



Reading 6.9
Leadership and Followership as
a Relational Process

M. Russell



Introduction

- Leadership is seen as significant subject, with a voluminous academic and popular literature.
- However, there is remarkably little consensus on what leadership is and what it entails.
- ~~To~~ study leadership we must attend to leadership practice.



Conceptual Framework

- I suggest there is one way to make sense of this embarrassing of riches is too view these types in a continuum.
- At one end %singular leaderqmodel, focused narrowly on individuals possessing particular gifts . the leader as charismatic hero - at the other end a %latter+leadership model which place the leader within rather than on top of the community they lead.

Conceptual framework

- This is in contrast to the distributed leadership, where leadership practice is taken throughout the school.
- Singular leadership models tend to see followers as people with lesser abilities relying on the leader's expertise, whereas flatter models are more likely to regard leadership as a form of social influence.
- The complexities of today's society have lead to more flatter models of leadership.





Meg Russell contends

- That leadership is a social process with a strong relational element, but little research in the affective domain.
- She conducted research within 4 village Anglican and 1 state primary school over the year of 1996-7 in south-central England.



Research findings: in both case studies

- Leaders shared three positional characteristics

1. they were people of importance

2. they were central figures in their organisations

3. and they had wide access to both individuals and groups within the organisation.



Research findings:

- Compared to their followers they were therefore well . known
well . informed
and in a position to exercise considerable influence.
- and regarded by all groups as the focal point of school life,
- A %central player+



Relationship with purpose

- I propose an overarching concept called μ relational purpose η
- Relational purpose is found in both leaders and followers and defined as what the various participants hope to gain from the relationship, and the needs or purposes they hope the relationship will fulfil.



Conclusion

- A relational view of leadership highlights the importance of followers as well as leaders in a leadership process.
- Leaders need to be aware of the different followership groups and their relationships and motivations.
- Leaders need interpersonal skills and support and training to develop them.