be cultivated so that it is non-judgemental and information is received with sensitivity.

"In my experience I found that it is impossible to understand a person completely unless we match the frequency"

"Unconditional listening must be exercised"

"I should be able to listen very carefully to what people are saying and to be able to understand what is driving them, understanding the different levels of connectivity of people; helps in making better decisions"

This interpersonal characteristic could be summarised as deep and rich listening in a multi-sensory and peripheral. Developing good communication skills is a common suggestion across all leadership theories, but active listening as mentioned here, refers to listening with true intent, engaging all the senses.

Congruence (values and ethics)

The findings laid importance on ethics, honesty and integrity.

"Open hearted integrity differentiates different kinds of leaders"

"I try to do things with a purpose, it helps me do it honestly"

"One has to answer to themselves at the end of the day."

The interviews indicated a strong correlation between trust, morality, transparency, respect and values. Similar suggestions are made across leadership literature.

Intuition

The findings show intuition as recognising potential, decision-making based on seeing and sensing patterns or interactions. This often leads to predictive accuracy, which Scharmer calls presencing; connecting to a deeper level to enable holistic action.

"When sometimes we make decisions, we say its intuition; it's a bit of a lame excuse to make snap judgements. Intuition is often

based on years of skill, knowledge, experience and you're not putting it down to that. Intuition is something that does not exists outside skill knowledge and experience."

The data suggests that intuition as an ability which manifests from an amalgamation of the other attributes combined with one's personal knowledge and experience.

Reflective practice

Reflective practice is when an individual introspects (reflecting on the inner state of being), 'extrospects' (reflecting on connections with people), learns from the past experiences, and self-assesses and challenges the self-paradigm.

"Most of my decisions are reactionary and I trust them as they have always worked out. Its experience and reflective learning that sort of help intuitive decisions"

"I always look back at cases and ask myself what would have I done differently"

Also revealed in Scharmer's interviews was the importance of reflecting on one's own thoughts; contemplating the thinking itself and how it is arising, as an indication of self-assessment.

Sense of meaning/purpose

The primary interviews elicited the way in which goals, ambition, value and responsibilities must not only be instilled

but also be disseminated within the circle. The African concept of Ubuntu, interpreted as 'I am because we are' could be used to illustrate this attribute..

"I try to do things with a purpose, it helps me do it honestly"

"I feel that I'm adding value to what I do now. If the council feels that this is not useful anymore, I'd still be comfortable as I've added value and meaning to what I did"

"Having a purpose keeps us positive and motivated"

This, combined with the right intention, would assist in acquiring the functional capabilities and motivation for a required task.

Holistic decision making

This is the most vital attribute of all. It captures the very essence of leadership, which was already discussed by Jan Smuts in his book *Holism and Evolution*, regarding the need to nourish every part to the extent that it becomes a bigger whole. Decisions are thus encouraged along this basis. The data concludes that it is the compound of all the attributes put together.

Authentic presence

The findings, along with Scharmer's characteristics, suggest authentic presence to be a combination of presencing, mindfulness and non-egoism. Scharmer's interviewees make an

important observation on how mere physical presence could change the dynamics of the entire social setting, by mentioning the children in the silent room experiment.

"I don't know whats going to happen in the future, so I cannot answer that question"

"Being fully aware of the present helps in dealing with uncertain things"

"Practicing mindfulness has helped me stay in the present"

A two-fold attribute, in addition to physical presence, is a conscious state of being in the 'present' mode of thinking.

Intention

The data consisted of indicators such as wholehearted work, task motivation and alignment of actions with intentions.

"When we say 'yes', we have to mean 'yes'. Everything should be aligned."

"Personal intent clashes with organisational intention. We have to cope and I wish in the future my intent is at the same level as that of the company"

This was in exact relation to the interviewees experiences as told to Scharmer. Intention is a very powerful soft aspect that drives humans and is well documented in appreciative inquiry, an organisational development process [9].

From the attributes it could be noted that some of the attributes are mutually related in order to materialise. It is extremely important to recognise this circularity as it assists in building holistic training. A second reading of Scharmer's interviews revealed many similarities between the identified embodied leadership attributes and the interview excerpts. The identified excerpts from Scharmer's Interviews could be found in the Appendices.

3. Discussion and Conclusion

One of the strengths of this study is that it is completely built on previous work in the area of leadership studies. Another advantage is the methodology; the grounded theory approach corresponds to the Process in identifying the attributes. Thinking forward, it would be interesting to investigate factors or methods that could influence the embodied leadership attributes. This understanding could further be used to build a framework that could be used to train individuals to become embodied leaders. Embodied leadership requires the development of attributes that correlate with the state of being in the World. These are fundamental underlying behaviours & actions and should be considered as of primary importance in terms of leadership development. Our research suggest that the following attributes describe the phenomenon of embodied leadership: being non-judgemental, embracing uncertainty, active listening, congruence, intuition, reflective practice, sense

of meaning/purpose, holistic decision making, authentic presence and intention. Courage, which was not part of the above findings, is equally important for a leader as it is impossible to enact any other embodied leadership behaviours without courage.

Research into consciousness [42] suggests that embodiment is acquired through transcendental practices [21] and there are numerous studies suggesting how transcendental practices can be used as an intervention to improve the cognitive behaviours of the individual [12, 22]. It is important to point out that most of the attributes outlined in our research can be acquired through mindfulness practices [22].

Research into the presence and development of these attributes requires a holistic approach, i.e. taking into consideration the physical, mental and social domains and sourcing data to correlate findings from these domains. Our further research seeks to establish possible correlation between physiological data i.e. EEG & heart rate variability and leadership attributes in the self and social settings.

Post Script: An elaborated discussion of the above article could be found in the PhD thesis of Dr. Kushwanth Koya, which is available on Northumbria University's Research Link http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk

4. Acknowledgements

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6. Tables

No.	Challenge	Keys to the challenge
1	We Live, Lead, and Work in an Era of Clashing Forces	Inherent change
2	The New Leadership Challenge Is to Sense and Actualize Emerging Opportunities	Recognising emerging patterns of change and opportunities, capacity to sense
3	For Leaders, What Is "Real" Has Changed	Continuous change in social dynamics, paying attention to several variables i.e., intentions, interpretations and identity
4	Operational Excellence Requires Accounting for Complexity and Evolution	Recognising that complexity is an inherent part of a working environment
5	The Quality of Awareness Determines Performance	Nature of experience, attention towards first person experience, new cognitive capacity
6	Plus Ça Change, Plus C'est La Même Chose (The more things change, the more they remain the same)	Knowledge for action, to become more mindful
7	Experience Must Inform Strategy and Leadership	Recognition of the place where we operate from, existential questioning, accessing experience
8	Social and Managerial Realities Arise from the Same Deep "Source"	Knowing the source of action, improving the source, deep sourcing leads to collective intelligence,
9	The Self Is the Eye of the Needle	Becoming aware of the self, changing quality of attention, deeper knowing
10	Knowledge Creation and Innovation Happen in Places	Perception, cognition action must be at a quality level, connectedness at a physical, mental and social level.
11	Primary Knowing: Shifting the Place from Where We Operate	Quality of knowing, compassionate, knowing the self, acting without conscious control, blank canvas capacity of sensing
12	Organizations Are Relational Spheres in Motion	Connectedness within organisations, understanding differences in systems and how they relate to the larger whole
13	Organizational Health Stems from the Interplay of Three Relational Spheres	The three relational spheres are formal/structural, social/relational ad transpersonal. Leaders should work, renew and develop themselves.
14	Leadership Is Both Deeply Personal and Inherently Collective	Life enhancing, embody collective patterns,
15	The Most Important Tool for Leading 21st-Century Change Is the Leader's Self	Transformation of the self
16	Distributed Leadership Systems Require Collective Practices	Understanding of self, personal cultivation, study(sense)/practice(inspire)/service(enact), co-creation and shared meaning,
17	Organizations Must Develop Core Practices That Inspire Creativity and Action	Observe, sense, presence, envision, execute
18	The Leader's Work Is to Allow New Social Spaces to Emerge	Sensing, acceptance of existence of social subsets,
19	The Quality of Places Is Foundational in Transforming Organizations	Self-organisational, open boundary, multi-discipline, equal access max capacity min conflict
20	Seven Principles for Changing the Quality of a Field	Immersion, Interpretation, imagination, Inspiration and Intuition, Intention, Instant Execution, Implementation

Table 1. Leadership challenges and their keys as found by

Scharmer [37]

Data Source	Indicators	Suggested characteristics
Scharmer's Theory U	Deeper Listening (ST1)	Holding the space
	Practicing non-judgementalism (ST2), inquiry based knowing (ST3)	Observing
	Open heart open mind open will (ST4), unconditionality (ST5)	Sensing
	connecting to a deeper level for holistic action (ST6)	Presencing
	intention and commitment (ST7)	Crystallising
	embodied action (ST8), reflection (ST9)	Prototyping
	embodied and holistic action by engaging mind, will and heart (ST10)	Performing
Trait and Behavioural Leadership Theories	Intelligence (TB1), core skills (TB2), honesty (TB3), learning skills (TB4), influence (TB5), temperamental balance (TB6), representation (TB7), demand reconciliation (TB8), productivity (TB9), predictive accuracy (TB10)	Functional Effectiveness
	communication skills (TB11), acceptance (TB12), extrospective (TB13), Emotional intelligence (TB14), tolerance to uncertainty (TB15), persuasiveness (TB16), tolerance and freedom (TB17)	Interpersonal Characteristics
	task directing (TB18), contingency management (TB19), team building (TB20), threshold knowledge (TB21), structure initiation (TB22), role assumption (TB23), handling bureaucracy (TB24)	Functional Motivation
	inspirational (TB25), integration (TB26), appealing (TB27), change and refinement (TB28)	Transformational
	accommodating (TB29), empowering (TB30), engagement (TB31), cultivate (TB32)	Relationships

Table 2. Indicators and characteristics identified from

Scharmer's work and the Trait & Behavioural Theories of

Leadership

Participant Codes	Participant Characteristics
	38
DPM1	Creativity development manager, local council leader
DPM2	Professor in Design Practice, FRSA, Director of a Research Group
DPM3	Founder Director of a charity, health professional, Qigong master
DPM4	Dentist, running a successful and acclaimed clinic for the past 14 years.
DPM5	Semi-retired professional, runs a well-being consultancy firm
DPM6	Young successful entrepreneur in the food industry
DPM7	Renowned psychiatrist, FRCPsych

Table 3. Participant panel

Indicator Similarity Bonding	Attribute
ST2, ST3, ST4, ST5, TB12, TB14, TB32, SR8, SR21, PI1, PI2, PI3, PI4, PI5	Being non-judgemental
ST4, TB6, TB15, TB19, TB28, TB32, SR12, PI12, PI13, PI14	Embracing uncertainty
ST1, ST2, ST3, ST4, ST7, TB11, TB13, TB14, SR9, SR14, SR16, SR17, SR24, TB32, PI15, PI16, PI17	Active listening
ST5, ST7, ST9, TB3, TB26, TB32, SR7, SR17, SR26, PI18, PI19, PI20, PI21, PI22, PI23	Congruence
ST3, ST6, TB10, TB28, SR11, SR20, PI24, PI25, PI26	Intuition
ST1, ST3, ST6, ST9, TB13, TB21, TB32, SR14, SR15, SR20, SR21, PI8, PI9, PI10, PI11	Reflective practice
ST7, ST10, TB2, TB3, TB4, TB25, TB30, TB32, SR15, SR18, SR23, PI27, PI28, PI29	Sense of meaning/purpose
ST10, TB2, TB3, TB14, TB28, SR8, SR21, PI30, PI31, PI32, PI33, PI34, PI35, PI36	Holistic decision making
ST10, TB2, TB4, TB5, TB7, TB11, TB16, TB20, TB21, TB22, TB23, TB25, TB27, TB30, SR2, SR3, SR4, SR9, SR13, SR15 SR16, SR22, PI37, PI38, PI39	Authentic presence
ST7, TB6, TB7, TB31, SR3, SR9, PI6, PI7	Intention

Table 4. Indicator confluence and emergence of novel
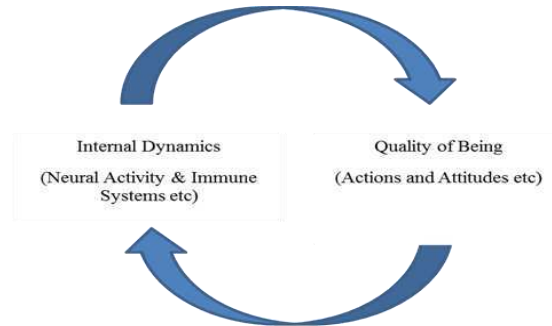
attributes

7. Figures

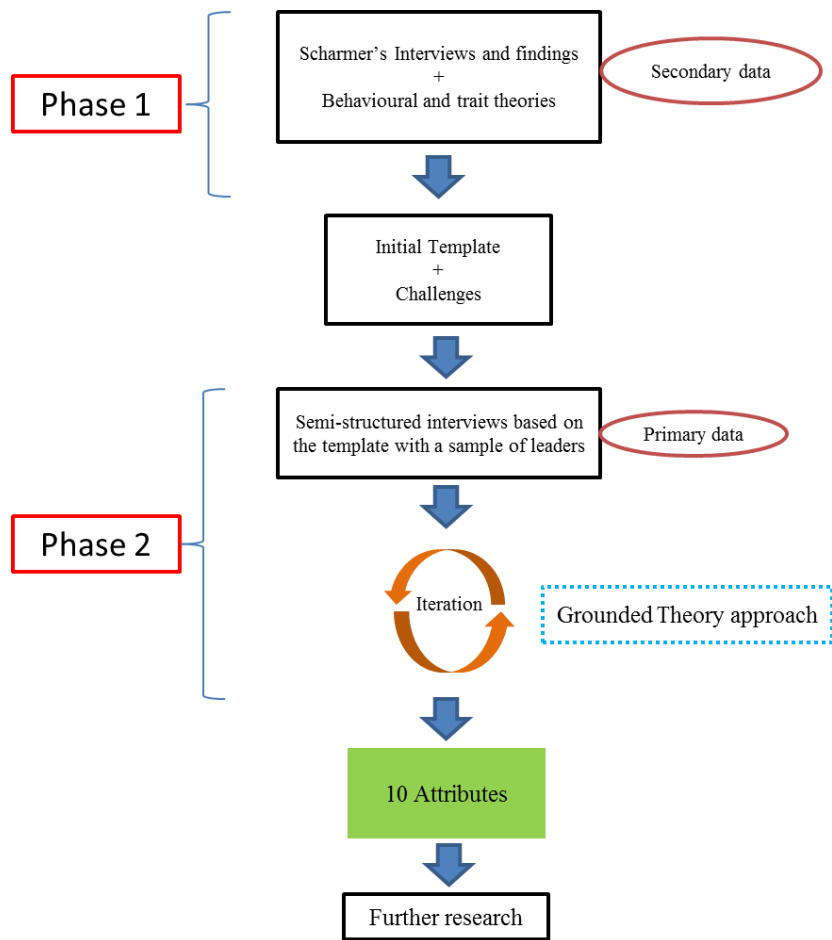Figure 1. Transcendental leadership perspectives
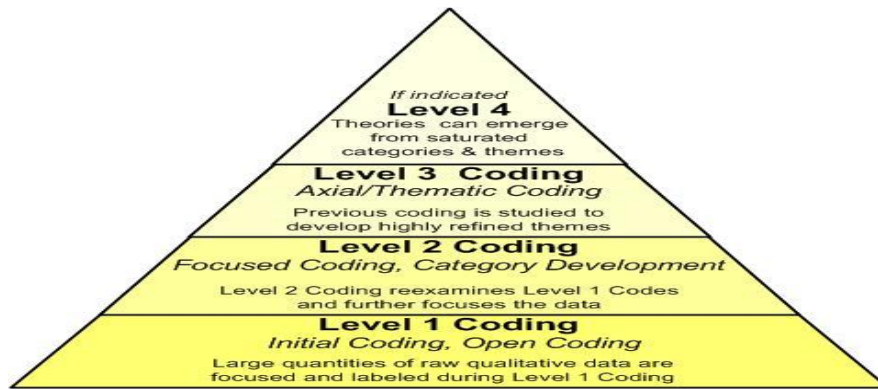
Figure 2. The Research Approach

Figure 3. Grounded Theory approach (Hahn, 2008)

Preliminary Findings	Respective codes
Learning from past, yet not being arbitrary	(PI1)
Neutral point of view	(PI2)
Presencing	(PI3)
Decision making	(PI4)
Compassion	(PI5)
Whole-hearted work	(PI6)
Motivation	(PI7)
Learning	(PI8)
Relation to past experience	(PI9)
Challenging the self-paradigm	(PI10)
Self-assessment	(PI11)
Resilience to uncertainty	(PI12)
Inherent change	(PI13)
Recognising emerging patterns of change and opportunities, capacity to sense	(PI14)
Non-judgemental listening	(PI15)
Deeper listening	(PI16)
Sensitive reception	(PI17)
Values	(PI18)
Honesty	(PI19)
Respect	(PI20)
Ethical	(PI20)
Transparency	(PI21)
Trust	(PI22)
Integrity	(PI23)
Recognise potential (comes from having a purpose of intent)	(PI24)
Decisions based on expecting patterns to arise	(PI25)
Seeing the interactions	(PI26)
Goals	(PI27)
Ambition	(PI28)
Value	(PI29)
Patience	(PI30)
Unbiased	(PI31)
Ego influence	(PI32)
Opinions	(PI33)
Judgements	(PI34)
Intuition	(PI35)
Connections	(PI36)
Presencing	(PI37)
Awareness	(PI38)
Mindfulness	(PI39)

Figure 4. Initial interview findings

Biographies:

Kushwanth Koya is currently a Senior Research Assistant in Information Sciences at Northumbria University. His PhD led to a novel perspective on leadership studies, as a result of which there is ongoing research at Northumbria to understand different aspects of human behaviour, characterised by addressing physiological, behavioural and social interconnectedness. His interests include sustainable information systems, the science of science, wellbeing informatics and leadership.

Jane has worked in education, training and development for over thirty years and is a qualified manager, teacher, trainer, coach, mentor, Pacific Institute facilitator, NLP practitioner and Reiki master. She has been a self-employed writer and presenter for nearly two decades and has written several books and numerous articles and columns. Her interests include Fringpreneurism (businesses outside the norm including schoolyard enterprise, older adult entrepreneurs, mumpreneurs and hobbyists) and Homesticity, the art and skill of homemaking. She is a school governor and is currently researching her PhD in Environmental Wellness with Northumbria University.

Petia holds a PhD in Systems and Complexity Thinking for Understanding Humans and Organisations. She is passionate about interpreting and applying insights from complexity theory for facilitating positive transformation in individuals and organisations. She is academic lead and facilitator of the Wellbeing, Complexity and Enterprise
(WELCOME) interdisciplinary research group, Convenor of the UK EPSRC Systems Practice and Managing Complexity (SPMC) network, member of the advisory board of the Health for Humanity International Forum, and Senior Associate Editor of the International Journal of Systems and Society. Her research interests focus on exploring quintessential insights and synergies between quantum physics, systems and complexity sciences, interpersonal neurobiology and the arts, and how these may inform a new paradigm of thinking in wellbeing and lead to new applications of technology.

Richard is interested in regional economic development in border regions, ecological modernization and environmental transformations, and urban futures. He is an Anglo-German economic and political geographer also interested in regional economic development in border regions, ecological modernization and environmental transformations, and urban futures. He is involved in rights-based approaches to disaster-risk reduction and empowerment of

marginalised communities, in addition to having sustained level of activity in Holocaust and Genocide Education within and outside of the university, both field-based (Poland, Germany) and city-based (Newcastle HMD working group). He possesses strong activist and organisational background in this field through Amnesty International as a national volunteer country co-ordinator for European issues, trainer for AIUK, and past Chair of Steering Committee of Country Co-ordinators, also the current member of Case Management Group of AIUK. He is developing research in this area examining capability building in human rights campaigning and evaluation of impact contribution and attribution, which has led to contributions to the TransEuropa festival and currently the York City of Human Rights project.