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- Simulated reality: A intersubjective belief in the construct of 'leadership'-

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Abstract

This thesis will investigate the construct of ‘leadership’ from a social constructivism perspective. Which interpretations does this construct have, and does the meanings given to the construct differ from an academician point of view compared to the practical thoughts among people in general? We know this is a topic undergoing constant research, and in the eyes of social constructivism ‘leadership’ can be seen as a construct created in the imagination of social scientists (Michell, 2013). This paper addresses the research question: *“Which meanings are appointed to the construct of ‘leadership’ through its definitions, and to what degree does intersubjectivity play a role on its acceptance?”*

A systematized literature review (Grant and Both, 2009) is conducted, focusing on gathering definitions from the most cited literature on leadership. From the systemized review, 30 definitions on ‘leadership’ were extracted. These definitions gathered shows the diverging meanings given to leadership by academics, however, this is not new findings, referring to Stogdill (1974). We further conducted ten semi-structured interviews on randomly selected people in Oslo. Answers showed that people interpret ‘leadership’ differently. There is also difference between academical definitions and everyday people’s interpretation of the construct. When it comes to the acceptance of social constructs, we conclude that it seems that we have created an intersubjective network which believes in ‘leadership’. Intersubjectivity states that our social reality is created through interactions and a mutual subjective shared agreement towards social phenomenon. It offers further interesting areas of research on the mediating role of intersubjectivity to the acceptant of social constructs.

1. Introduction

This thesis will investigate ‘leadership’ as a construct through the lens of social constructivism within an intersubjective perspective. In general terms, social constructivism is the creation of the social reality we live in. The social reality can be seen as beliefs and social representations created through interactions with others (P. L. Berger & Luckmann, 1991). It is these phenomena that are of interest, as it can be argued that constructs are the creation of imaginative facts (J. Berger, 2016; Bloor, 1983; Michell, 2013).

Scientists have observed certain phenomena and objects and ascribed them names. This can be categorized in two main groups, the objective reality, and the subjective reality. The objective reality consists of trees, stones, animals etc., which have been ascribed names and given meaning. Natural laws would be phenomena that also can be physically observed, for example gravity. In the subjective reality social science has created constructs such as stress, laws, and leadership – which in turn are ascribed names and given meaning. Berger and Luckman (1966) argue that we socially construct reality by our use of shared and agreed meanings communicated via language; that is, that our beliefs about the world are social inventions (P. L. Berger & Luckmann, 1991).

As the topic of social constructivism incorporates many factors, and scientist dedicate their careers to the topic, we will use one exact construct in order to narrow down our selection of research and theories. The construct we will highlight and analyze through both our theoretical framework, and by a two-part research design, is the construct of “leadership”. Before we depart into the world of leadership, a detailed introduction to constructs will be given.

Constructs are imaginative, theoretical concepts of non-observable phenomena, used to help us navigate, and create understanding to our surroundings (Slaney & Racine, 2013a, 2013b). Validating unobservable phenomena occurs when scientists believe that they have found patterns within a network, reflecting a construct which they have ascribed meaning towards. The network in which the construct exist is often based on inductive reasoning. As stated by Cronbach and Meehl (1995) *“unless the network makes contact with observations, and exhibits explicit, public steps of inference, construct validation cannot be claimed”* (in Cronbach & Meehl, 1955, p. 291). Within the network, researchers aim to find correlations underpinning the theorized construct. Researchers use different

measuring tests such as observation reports, however, as stated by Cronbach and Meehl (1995) “*for most tests intended to measure constructs, adequate criteria do not exist. This being the case, many such tests have been left unvalidated*” (p. 291). Not having adequate tests, and relying on correlations within the postulated network, construct validation is highly inductive and based upon researchers’ interpretations of correlations. Even if scientists find adequate correlations, as shown in Rolf Dobelli (2013) book ‘*The art of thinking clearly*’, correlations do not always tell the truth (Dobelli, 2013).

Through utilizing the theory of intersubjectivity, this thesis will offer a different viewpoint on the established belief of ‘leadership’. Intersubjectivity, as presented by Husserl (1859 - 1938) is the notion that we as individuals do not live in subjectively private domains, rather, we live in a shared subjective understanding of the reality we live in, created through interactions with each other. Husserl (1859 - 1930) argues for that the world we experience exists through others experiencing the same world (in Crossley, 1996).

The reason for focusing on intersubjectivity is that it purposes explanatory reasons for why we in large numbers can seemingly agree upon the meanings created towards our reality. Although intersubjectivity does not directly address social constructivism, it offers interesting points to how we create our social world through interactions, search for recognition, language, and shared beliefs and meanings. We will present intersubjectivity in the context of our research topic, which will focus on how the subjective network affects what we accept and not.

Although intersubjectivity can be seen as the fundament, the paper will also address other prevalent theories that provide explanatory reasons towards the agreement of social constructs. Certain cognitive mechanisms and heuristics will be address, as this in large affects how people perceive, understand and associate with the social world. Discourse and narratives will also be addressed, as these are essential topics within social constructivism.

2. Research question development

Constructs can be seen as made up in order to provide explanations to phenomenon not necessarily explainable (Michell, 2013). As put in the words of Nunnally (1967) “*Literally a construct is something that the scientist puts together from his own imagination*” (in Michell, 2013, p. 85). We postulate that we should

be critical towards constructs created within social science as there is a lack in their validating value and the process of construct creation. Our contribution to this body of literature is investigating the mediating role intersubjectivity might have on social constructivism.

Scholars such as Alvesson & Sveningsson (2003) and Lakomski (2005) show that the interpretations of 'leadership' is rather fluid and lacks any clear objective definition or essence (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003; Lakomski, 2005). As put forth by Ralph Stogdill (1904 – 1978) in his book *Handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research* - "There are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (Stogdill, 1974, p. 259). How 'leadership' is perceived, is highly affected by several factors. We question why 'leadership' has such a prevalent stand in society, when there is a clear lack in a unanimous interpretation of the construct. This leads us to our research question:

"Which meanings are appointed to the construct of 'leadership' through its definitions, and to what degree does intersubjectivity play a role on its acceptance?"

In the light of Yin (2014), the research question should indicate which research methods will be used to reply to the research question given (in Baskarada, 2014). This thesis will be a mixed study, consisting of a theoretical study, systemized structured literature review and semi-structured interviews utilizing folk psychology (Cooper, 1984; Stich, 1983). The study is mixed in order to provide a nuanced picture towards the different interpretations of the construct 'leadership'.

3. Literature review

As with all knowledge we human possess, the question of epistemology arises. In general terms, epistemology questions the nature of the knowledge we possess, the validity of knowledge and the rationality in justifying it. There are several branches within epistemology such as realism, empiricism and constructivism. Our paper is within the branch of constructivism, which views what we know as creations of our own imagination rather than objective truths. What we know, and how we view reality is an invention made by us. The focus we have

within constructivism is on what determines what we choose to believe and how we seemingly accept certain constructs as true (Schutz, 1954).

When a relation is not determined by rules, or our behavior is not based on logical consequences, social constructivists argue for that there are social conventions that determine our behavior, thoughts and our perceptions (Lynch, 1992). Marriage can be used as an example. One can argue that marriage is not a rational act, and neither is it determined by natural rules, yet the value society derives from it can be found within social conventions and will remain an exercised practice. Social constructivism is a determinant factor for how we perceive the daily life around us. We will present a selected number of theories, which are prevalent within social constructivism.

3.1. What is a Construct?

In general terms, one can define a construct as *“Theoretical concepts used by theoretical and empirical psychologist alike in their discourse about psychologically relevant phenomena”* (Slaney & Racine, 2013a, p. 1). Constructs mainly occur in the realms of non-objective phenomena such as corporations, nations, culture, laws, leadership, motivation etc. The definition introduces three main elements within constructs. A construct consists of a theoretical concept. This implies that a construct has to consist of a theory that scientists attempt to prove or disprove. Secondly, constructs are based on empiricism. Empiricism is the gathering of knowledge through observation and experience. Gathering knowledge from observation and experience can, to a certain extent, be seen as creating meaning where it does not yet exist. As constructs are not grounded in physics, one has to create facts out of assumptions made. It is fair to assume that people experience certain situations differently and that scientists also observe various experiences differently. The knowledge gathered from empirical research is heavily dependent on subjective reasoning and we should therefore be careful, or at least critical towards the knowledge we accept (Michell, 2013).

Karl Popper stated that if we create universal theories using empirical measures, empiricism can be seen as inductive knowledge (Karl R. Popper, 2005). Inductive reasoning is making concluding theories based upon generalizing numerous singular observations. In the view of Popper, scientist seek for patterns by observing numerous singular events. Scientist then make generalized theories as a means for explaining the patterns (Karl R. Popper, 2005). As stated by

Reichenbach “*We have describe the principle of induction as the means whereby science decides upon truth*” (in Karl R. Popper, 2005, p. 6). This raises questions regarding the validity of empirical science. Inductive reasoning is based upon the scientist subjective interpretation. And as argued by Popper, we can never use subjective experiences to justify a statement (Karl R. Popper, 2005).

Lastly, the presentation of construct, in other terms discourse, also plays a role. Discourse is the use of language to communicate a specific message about knowledge and information. How thoughts are explained, or put forward, affects how people understand it, and what we tend to associate with it. The right discourse can be an effective tool in convincing others towards believing in one’s own thoughts (G. Brown, Gillian, & Yule, 1983; Gumperz, 1982). As put in the words of Nunnally (1967) “*Literally a construct is something that the scientist puts together from his own imagination*” (in Michell, 2013, p. 85).

3.2. Social constructivism

In general terms, social constructivism is the creation of the social reality we live in. The social reality can be seen as beliefs and social representations created through interactions with others (P. L. Berger & Luckmann, 1991). An underlying assumption within social constructivism is that the reality we live in is not an individual one, but rather a reality in which we share with others. The reality in which we create, and share is by part determined by the social groups we have and the culture we live in. Creating meaning of the social world as people perceive it can be in broad terms seen as generalizing individuals’ perceptions of observable phenomena into distinctive constructs. Social constructivism attempts to rationalize social observable phenomena into knowledge and facts (J. S. Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). By observing social phenomena, one attempts to create meaning, understanding and knowledge where it does not yet exist (Bloor, 1983). Social constructivism can be seen as creating, and/or manufacturing knowledge, truths and reality based on imagination (Fine, 1996).

Another aspect that is essential within social constructivism is the usage of discourse. We have chosen not to focus extensively on discourse, but language is essentially the way we communicate thoughts and knowledge. One cannot explain a construct without using language, therefore, it is a topic which may not be disregarded (G. Brown et al., 1983; Foucault, 1971; Gumperz, 1982).

In the book *Objective Knowledge*, Karl Popper argued that our objective knowledge is created through imaginative myths, ideas and especially scientific theories (Karl R Popper, 1972). We have created constructs, used to explain phenomena, which in turn has made us inherently believe and assume the legitimate existence of these phenomena. These fictional constructs created from our imagination are not inherently a negative thing. Some constructs, such as the value of money have created order, guidelines, control, and opportunities. One can argue that without money, as a symbol used to ascribe value to goods and services, the world would be more chaotic. However, some constructs have less of a societal value, and we have to ask ourselves why these constructs are seemingly socially accepted.

3.3. Discourse

As mentioned, discourse is the use of language to communicate a specific message about knowledge and information (Chomsky, 1992). This is an interesting topic to shed light on, as the usage of discourse plays a central role in social constructivism. Scientist are able to create meaning out of fragments of information, and/or knowledge by the use of discourse. It is through the use of discourse, that findings of knowledge within social constructivism are understood and communicated by researchers (White, 2004). How one chooses to put forward the information will in turn affect how people interpret, understand, and associate with the construct (Gumperz, 1982). As Gregory Bateson (1972) puts it “*Have we been misled by the existence of a single term in our language to think that it reflects some uniform reality?*” (in Leavitt, Pondy, & Boje, 1989, p. 224). Bateson argued that we improvise our language when it comes to describing phenomena, and that we have to be critical towards using a single term, i.e. leadership, to explain and create familiarity towards the phenomenon (Leavitt et al., 1989). Karl Weick introduced enactment theory, which argues for that humans are not rational beings, where we fail to go beyond the knowledge and experience, we have created for ourselves, and that we enact our own reality. Talking about certain phenomena enacts it to become real (Weick, 1995; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). A reason for why we enact our realities is to create structure in an unstructured environment filled with information. When we deal with information overload, we simplify the complexity in order to navigate in the environment.

3.4. Rhetoric

One cannot use discourse without language, and an interesting aspect of language is how it can be used to influence others. Rhetoric is explained as the art of using language to persuade (Perelman, 1971). Aristoteles first adapted this term in *a treatise on rhetoric*. He introduced three branches within rhetoric that can be used to persuade others - ethos, logos and pathos (in Perelman, 1971). Ethos is explained by trust being gained due to the authority or credibility of the sender. Logos is seen in presenting information in a logical sense, appealing to the receiver's logic. Pathos is seen as appealing to the receiver's emotions, creating an emotional response within the receiver. Aristoteles showed how people can use the tools of language in order to convince others to believe in the message they are conveying. The literature on rhetoric is massive, although research on the validation of the concept and the measurement of the efficiency is lacking (J. E. Kjeldsen, 2013). Phrasing can for example be seen as using ethos in speech. People often phrase credible names when making a statement, in order to increase the legitimacy of the statement. The way some speakers use rhetoric tools gives the language an extra powerful touch. If we hear a good speech, we are more likely to adapt and accept the message than if it comes from a poor speech, at least the literature on rhetoric assumes so (J. Kjeldsen, 2015; Meynet, 2012; Perelman, 1971; Richards, 1965).

By using discourse, social scientist communicates constructs which they interpret as explanatory to certain latent variables. The creation of knowledge in certain aspects influences what society perceives as true or not. As argued by the French philosopher Michel Foucault, What we view as true in society is be dependent on societies current dominant narrative (Foucault, 1971).

3.5. Dominant Narratives

Michel Foucault used a substantial part of his work arguing for what we as a society deem as correct is a result of our current dominant narrative (Foucault, 1971, 1982, 2005, 2012). What he means with dominant narratives can be explained as several alternative truths competing to become the most accepted by society. When a narrative becomes the dominant one, it governs societies believes. This can

be seen in science and research. Dominant narratives in today's society are heavily influenced by knowledge and findings conducted by research and science. However, the fundamental principles of science are to prove hypotheses. Hypotheses are assumed to be correct until potentially disproven. An example of how a dominant narrative, which in turn affected societies attitudes and believes, got replaced by another dominant narrative was science regarding smoking. For many years, scientists put forth that smoking is good for you. In turn, people arguably believed that smoking is healthy, and thus were inclined to smoke. Later research has shown that smoking actually leads to lethal diseases, thus affecting people's attitudes, at large, towards smoking. In other words, Foucault argues that what society accepts as correct is merely the narrative that is currently dominant until another narrative replaces it (Foucault, 2005).

In a world where it has become more and more easy to send and receive information, the processing abilities of the human brain feels the effects of heuristics, or mental shortcuts. We use these mental shortcuts in order to make sense, categories, and ascribe meaning to all the information we are exposed to. As Jens E. Kjeldsen (2015) states *“The power of the speaker is big, but the power of the receiver is bigger”* (p. 322).

3.6. Heuristics and cognitive mechanisms

Over time, humans have searched beyond what we have been able to physically see and understand in order to create sense out of our surroundings'. The drive to understand ourselves has challenged our thoughts and perception over centuries. Karl Weick (1979) described our understanding of reality very good with his enactment theory. People are caught in the presence of what they know and how they perceive their surroundings. From our limited capacity to comprehend all information around us, we enact our realities based on what we know (Weick, 1979, 1995; Weick et al., 2005). The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard offered a view on the subjective self, later termed as existentialism. In existentialism, it is the individual who is responsible for the creation of meaning in life. Kierkegaard purposed three phases on how humans create their subjective meaning to life. The most relevant point from his thoughts to our research question is the subjective truth. In the subjective truth, meanings created are dependent on personal opinions, feelings and believes (Kierkegaard, 1959, 2013). We are surrounded by thoughts,

beliefs, traditions, cultures etc. which alter our perceptions of what is true and not. Two people can be sitting next to each other on the same bus, and still live in totally separate worlds based on their subjective perceptions of the world. Confirmation bias is the tendency to search and find evidence that supports your initial thoughts, beliefs or statements (Nickerson & Salovey, 1998). When you are caught by the confirmation bias, you will overlook all the hints, evidence and tendencies that would state that your assumptions are wrong. You actively seek for information confirming your initial thoughts and beliefs (Nickerson & Salovey, 1998).

Kahneman & Tversky introduced heuristics within decision-making, which is described as different mental traps in our judgment and decision-making processes (Kahneman & Egan, 2011). When people face a situation, different cognitive mechanisms activate, dependent on the situation. These mechanisms affect what people decide, how they act, and what they believe towards the particular situation. As shown with regards to ethos as a rhetorical tool, we often trust blindly in people with expertise roles. When someone possesses knowledge on a field we know nothing too little about, we often trust the judgments of the person based on their expertise. There are numerous heuristics and biases researched on, we will however limit ourselves to the heuristics and biases which offer interesting aspects to our research question.

Herbert Simon coined a cognitive limitation in his book *models of man*, which he referred to as bounded rationality (Simon, 1957). Bounded rationality states that we are caught in our present of the circumstances, and we have no cognitive capability to process all information that we come across (March, 1978; Simon, 1972). As humans are not able to process all information we come across, we limit our understanding of our world to the information we are able to process.

One heuristic which enables us to make a judgment and decision when faced with a certain topic is the availability heuristic. First introduced by Tversky and Kahneman (1974), they purposed that we make judgments about a situation, topic, or decision based upon which information which is first comes to mind (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). This can be linked to bounded rationality, coined by Herbert Simon, as when we face a situation, we depend on the information available to us, ignoring other facts that we do not yet possess about the situation.

How information is represented also affects our judgments and decisions about questions. Representativeness heuristic is people's tendency to judge a

situation based upon A's representativeness about B (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). The more object A is seen to be representative of class B, the higher we judge the object. If a person, object A, is seen to possess qualities which represent object B, we will judge object A's representativeness higher. This leads to errors in our decision making as representativeness does not incorporate other factors which should be taken into consideration when judging the probability in situations (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974).

Another clear fallacy that influences our opinions is groupthink. Groupthink is an interesting psychological decision trap to discuss as an introduction to our next topic. Groupthink has over time biased important judgement and decision-making processes, with some outcomes being catastrophic. The classical example is the US invasion in the bay of pigs (Irving L Janis, 1972; Irving Lester Janis & Janis, 1982). If we return to Karl Weick's enactment theory, where we as individuals have no information beyond what we already know. By gathering several people, we extend our understandings beyond what we are able to gain alone. The problem is that we tend to create homogenous groups, and groups in general develop strong norms and group cohesion. These groups can then create a mental mood that will overestimate the group's ability to make good decisions, and will also feel overconfident that it makes the right decision (Dobelli, 2013; Irving Lester Janis & Janis, 1982). When the effect of groupthink reaches a substantial amount of people, you will get misguided decisions about our reality which are supported, therefore confirmed, within the group. Janis (1982) discovered, through his investigation of historical fiascos, that pressure towards uniformity is prevalent (Irving Lester Janis & Janis, 1982). The stronger the bond between the group's member are, the tighter they will be, and greater the risk of groupthink will occur. This subjective network of shared meanings and beliefs can be explained by introducing intersubjectivity.

3.7. Intersubjectivity

Intersubjectivity is a term used to describe social interactions between people. In the book *Intersubjectivity: The fabric of social being*, Nick Crossley attempts to unfold the many layers of intersubjectivity (Crossley, 1996). Nick Crossley defines intersubjectivity as “*a view of the world arrived at through mutual confirmation and negotiation between different and independent perspectives*”

(Crossley, 1996, p. 3). The term intersubjectivity was first used by German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859 - 1938) and is aligned with the philosophical viewpoints of epistemology (Husserl, 1970). Husserl argued that the subjective reality we live in is created by a mutual shared understanding, created through interactions with others (in Crossley, 1996).

German philosopher Georg W. F. Hegel argued that self-consciousness, or the self, is only relative in experience to others (in Frie, 1997). An interpretation of his proposition is that peoples' subjective self can only exist in mutual recognition by one or more people. Hegel's view on social philosophy is focused on how we create ourselves in relation to others. Axel Honneth is most known for his theory of recognition. In his theory, he puts forth that the need people have for recognition is formed by an intersubjective struggle for recognition when interacting with others (Honneth, 1996). The role intersubjectivity plays in creating the social world is through this process of participating in social acts in the search for recognition (Calhoun, 1995; Varga & Gallagher, 2012). A notion within intersubjectivity is that what we subjectively believe in, is due to what we are indirectly thought as children. When we are young, we are impressionable. The norms, values, rules, rituals etc. which we grow up in shapes our believes, and this happens in relations to others. This intersubjective network is created from what is expected from us, and what we see as necessary to function in society (Crossley, 1996).

Intersubjectivity also address the question of language. An intersubjective viewpoint towards language would be that the meaning of a word does not exist if the people in the conversation do not subjectively agree upon its meaning. I.e. the word hello cannot be seen as a word used for greeting unless the recipient of the word already has subjectively agreed that hello is a word used for greeting. In the light of intersubjectivity, there exist no self, or private domain. How we are, think and act is an effect of what we believe is correct in social situations related to others, which is in part due to what we are thought when we are brought up (Crossley, 1996). Goffmann argued that what people believe about themselves, is dictated by the intersubjective rules we share to others. Who we are, and in turn what we believe, is governed by what others believes, or at least what we think they believe (In Crossley, 1996). Therefore, who someone is, is only achievable with relations to others recognizing them through interactions in social situations.

We have presented social constructivism and some of the aspect social constructivism are dependent on. Selected theories have also been presented, focused upon what might affect how people create their subjective reality. This paper will now address the construct of 'leadership'.

4. 'Leadership' as a construct

As put forth by Ralph Stogdill in his book *Handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research* - "There are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (Stogdill, 1974, p. 259). One would think that a definition of leadership would be clearer with time, though the same statement is seen in numerous newer published works on leadership (Hunt, 2004; Ladkin, 2010b; Martinsen, 2004; G. Yukl, 2013). We have chosen a definition from Gary Yukl (2006) as we perceive his definition as rather encompassing. Yukl (2006) defines leadership as "*the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives*" (G. Yukl, 2013, p. 7). In short, Yukl (2006) defines leadership as creating goals for which others have to be obedient towards in order to obtain them. In the eyes of this definition, 'leadership' can be seen as guiding those who need guidance towards an objective decided by the leader.

Donna Ladkin states that 'Leadership' is not a clear objective statement and should therefore be seen more as a phenomenon. As she quotes as a metaphor to the phenomena of 'leadership' "*Freedom is not material, no shape, but can be signalized through flags*" (Ladkin, 2010a, p. 20). She also states that 'leadership' is like justice. We believe in justice, but justice in itself is not a clear object, as with leadership (Ladkin, 2010a). Alvesson and Sveningsson further showed how leadership is diffused in people's views and vanishes when people within managerial position actually have to describe what they do (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003). Gabriele Lakomski argues that the construct of 'leadership' is a categorical mistake. His arguments are based upon our use of language and linguistics. We use language to explain observable phenomenon, thus limiting our understanding of the phenomenon's we are explaining. Our views are therefore heavily dependent by the language we use to explain something (Lakomski, 2005). This was previously shown in our section on discourse.

Marxy (1991) argued that the human subjectivity, thus the meaning we ascribe objects, is bound by the discourse we use. Ultimately, cultural on social context has a major influencing role on the discourse we use, and implicitly the meaning we ascribe objects (in Lakomski, 2005). Humans are bound by our ability to use language and linguistics to represent knowledge of objective value. Theories put forth by scholars show that there is a clear lack of understanding towards 'leadership' within the academic world.

Early depictions of 'leadership' figures can be interpreted as heroic figures (Case, French, & Simpson, 2011; Cawthon, 2002). These figures were depicted in specific settings, where acts of heroism could be seen. The figures represented something bigger than themselves, either it was God, or it was the people, and were seen as people who possessed qualities greater than the many. This entitled them to lead the masses in the interest of the greater good (Case et al., 2011). Depiction of heroic figures in early writings seem to have been interpreted as depicting 'leaders', influenced by modern day thoughts regarding leadership. We are affected by our current understanding and thoughts on the subject. This creates an interpretation made to fit what we wish to believe. As argued by Collingwood (1994), studying history from the past is also a study of the present history (Collingwood & Collingwood, 1994). This can be seen in the modern-day interpretation we have of the great work in Niccolò Machiavelli's (1469 – 1527) *The prince*, - and Sun Tzu's (545 BC – 470 BC) *The art of war*. These are two books commonly recommended to read with regards to how one should lead strategically. However, the essence of the books arguably regard warfare, focused towards generals and kings, not to organizational leaders (Machiavelli, 2008; Tzu, 2008). One can argue that our current understanding and interpretations have affected how we view these classical works, and others, altering them to depict what we view as 'leaders' in modern day society.

The French revolution marked the beginning of modern democratic societies where power was taken by the people. Taking this into an organizational perspective, one can see that centralized leadership became more prevalent with the industrial revolution. The utilization of resources and increasing efficiency became more on the agenda. A lot of brilliant thinkers came forth during this period such as Henri Fayol (1841 – 1925), Frederick W. Taylor (1856 – 1915) and Max Weber (1864 – 1920), where an underlining focus within their theories was how leaders

can best increase the efficiency of an organization's outcomes (Scott & Davis, 2013). However, the focus has shifted, as newer studies put forth focus on how leaders can motivate employees and increase their wellbeing. As with history, what we tend to believe adapts to the current societal needs.

Arguably, the acceptance of the construct 'leadership' is prevalent in today's society. There were 201 000 papers published on 'leadership' in 2018 alone. By going into the library at BI in Oslo, the section on literature on leadership is comprehensive, and can be considered a minor selection on all the existence literature on 'leadership'. Grint, Jones & Holt states that reading all books provided by amazon within leadership would require reading one book per day for approximately 39 years (Grint, Smolovic Jones, & Holt, 2016). There are educational programs focused directly on 'leadership' in many institutions worldwide. The term is used in organizations, cooperation's, sport teams, households and so on. There is definitely a presence of the construct 'leadership' in society.

The theories presented in our literature review provide insight into social constructivism and the effects the subjective world has on how we have created the reality surrounding us. We have introduced the theories which makes it comprehensible to understand the underlying notions of social constructivism. Looking at social constructivism through the lenses of these theories offers an interesting viewpoint which provides insight into explaining why we accept certain constructs versus others. The topics brought forth in our literature review are substantial in terms of research and explanatory value.

5. Research methodology

Our research design consists of two separate studies, which will address different aspects of our research question. The two studies are independent from each other but can however supplement each other based on findings. We have decided to divide our research design in two studies based upon the structuring of our research question. A two-part research design is used in order to provide a systematically, clear understanding towards the research question as a whole.

5.1. Study one: Systematized literature review

Our first study is a systematized literature review, defined as an “*Attempt to include elements of systematic review process while stopping short of systematic review. Typically conducted as postgraduate student assignment*” (Grant & Booth, 2009, p. 95). The review will go into how the construct of ‘leadership’ has been defined, as we see this a reliable measure of the interpretations towards the construct. The systematized review will be conducted to underline proposition one in our research question; “*Which meanings are appointed to the construct of ‘leadership’ through its definitions?*” However, as mentioned using the statement from Stogdill (1974) “*There are almost as many definitions of ‘leadership’ as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept*” (Stogdill, 1974, p. 259). There is lack of consensus for how this construct is defined. Our systemized literature review on definitions in not new research. Definitions on ‘leadership’ has been a topic for several scholars, see (Bass & Bass, 2009; Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Hannum, Martineau, & Center for Creative, 2008; G. Yukl, 2013).

Systematized reviews follow a methodological detailed search strategy on existing literature on the topic researched (Higgins & Green, 2008). A systematized review approach includes a detailed structure in search strategy; identifying, analyzing and interpreting relevant literature on the topic. It also includes a detail selection criteria strategy on which literature is taken into consideration. This aids in minimizing biases and allows for easy reproduction of the review (Higgins & Green, 2008). Systematized reviews are useful for summarizing empirical evidence on the field, identifying gaps and find further areas of research (Kitchenham, 2004).. A systematic review will bring out literature relevant for our research question within the vast field of ‘leadership’. According to Liberati (2009), basic components of a systematic review are:

(a) a clearly stated set of objectives with an explicit, reproducible methodology; (b) a systematic search that attempts to identify all studies that would meet the eligibility criteria; (c) an assessment of the validity of the findings of the included studies; and (d) systematic presentation, and synthesis of the characteristics and findings of the included studies (Liberati et al., 2009, p. 3).

The appropriateness of systematic reviews within the field of social science has been questioned, however, Boaz et. al. (2006) noted that the suitability for a systematic review is dependent on the particular research question (Boaz, Ashby, & Young, 2002; Boaz, Baeza, & Fraser, 2011). The process of conducting a systematic review within medical science is also relevant for research on topics outside health and medicine (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003).

Due to the search strategy, a systematized review will be limited to the criteria set prior to the search. It will identify the studies within the search criteria in the selected databases. A systematized review will also not take to consideration biases within the selection of studies included, it will however discuss limitations set in the search process (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016). A tool used to insure a sufficient detailed research strategy is the *Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis* framework, referred to as PRISMA (Liberati et al., 2009; Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009)

5.1.1. PRISMA

The PRISMA-framework consists of a 27-item checklist to guide you through the review. It is used to ensures an unbiased quality of the review through a transparent method. The PRISMA-framework, in addition to the checklist, is a walkthrough of the four phases which Liberti et. al (2009) illustrates in their flow diagram.

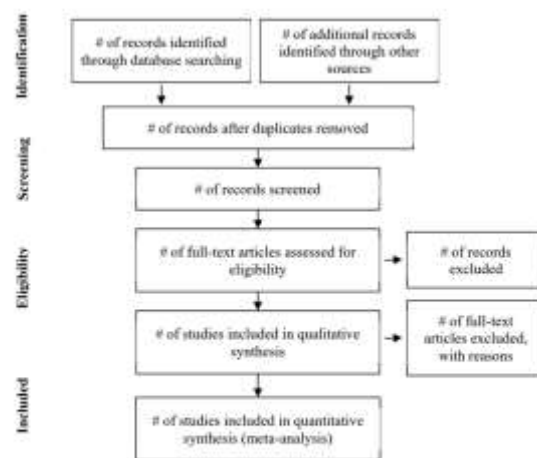


Figure 1. Flow diagram

Source: Adapted from Liberati et al. (2009, p e5)

The four phases are identification, screening, eligibility and included. The whole reason to do a systematized literature review is to gain understanding of the present research on the topic selected or conduct further research. The identification phase is meant to find and identify all relevant research that matches your criteria. Here, the 27-item checklist is used to help set these criteria. Already in the identification phase, the aim is to have such a clear scope and direct aim as possible, to avoid being overwhelmed by all the research that exists. As the next step is to avoid duplicates, it is already requested in the PRISMA framework that several search engines should be used. Our identification phase will consist of five main search engines, which we will come back to. The second stage will consist of screening, which will be done by going over abstracts for the articles and see the relevance of results provided, with regards to the criteria set in advance. The search strategy and criteria's need to be clarified and set in advance. In the third phase, the remaining literature are read thoroughly, to find the sample of literature that suits the aim of the study and should be included further. We will soon go into our own search strategy and our sets of criteria. The framework and the illustration provided by Liberti et. al (2009), combined with the checklist provided, is an academically accepted methodological tool (Boaz et al., 2002; Booth et al., 2016; Cooper, 1984; Higgins & Green, 2008; Liberati et al., 2009; Moher et al., 2009).

5.1.2. Identifying the need

In 2019 alone, literature on 'leadership' within eligible databases provided a large scale of new research:

Web of Science (N=3,683)

Science direct (N=7,273)

Sage Journals (N=8,332)

PsycINFO (N=1,425)

We acknowledge that there is overlap in articles provided within the search engines, however, if we use science direct as a proxy, new research articles published on 'leadership' in 2019 alone are (N=7,273). Previous extensive analysis of existing literature, conducted over the past decades, has managed to cover just a minor part of research on the topic (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; G. Yukl, 2013). Yukl stated that his book *Leadership in Organizations* focused on the 'leadership' theories and research in the past 50 years, covering approximately 20% of the most relevant literature for his studies. There are sufficient amounts of different theories on

'leadership'. The need to conduct a systematized review is already stated from our research question, where we question how 'leadership' is defined. We have already exemplified how comprehensive 'leadership' is, and that there is a lack of consensus in the research already present.

5.1.3. Search strategy & Criteria

A topic with so much existing literature, and new research ongoing, will also inevitably consist of research and literature with low quality. It is important to search for recommended studies by researchers within the field, read literature provided by reference lists in books, screening abstracts and screening quality assessments of literature (Barroso et al., 2003). With a clear systematic approach, the quality of the research and literature will be higher due to a set of criteria prior to search (Thomas & Harden, 2008).

We will focus on definitions of 'leadership', as definitions provide clear understanding towards how different scholars interpret 'leadership'. Definitions are also commonly denoted by highly renowned scholars within their field. Within our criteria we will focus on definitions provided by scholars academically renowned, and high-quality journal publications. This is due to the sheer number of articles, case studies, reviews, research papers, books and journal publications touching upon different facets of 'leadership'. Citations will be used to assess the quality of the research gathered, combined with other quality assessment tools. We will utilize the following search engines, as they are academically approved and also available for us:

- Microsoft Academics
- Web of science
- Oria
- Google Scholar
- PsycINFO

The aim is to provide definitions on 'leadership' to show all the comprehensive and diverging ways it is defined. To cover them all will be overwhelming, yet the use of highly ranked journals, high cited scholars, academically used books and articles will provide high quality research and highly used definitions. Words to be included in the title will be:

- What is 'leadership'
- 'leadership' definitions

- Defining ‘leadership’

We will also have set boundaries, which will further narrow our scope.

Boundaries for our scope are:

1. Literature shall be published in English in order to reduce uncertainties connected to translations.
2. We will use literature which we have access to.
3. We will not restrict our search in form of year published or place published in order to include definitions across time and borders.
4. Avoiding context specific definitions in order to establish a broader view on the topic of ‘leadership’ and reduce biases.
5. Gather definitions from highly cited articles and scholars using citations as a quality assessment.
6. The quality of journals has to be set to either 1 or 2 within Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD) quality framework.
7. In Web of Science, the journals must be within the quality of Q1 and Q2.

All findings will be included in the total material before the second phase of PRISMA.

5.1.4. Inclusion

The 4th phase of PRISMA is to take the last overall review of the articles to see if they hold up to our criteria before including them in our final analysis. The review here will be to read the literature and map out how the authors have defined ‘leadership’. Literature provided will be written down and duplicates will be removed before final analysis using endnote and excel.

Miles (2017), argues for not using books in their search of definitions. Their topic was stakeholders, which is not as broad and comprehensive as ‘leadership’, still their findings of definitions was not as few as you first would think. Miles (2017) focused on articles as they assumed implicitly that highly cited books and definitions will be represented in the articles they find (Miles, 2017). However, we will include books used for academic purposes, and also the most renowned books within the topic of ‘leadership’. The books often include decades of research and studies, including definitions from several aspects of ‘leadership’.

5.1.5. Review of literature included

In our introduction of 'leadership', an already widely cited definition on 'leadership' was presented by Yukl (2009). The underlying expectation we had to the represented articles found within our search criteria was not as expected. The above search strategy provided 527 results (see appendix A). We did not read through all 527, rather, we conduct a face validating process. This consisted of selecting and reading abstracts/ titles of the articles most cited within the search database. The selection of articles based on quality assessment within each database followed:

- Web of Science: Ranked by number of citations
- PsycINFO: Ranked by Scholarly (peer reviewed) journals
- Microsoft academics: Ranked by most cited articles
- Google scholar: Ranked by most cited articles
- Oria: Per reviewed

The face validation process produced disappointed findings. By reading through the abstracts, titles, citations and academically impact factor, we ended up with 6 articles included (see appendix A). We acknowledge that screening out 521 might be perceived as not conducting a thorough screening faze. However, not all articles were red, as we limited our screening too the most cited articles within each search engine, which was approximately 1/3 of the results. The main issue was as one would expect with articles. Articles mainly focus on a specific topic and context within 'leadership'. Many of the most cited articles focused too narrowly, proving it hard to find a general definition of 'leadership'. Many articles also did not include a definition of 'leadership'. The articles that including definitions, often cited definitions by scholars and other literature, mainly books. Reading trough abstracts showed that many of the articles found were not relevant to our research topic. There was also a lack in articles which included definitions on what 'leadership' is, and not all articles were accessible to us. Using articles as a method for finding definitions was therefore excluded. That eliminated the use of the search engines web of science and PsycINFO, as they mainly provided articles in their findings. Oria was also eliminated as it does not provide citations on results.

Books provided within our search criteria provided better results. Within our search criteria, 59 books (see appendix B) were retrieved. Books on 'leadership'

often cover the topic as a whole, with some chapters devoted to context specific situation. We focused on including books with a minimum of 2000 citations within the two remaining search engines, Microsoft academics and Google Scholar. We further conducted a secondary search to see if books highly cited on one search engine provide equal results within the other search engine. In some cases, where one search engine had provided a book highly cited, it was represented by a quotation or a review of the book on the other - some with high citations, others with low. The issue of mismatch went both ways. We included the few books from both sites and gave them a new ranking based on total citations. We included the books with most citations of their quotation and/or reviews and ended up with 14 books with top ranking in both search engines. Six additional books were also given by top hits in google scholar matched with good citations in the extended search. This provided in total 20 books, highly cited within both search engines (see appendix C). A number of the 20 books provided did not include direct definitions on 'leadership', and others were not accessible to us. Although 'leadership' was extensively discussed in the books not including definitions, we refrained from interpreting authors perceptions to reduce potential biases. Therefore, only direct quotations of definitions are included. This provided in total 30 definitions from 7 book (see appendix D).

5.1.6. Results study one: Systematized literature review

When defining a construct, differences will almost always occur. Unanimous definitions are not feasible as one has to consider the purpose and specific context of the definition. Definitions are used to serve the context in which the construct will be used (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & De Colle, 2010). Definitions also adapt and evolve to the current time period which they are meant for (Schein, 2010). Finding a concrete number of definitions on 'leadership' is near to impossible. The literature on 'leadership' is broad, including definitions catered to context and purpose (Eddy & VanDerLinden, 2006). Pfeffer noted that one fundamental problem with the construct of 'leadership' is the ambiguity in 'leadership' definitions (Pfeffer, 1977). This ambiguity is also stated by Bass and Stogdill, where they conducted more than 3,000 empirical investigations on how 'leadership' was defined. They stated that definitions of 'leadership' is dependent on the purpose of the definition (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). Scholars and researchers

on leadership acknowledge the wide range of definitions denoted to leadership, which shows that not only is there lack of a unanimous understandable definition, but also that there is a lack in understanding towards what 'leadership' actually is (Bryman, 1996).

The definitions included (see appendix D) are gathered from high quality books based on a number of criteria. Citation was used to quality assess the books (see appendix C). Inspiration to conduct a citation quality assessment was gathered from Bolman, Lee G., and Terrence E (Bolman & Deal, 1991, pp. 246 - 247). This provides eligibility in using these definitions to show how diverging the understatement of leadership actually is. Previous research has yielded extensive results on the diverging definitions and meanings appointed to leadership. We did not aim to analyze, code, or compare definitions. The purpose of conducting a systematized literature review on definitions of leadership was to underline how diverging the views on leadership are (see appendix D). Therefore, an extensive analyzation of definitions was not conducted. Many of the definitions have clear similarities, yet differences are present. This underlines our proposition, that it is difficult to define the construct of 'leadership' itself, and that meanings appointed to the construct differ. It can also be said that this research approached definitions on leadership as a whole, not including all the branches within leadership. Some of the definitions identified will get emphasized during our discussion.

Naturally, if researches cannot yield a clear-cut answer and definition of what 'leadership' actually is how can one expect that people not digging extensively into the topic will have a clear understanding towards the construct of 'leadership'? That raises the question towards how everyday people, with a clear lack of knowledge towards the topic, seemingly accepts the construct of leadership - implicitly accepting the different meanings and understandings.

5.2. Study two: Folk psychology interviews

The second part of our research methodology will consist of folk psychology interviews. This methodology will bring nuance to the paper within proposition two; why do people believe in the construct of "leadership", despite all it's different meanings. The first part of our research question will also be emphasized through the interviews. We wish to ask 'common' people about their interpretations in order to provide grounds for possible reasons why we believe in

leadership, and further what people actually interpret leadership as. This research method will be used to potentially emphasize the effects of social constructivism through intersubjectivity and our beliefs upon constructs. In this way, we want to enhance the understanding of what people believe and think around the construct of leadership. Before we can go deeper into this field, we want to introduce another theory of approach, folk psychology.

5.2.1. Folk Psychology

Fiebich (2016) argues for the role of narrative practices in the development of false belief and understanding, where false belief and misunderstanding is the short and easy way to describe folk psychology (Fiebich, 2016). Folk Psychology is about how people's perceptions dictates their way of making sense of social life, actions, behavior etc. As Derek and Bruin (2012) puts it, "*how the folk puts it*", Or as Nassim Nicholas Taleb writes in the introduction of his new book, *Skin in the Game: Hidden asymmetries in daily life* (2018) - "*In academia there is no difference between academia and the real world; in the real world, there is*" (Strijbos & de Bruin, 2012; N. N. Taleb, 2018, p. 3). Gordon (1986) and Heal (1986) proposed that our social understanding is not theoretical in nature, but rather proceeds by means of practical reasoning within a simulated or replicated context of action (Gordon, 1986; Heal, 1986).

5.2.2. Interviews

Interviews will be conducted in order to gain insight into how people perceive the construct of 'leadership'. Our sample group will be selected at random, reducing sampling bias. The selected sample group will be asked two questions, with follow up questions when appropriate in order to facilitate discussion. The structure of the interviews can be seen as semi-structured, as it will consist of open-ended questions allowing for ideas participants have to come forth in the interview. We will not get the chance to interview participants again, and we will conduct interviews separately, therefore, in the eyes of Bernard (1988), a semi-structured interview is the best fit (In Cohen & Crabtree, 2006) . In folk psychology, the interview participants should be randomly picked and should not have direct experience or extensive knowledge on the topic. People will be asked at a selected location which consists of commuters within all races, genders, and social classes.

This provides a broad approach to people's perception of 'leadership', taking into account people within all genders, occupations, social classes and ages. The location, Nationaltheatret in Oslo Norway, was also chosen to increase the possibility of eliminating respondents with expertise and/or extensive knowledge on our topic. The Faculty of Law is in close distance to the selected site; however, we do not perceive this to be a major problem. People attending The Faculty of Law mainly study programs not directly correlated with extensive programs on leadership. Collection of personal data will not be done, as this is not relevant information for our reasoning behind conducting interviews. Sample size is also not given in advance. Results should be representable to the 'common' persons' perception on leadership. The semi-structured interview will include the following questions:

- What is leadership?
 - This question will provide a view on what the 'common' person believes about 'leadership'. If appropriate, further questions will be asked to facilitate a discussion around the topic of what 'leadership' is.
- Do you believe there is a need for leadership?
 - This question is directly focused on gaining responses towards the social construct of 'leadership'. It will, hopefully, emphasize the role that intersubjectivity plays in the belief of 'leadership'. Here again, follow up questions will occur when appropriate, to engage discussions.

Sampling will be concluded when we have gathered sufficient amounts of data. The results will provide nuance to the discussion part of our paper, and hopefully provide findings on the mediating role intersubjectivity.

5.2.3. Results: Part two - Folk Psychology interviews

As purposed by Phillip Burnard (1991), we assessed the data from the interviews using a fourteen stage process in order to find and link themes and issues amongst respondents (Burnard, 1991). Also noted from Burnard (1991), we must be critical towards assuming that we can compare answers amongst respondents and create categories of answers.

Stage 1: Recording answers

We did not register our interviews in the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). Therefore, no personal information was gathered (age, gender, name, occupation, education etc.) Recording of the interviews were done by writing down in a notebook answers provided, and later transferred to a word document (see appendix E). This was time consuming, but it also offered participants time to think about answers. We see this as beneficial as participants were able to provide answers thought over, which offers ground for assuming that their answers represent their ideas about leadership.

Stage 2: Review of answers

Answers were later reviewed and analyzed. Here, possible categories and themes within individual answers were noted (see appendix F). We further analyzed if we could find overall categories and themes, which included responses from several participants. We have mapped out categories and themes separately and compared them afterwards to see if we were able to extract the same themes. After comparison of our separate analyses, some reoccurring words can be noted, see appendix C, such as groups, guidance and decision making. We noted overall categories, which includes answers amongst participants. However, even if the categories are not directly stated, with our knowledge on leadership as a topic, we interpret answers as depicting the essence within the categories. The overall categories noted are groups and teams, decision making, guidance, control, power, responsibility, and symbols.

Stage 3: Open coding

In this stage we read through the answers again, removing unusable fillers in all respondents' answers were removed (see appendix F) (Burnbar, 1991). Removing unusable fillers create a better understanding of categories within the interviews. An example can be seen in how we have categories participant one's answers. The original transcript for question one was:

Person 1.

1) What is leadership?

- a. (Had to think for a while) Leadership is to have control, not control in a negative sense, but to a certain degree to control people in a certain direction, where the people being led also have autonomy. Leaders have to have power, although power should not be shown excessively

After removing unusable fillers, we ended up with:

1) What is leadership?

- a. Leadership is to have control. Control people in a certain direction. Leaders have to have power.

Stage 4: Reduce categories.

Overall, we mapped out 7 categories within respondent's answers. The 7 categories got further reduced to two overall categories; Guidance and decision making. The two categories were the ones most found between respondents' answers, and also be seen to include aspects within other categories. For example, to be able to take decision, one can assume that some form of power or control must reside within the individual.

Stage 5: Review of categories.

The final list of categories will include guidance and decision making. We will also include "essentiality" as a category. Six out of the ten respondents put forth answers resembling how essential it is to have leaders. Answers depicted that without leaders, society would not function.

Stage 6: External validation.

Interviews were conducted within the last month of our research. Asking external sources, not familiar with our educational program would provide inadequate answers. Students within our educational program did not have time to review our interviews as they were in the final stages of their own thesis. Therefore, this stage has unfortunately not been conducted. To reduce the potential bias this introduces, we analyzed the data separately, as described in stage 2.

Stage 7: Re-evaluation of categories.

Categories selected go through a re-evaluation in this stage to possibly make necessary adjustments. As mentioned earlier, as our sample size consists of ten participants, re-evaluating the categories did not provide any further necessary adjustments.

Stage 8: Coding categories.

Here, we went through all interview answers with the categories found in stage two. All answers were color coded by hand, linking the overall categories to respondents answers.

Stage 9: Section creation

Throughout the previous stages, respondents' answers go through extensive coding. Fillings are removed, answers are grouped, responses coded and so on. In order to maintain a point of reference, all stages within the coding of answers are created on separate documents. This is done to keep intact the original transcript and have a reference point to go back to.

Stage 10: Categorizing the sections

All sections created from our interview was given separate headings in order to systemize which part of the coding they resembled.

Stage 11: Respondent-validation

As we did not gather any personal information, this stage was not possible to conduct. Respondents were asked randomly, and we have no way of re-tracing respondents.

Stage 12, 13, 14: Findings and inclusion

We have grouped the three final stages together, as they all regard presenting findings in the literature. Interview transcripts in full can be seen in appendix E. Interesting answers got provided, with one person stating, "*what is actually leadership?*". Another person stated that "*Leadership is a natural concept*" and further stated that "*leadership has also been created because there is a need*".

The interviews provided three overall categories, as mentioned in stage 7.

A majority mentioned leadership within the category of guidance. Leaders are seen as necessary in order to guide people towards a goal or in a particular direction. Category two, which a majority also touched upon was decision making. The view in this category is that we need someone to take decisions for us. Leaders are thus fundamentally the ones responsible for taking the overall decision for a larger number of people. The two categories can be seen within our third and last category, essentiality. Essentiality can also be seen as encompassed throughout all answers provided by participants. All participants interviewed agreed, separately, that there is a need for leadership. Based on answers, it seems like people fundamentally believe that leadership is an essential part of society. We need someone to guide us in the right direction, or else we would be lost. In times where a decision is to be made, affecting a number of people, we need a leader to take the decision for us. Participants seemingly believed that without leadership, the world would be chaotic. As answered by participant 8 *“Leadership is a fundamental part of society”*.

The results of the interview process showed that there a wide and diverse variety of conceptions of ‘leadership’. However, the overall belief that leadership is essential to society can be seen throughout answers provided by all participants. This proves to be interesting with regard to intersubjectivity. All participants asked can be seen to have a shared subjective belief in the existential need for “leadership”.

6. Discussion

Through our two-study research design, we have shown the different interpretations and meanings given to ‘leadership’ through definitions. Using definitions might seem a bit narrow, but we have chosen definitions as a parameter as this is widely the way in which things are described. Also provided through our interviews was interesting insight into possibly explaining why people accept certain constructs as true. Respondents can be seen to share a common subjective believe in the essentiality of ‘leadership’ in society. Implicitly saying that we would not function without figures guiding and directing us. We acknowledge that the method and data collection is not as comprehensive as some narrow qualitative case studies, or quantitative analyses as some of our fellow students have conducted. However, findings still provide valuable information towards our research topic.

Our discussion will first emphasize the definition of 'leadership' in light of both the use and how leadership is perceived. Secondly, we will discuss how intersubjectivity can have a mediating role towards the acceptance of constructs such as 'leaderships'.

In the coming discussion, we will address the first part of our research question, "*Which meanings are appointed to the construct of 'leadership' through its definitions*"?

From our extraction of definitions, which is just a minor selection, there is already proof that the construct of 'leadership' has very different interpretations and that there is a lack of consensus for one clear definition of the construct. We will now discuss and compare definitions extracted from the literature to answers provided during our interviews. One interesting aspect to point out is the difference in academical definitions and interpretations from every day people asked during our interview round. Some of the definitions included are from practitioners such as Eisenhower, however most definitions are gathered from academics such as Yukl. Comparing definitions to participants answers shows that the interpretations of 'leadership' differs between the academical field and the common man's understanding.

When we introduced 'leadership' we selected the definition given by Yukl's (2019). Where he defines 'leadership' as: "*Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives*" (p. 8).

In his definition, the word influence occurs. One can argue that being in a leader position enables one to influence others, however, none of the participants in our interviews mentioned influence, either explicit or implicit. Participants were given time to think and follow up questions were asked to create discussion; however, the string of influence did not occur. Through our master's degree, and by reading several definitions for the construct, influence occurs in terms of both definitions and in the meaning of the construct. Therefore, we find it interesting that no one of our respondents mention influence.

This can be due to the negative attachments we have towards the word influence, as with other words such as propaganda and power. We wished to shed light on how 'common' people perceive 'leadership'. Their perception of

'leadership' is an essential part of how society is dictated. One participant, referred to as person 1, mentioned control and power. When mentioning control and power, person 1 also directly emphasized that power is a negatively loaded word and should therefore not be included directly in 'leadership'. They would rather describe leaders as people taking decisions and guiding people, which arguably includes influencing people. "*A leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do, and like I*" (Larson, 1968, p.21) as cited in (Bass, 1985, p. 17).

As shown in our result section from our interviews, decision making was selected as an overall category. Five out of ten respondents have the essence of decision making in their answers. Among our definitions, only one definition clearly states decision-making. However, the definition by the former US. President Eisenhower can clearly be interpreted as including decision making. "*Leadership is the ability to decide what is to be done, and then get others to want to do it*" (Larson, 1968, p.21) as cited in (Bass, 1985, p. 17). Another clear definition which includes decision-making was extracted from Fiedler, "A theory of leadership effectiveness"

(1967). "*Leadership is the exercise of authority and making decisions*" (Fiedler, 1967, p. 7). Both of them are old, and new definitions are more nuanced where 'leadership' as a construct has evolved. Yet, we mean that these "old" thought still counts. Thus, we must differ from holding a formal position as a 'leader', CEO, President etc., where say both strategy and decision making is essential. Though, still within 'leadership' we would mean, if the construct is to be, decision making should be a central part for everyone who wishes to lead an organization, company, a group of people in general. Yet, no one of our respondents explicitly mention judgement and decision-making. Thus, a sideline for judgement and decision making as several respondents mentioned can be seen as responsibility.

'Leadership' is to be responsible was a reply from three of the respondents. This leads us to ask, responsible for what? To be responsible gives an implicit authority to make decisions. Thus, there is a difference here, to be responsible for actions and behavior compared to be responsible for judgement and decision-making. From an organizational perspective, responsibility can be on several levels within the organization, and this will affect the perception of 'leadership'. None of the definitions from the literature explicitly mentions responsibility, though

'leaders' implicitly take it for granted that they have the responsibility. When defining 'leadership', academia has more time, and our respondents just got a few seconds to the question. Their reply is shaped by what first come to their mind, and the experience they have towards the construct.

From our respondents, we clearly saw a touch of personal context and experience for what they perceived 'leadership' to be. Karmel and John Campbell stated that when studying 'leadership', one's conception of the concept depends on the particular reason for studying it (in Bedeian & Hunt, 2006, p. 195). Definitions of a construct should be used to serve the context in which the construct will be used, Freeman et al. (2010). This means that if we were to study 'leadership' in the context of influence, we would implicitly view 'leadership' different then if we were studying it in the context of effectiveness. This was shown during our interviews. Respondents which saw 'leadership' in an organizational context depicted 'leadership' as taking decisions for a group, a person with authority, or a person providing directions towards goals. In general, they saw 'leadership' as a crucial role within an organization, as 'leaders' are the ones with power and control to take the final decision. In an organizational context, this can be seen as rather implicit. On the other hand, other respondents viewed 'leadership' within the context of society at large. Their answers were more focused on 'leadership' being something historically dependent, a natural part of humanity, or, as one respondent stated, "*a fundamental part of society*". Here, 'leaders' are not necessarily viewed as decision-makers in a group, rather, 'leaders' are seen as people you believe in, people possessing certain qualities which make them leaders.

How the context affects the views one has can be argued to partly be due to mental shortcuts, in other words, heuristics. These heuristics reside within each and one of us and affect our views, judgments, and interpretations of situations and topics (Dobelli, 2013). These heuristics are subconsciously used when we make judgments about a certain topic or situation, and can often lead to cognitive biases. One such heuristic is the availability heuristic, which is the tendency people have to make judgments on a topic based on immediate examples one possesses on the topic. It clearly came forth during the interview that the context 'leadership' was depicted in affected the views people had on 'leadership'. Where person 2 states straightforward that 'leadership' depends on context. For some, the first context which comes to mind would be a direct effect of the availability heuristics.

As respondent 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 said, 'leadership' is about guidance, and facilitating individuals or groups. This is in line with several of the definitions extracted from our literature review, such as; the definition gathered from *Leadership and performance beyond expectations* "a leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do, and like it" (Bass, 1985, p. 17). If we take an objective stand to this definition, Hitler would be seen as a great 'leader'. He was able to make millions of people act in ways they did not initially want and ultimately convinced a huge number of people believe in their acts. However, the context of his actions was horrible and gruesome. 'Leadership' is arguably contingent on contextual situations. How, and possibly why, we believe in 'leadership' can be argued to be in part based upon which context we put 'leadership' in.

How the context affects our perceptions is interesting, especially in the way 'leadership' is perceived and in the way the construct is used. How we interpret the word is not the only interesting part, how we use it in different relations is also of interest. Many views 'leadership' not only in the context of culture; some see it in the context of biology, and others in direct experiences from family, work, sports clubs etc. one can ask, for a family, is there a 'leader' present; - if so, who is it? From a biological and historical point of view, a family has had a distinct separation in roles and tasks, yet in modern times this is more or less vanished. If we had asked persons with military experience, where the military has a strict hierarchy and structure, can we say they have leaders at all? Or do they just have people to coordinate, facilitate, administrate the resources to solve the given tasks? We do know that within a military setting, a lot of direct orders are given, though we do not see it as direct 'leadership'. We would hypothesize that the context we see 'leadership' in is in direct link to our own experiences, and in the relations for how we interpret the construct.

Human beings are biologically flocked animals. We have worked in groups and teams since the hunter-gatherer era. This can also be seen in modern day society where several of the definitions both from the literature and those interviewees saw groups and teams as an important part within 'leadership'. the role of 'leaders' is to guide and make these groups and teams function. In these groups, we often have an alpha taking lead. They guide our directions, take decisions, and in a sense, lead us. These people are often given positive characteristics and entrusted by the rest. They

become a symbol we believe and trust in. As answered by one of our respondents “*You believe and trust your leader*”. It might seem that we are so fundamentally enrooted with the notion of groups and teams, that we implicitly believe that groups and teams are the best options when solving problems. And as with groups and teams, one ‘leader’, or alpha, has to take control of having the final say. One respondent in our interviews stated, “*we need someone to have the final say in groups*”. Yet, we do find it interesting with all the focus on groups and teams, the individual seems to be disregarded. In light of the research done on romance of teams, people seem to be romanticized to the notion of groups and teams (KILDE).

To summarize; How the construct of ‘leadership’ is defined, is still unclear, both in the academia, and in the common perception in society of the construct. How the construct is perceived, is founded by our relations for the construct, our culture, context and experience. So, what makes us still use this construct and believe upon the function and need of it? In our earliest stages of life, we do not choose our cultural upbringing. What we believe about a certain topic depends on the culture we were raised in. ‘leadership’ as a whole is generally accepted across cultures and contexts. It is interesting how we commonly believe in a construct that is given widely different interpretations based on contextual and/or cultural factors. The argument we would purpose is that intersubjectivity plays a crucial role in how and why ‘leadership’ as constructs seems to be widely accepted when the views on ‘leadership’ are contingent on culture and context.

6.1. Intersubjectivity

As introduced earlier, intersubjectivity views the creation of our subjective world as mediated by the struggle we have for recognition by others (Calhoun, 1995; Varga & Gallagher, 2012). Although intersubjectivity is not directly concerned with the acceptance of social constructs, it implicitly addresses it. Many factors within an intersubjective network can be seen as affecting what people accept and not. This offers an interesting viewpoint to why people have accepted the construct of ‘leadership’.

Schutz argues that constructs can be seen as trying to organize observable patterns within the social world (Schutz, 1954). He argues that the social world in which we live in is not one of private domain, rather it is an intersubjective world in which we share. The observable patterns that are created through the social, cultural and historical context in which we live in are shared intersubjectively.

Schutz argues that unless we subjectively agree upon a construct, the construct will not exist. This was shown with the respondents to our interview. All ten respondents showed a shared agreement towards the construct of 'leadership'. Possible reasons for why respondents subjectively agreed upon the construct will be discussed later, however, by intersubjectively agreeing upon the construct, they contributed towards the existence of the construct itself. By creating shared meanings and beliefs of the social world, we implicitly create the realities we live in (Leduc, 2013).

The shared beliefs and meanings towards certain constructs can be seen as partly due to social learning. Within social learning theory, behaviors towards certain situations are acquired by directly experiencing the situation or by observing other people's behaviors within the situation. We learn through interactions with others, viewing behaviors, imitating behaviors and modeling behaviors (Bandura & Walters, 1977). This implicitly affects our ideas, thoughts, perception and understanding towards social constructs. If we learn from observing others in social settings, we will adapt their behavior, and thus beliefs. 'Leadership' is prevalent in social settings. This can be seen in many aspects of life from kindergarten to sport teams. By observing others recognizing 'leader' figures in different social settings, we implicitly accept the construct of 'leadership' ourselves. One can argue that social learning is strongest when we are young impressionable infants.

It is argued that children's ability to imitate their parents at a young age contributes to their understanding of the social world (Crossley, 1996). We teach our children how to interact in social settings, either by scolding actions, directly teaching actions, or by being observed in how we behave. How we are thought to act and behave at a young age is arguably brought with us throughout our life. What we learn from interactions with others in certain situations, can be seen to shape our beliefs and meanings towards the situation. In turn, intersubjectivity offers another interesting view on why we believe in social constructs. If a construct is seen as accepted by others in social settings, we implicitly adapt the behavior taught to us in childhood towards the social setting. However, one can argue that later in life, when we have matured, we start to form our own ideas, opinions, and behaviors. This is where cognitive mechanisms offer explanatory factors.

Heuristics and biases offer potential explanation towards why we have created shared meanings and beliefs towards social constructs. As proposed by Simon, our rationality is bounded by the information we possess towards a

particular situation. When facing a decision, or judging a situation, our rationality is bounded by our cognitive capabilities (March, 1978; Simon, 1972). This is arguably also represented in how we perceive social constructs. When we face a situation, we often seek for the solutions which are satisfactory, or available to us. When faced with a particular situation, we rely upon examples which are readily available to us (Taylor, 1982). When people were asked what ‘leadership’ is, only two needed time to think. The rest offered answers which can be seen as the first examples available to them. After minor discussion, we asked if they believe that there is a need for ‘leadership’. Most respondents acknowledge the need relatively quick, while a few acknowledge the need after a minor consideration. This can be argued to be due to the fact that they already were in the mindset of depicting ‘leadership’. The information and examples available for them can be seen as effecting their judgment on the topic.

As with ‘leadership’. We are thought since we are young, directly or indirectly, that certain people possess qualities such as being outgoing, motivating, confident, strong minded, rational, friendly etc. These are qualities commonly denoted to ‘leadership’ (G. A. Yukl, 2013). The effects of this can be seen in the representativeness heuristic. When we encounter people possessing these abilities, we believe that they are representative for the construct of ‘leadership’. As respondent 7 in our interview round said, *“Leaders are leaders because people believe and want to follow them”*. Or as respondent 6 said *“Leaders should not be selected, they should naturally have the qualities a leader needs”*.

If society at large has an intersubjective belief in ‘leadership’, then people will implicitly not actively seek for evidence disproving ‘leadership’. This can be seen as confirmation bias, as we do not seek out facts which might disconfirm our belief in ‘leadership’. ‘Leadership’ is a construct which is constantly confirmed by the intersubjective network in which it resides. This is seen throughout all ten respondents’ answers regarding question two (see appendix E). An overall theme within all ten respondents was that without ‘leadership’, society would not function. We are constantly confirmed that ‘leadership’ has a vital role in society. This confirmation is all around us, from how we have structured schools and organizations, to sport teams and politics. In a broad set of social settings, a ‘leadership’ figure can be seen, which arguably affects our acceptance of the

construct. If 'leadership' is always confirmed to have a vital role within society, one can argue that we will implicitly keep on believing it's essentiality.

Intersubjective beliefs can be seen to encompass all non-objective realities we have created, from nations, religion, culture - too corporations, money and politics. As argued by Yuval Noah Harari (2014) in his book *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*, this shared subjective network is one of the reason we as a species have managed to collectively work in large numbers (Harari, 2014). Harari argues that by creating fictions, we have enabled ourselves to function together in mass numbers. The intersubjective belief is created through interaction in the daily rituals we are exposed for. Knowing how to engage with others in certain situation can almost be seen as intuitive, however, situations are also seen differently across cultures and contexts. This can be seen in how different people interpret 'leadership'. How we interact with 'leaders' in an organization is dependent on which culture and/or nation we belong to (Robert J House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004).

Some would argue that there has always been a form of 'leadership', as stated by respondent 4 (see appendix E). Having figures in society, possessing certain capabilities entitling them to direct others is no new phenomenon. Historical societies have depicted heroes, kings, generals and great men in different scenarios, governing and leading the masses. However, we can never fully know if these historical figures were seen as 'leaders' in the way we depict 'leaders' now. The associations we have towards 'leadership' in modern day society can be seen as a new phenomenon.

Collingwood (1889 - 1943) argued that historical representations are exposed to what he calls "scissor and paste" historians. In Collingwood's thoughts, many historical perspectives are built upon the historian's thoughts on what he or she wishes to discover. Instead of trying to understand what the historical actor in examination might have meant, thought and felt, historians place their own meaning, thoughts and feelings to the situation. Shaping the view on historical events with the process of their own views (Collingwood & Collingwood, 1994).

The same notion can be seen in what Michel Foucault called dominant narratives. Foucault argued that we have the tendency to view history based on societies current dominant narratives. We represent time periods mainly based on events created by the few, instead of society as a whole. What he means is that we

create a picture of history, based on what we currently believe, and that we also generalize historical perspectives based on historical figures who had a more central role in the time period (Foucault, 2013). How 'leaders' were seen historically will be assumption based, and in the eyes of Foucault, the winning assumptions will be guided by societies dominant narratives.

In the eyes of Collingwood, 'leaders' in historical settings will be depicted based on the mindset we have now, as we are not able to experience what they thought, felt or meant during specific moments. One cannot claim with hundred percent certainty that what we see as historical 'leaders' actually were viewed as 'leaders' during that time period. They could equally have been seen as heroes, lucky people, dictators, great men or many other things. We are not able to experience, feel, or take part of historical events with objectivity and clarity. Therefore, we cannot with certainty claim that what we deem as history is a right depiction of the actual thoughts during that time period (Collingwood & Collingwood, 1994).

When it comes to newer interpretation of 'leadership', mainly from the late 1800's to present time, one can with more certainty depict how 'leadership' has been viewed. Rost (1991) conducted a study where he analyzed literature on 'leadership' from 1900 to 1920. In his work, he mapped out how 'leadership' has been defined throughout this time period, and provides a clear understanding towards how 'leadership' definitions have been based upon, and effected by time periods (in Northouse, 2018). Dominant narratives are constantly replaced with other narratives, becoming the new dominant one. This implicitly affects which meanings and believes society affiliates with constructs. The current dominant narratives have replaced previous narratives, which shapes our understandings and beliefs towards 'leadership'.

As mentioned during our interview by one of the respondents, there is a need for 'leadership' based on history. However, as argued above, it is not possible to depict a clear objective view of history as we are not able to set ourselves in the minds of historical actors. History lectures during primary school, literature on history and movies depicting historical events commonly depict 'leadership' figures. We have arguably created an intersubjective belief in 'leadership' trough how we depict history in different media sources. We are thought to believe that 'leadership' is something which has always existed, thus confirming our belief in

the construct and reinforcing our intersubjective belief of the construct. However, we cannot claim with certainty that ‘leadership’ is something that has always existed. One can argue that our current interpretation of the construct has affected our views of history. We believe in ‘leadership’ now, which has affected our historical representation. Societies consist of different cultures, which have different cultural norms. These cultural differences affect our perception of constructs.

As stated in *Culture, leadership, and organizations* “*leadership is culturally contingent*” (Robert J House et al., 2004, p. 5). What this means is that the views people have on ‘leadership’ depend on their culture. Culture has a substantial role in people's values, attitudes and beliefs. This in turn affects how ‘leaders’ are seen in the culture, and also how ‘leaders’ act depending on their cultural upbringing. Hofstede (2011) created a cultural dimension theory, dividing nationalities between six cultural dimensions. Hofstede (2011) defines culture as “*the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others*” (Hofstede, 2011, p. 3). The six dimensions provide insight into how people of different nations, implicitly consisting of different cultural norms, tend to act and view different scenarios.

The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program (GLOBE) was a 10-year project studying the relationship between culture and conceptions on ‘leadership’ which used Hofstede's dimensions as foundation. It involved 170 social scientists, representing 62 cultures, testing 27 hypotheses with data gathered from 17,300 managers from 951 organizations (Robert J House et al., 2004). The Globe research program showed, in short, how the cultural dimension a nation falls under affects people's attitudes, beliefs, and interactions with ‘leadership’. Although this study was focused on culture in an organizational level, the results still provide interesting aspects on ‘leadership’ as a whole. Depending on which cultural dimension a nation fell under, the views of ‘leadership’ differ. Some cultures view ‘leadership’ as important, and almost romanticize ‘leadership’, other are more skeptical towards ‘leadership’ in fear of power abusing.

Although different cultures have different views on ‘leadership’, the construct as a whole is arguably accepted across cultures. It is interesting how we commonly believe in a construct which is given widely different cultural

interpretations. The argument we would purpose is that intersubjectivity plays a crucial role in how and why 'leadership' as constructs seems to be widely accepted, when the views on 'leadership' are contingent to culture. Intersubjectivity states that what we believe is partly due to what we are thought in social settings as infants. In our earliest stages of life, we do not choose our cultural upbringing. Which cultural upbringing we have, affects our values, views and beliefs, and one can state that this is partly chosen for us. This provides explanatory reasons for why we have adopted different views of 'leadership'. However, despite the different cultural views we might have on 'leadership', the construct as a whole is intersubjectively agreed upon.

We have had alphas in packs during hunter gatherer societies, - kings, queens, generals, bishops and other authoritative figures throughout earlier civilizations, - and now presidents, politicians, CEO's. Society is fundamentally rooted with the notion of 'leadership', which is, either directly or indirectly, passed to infants in their learning of the social world. In this shared subjective network, the meaning, attributes and values we possess 'leadership' with gets an objective stand in society. Being constantly surrounded by the construct of 'leadership' seems to have created the spread acceptance towards the construct.

This was also seen from the respondents during our interviews. We asked two question, one focusing on what they believe 'leadership' is, and the other focusing on if they believe that we need 'leadership'. Answers to question one where diverging (see appendix E). This was somewhat expected, as shown in this paper, a lot of factors affect how people interpret 'leadership'. However, regardless of respondents diverging views on what 'leadership' is, by merely describing the construct, respondents implicitly state that they believe in the construct. This is where Question two offered interesting aspects towards intersubjectivity and the acceptance of 'leadership'.

After analyzing answers, a set of overall categories where mapped out (see appendix F). Within these categories, one overall theme can be seen - essentiality. All respondents viewed 'leadership' as an essential part of society. As one participant responded, "*without leadership, it would be a circus*". Regardless of different interpretations towards the construct, all respondents collectively believed in the need for 'leadership'. It seems possible that trough our strive for recognition in social settings, observing others at an impressionable age, and being constantly

confirmed through media and other outlets that 'leadership' is a phenomenon we need, an intersubjective network has been created. We have seemingly accepted 'leadership' as we are constantly surrounded by the construct. We live in a post-modern society where humanism is at front. Previous societies have consisted of symbolic figures offering comfort, guidance, structure and direction. One can argue that we still seek for symbols offering the same, and that we have coined these symbols as 'leaders'.

The purpose of this paper was not to see the possible positive and/or negative effects of 'leadership'. However, a rather interesting aspect with regards to 'leadership' and its essentiality is how respondents collectively depicted 'leadership' as something positive. Only one respondent mentioned power but withdrew the answer as power was a negatively loaded word. The general conception between respondents to our interview was that 'leadership' is positive. This can also offer why people see 'leadership' as essential for society. It seems like people have a relentless positive association with the word (Kellerman, 2004). We tend to focus on the cases where 'leadership' is positive, disregarding the negative side.

By focusing on intersubjectivity as an explanatory factor, several interesting viewpoints have been highlighted, showing the possibility that we have indeed a shared subjective belief in 'leadership'. Having created this intersubjective belief in the construct, 'leadership' in turn exists in our reality. We are not stipulating that this is an indefinite answer to such a broad and extensive topic, but intersubjectivity offers interesting areas for further research on why society has accepted certain constructs.

Although the paper has not directly addressed construct validity, it has implicitly addressed this through the construct of 'leadership'. As shown with 'leadership', the validity of construct should be questioned. As constructs can be argued as imaginative facts created from the minds of social scientist, the process of validation should have better and clearer guidance. Social constructs affect how we perceive the reality in which we live, therefore, creating and accepting constructs should be much stricter than it is. There is a clear lack in sufficient tools and guidelines, therefore, there is a need for further examination.

7. Limitations

Limitation section will focus on the limitations directly encountered when working with our research question, rather than the topic as a whole (Connelly, 2013). As both topics investigated, social constructivism and 'leadership', include comprehensive research and literature, covering all topics within a six-month time period is not possible. This was a limitation, although we acknowledge that most topics for research consist of extensive prior literature. Time served as another limitation, but this should not affect the validity and reliability of our research.

Immediate limitations encountered during information gathering was access to studies and literature. We have included extensive literature on the topic, but we were not able to access certain articles and books which would have offered other interesting insight on the topic. A strategy used to overcome the accessibility was to include literature referring to the original work which was not accessible to us. However, we acknowledge that this offers the authors interpretations from the original work, rather than being able to gather our own interpretations.

As with qualitative studies, another limitation is the extension of our findings. As we have written a theoretical approach to a research question, conclusion gathered cannot be generalized as it is not statistically tested. Our conclusion is based upon our own interpretation of literature on the topic which limits the findings. However, our findings provide grounds for future research which is included in the section beneath.

Inclusion of theories within the field of social constructivism and 'leadership' has also been a limitation as we have had to focus on a narrow section within the topics. Offering a specific viewpoint to the topics of investigation gives insight to minor area and not the whole, excluding possible valuable insight. Although a narrow scope excludes possible valuable insight, using a narrow scope increases the quality of findings.

Stated early on by our supervisor Jan Ketil Arnulf, we have to be careful in generalizing our opinions on the topic and be as impartial as possible. This proved to be another limitation, especially with regards to a topic which arguably does not consist of a right or wrong answer. Staying objective to theories has proven to be a struggle. We have fallen into heuristics such as confirmation bias and the effects of

bounded rationality. On certain topics, we have had opposing views. This has worked out to be a combat measure as we have discussed topics with different viewpoints. Further, we have also utilized friends throughout the process, offering unbiased opinions towards our own.

Conducting a systematized literature review was also a limitation for this study. This approach for a literature review is not that extensive, comprehensive and accurate as other literature reviews. We still mean that this approach is sufficient and provides clear indicators to where the literature is leading. Grant and Both (2009) states that this is what we as postgraduate students should be able to do. In others world, our method is not a limitation itself, it is more our knowledge and experience to conduct literature reviews in a proper academic and scientific manner that would be a limitation for this paper.

Within our research methodology, the sample size of participants for our interview, and generalizability of answers provides limitations. The sample size consisted of ten randomly selected individuals, which is not a representative sample size (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Further, answers provided by participants are representations of their subjective interpretation of 'leadership'. However, we conducted interviews in order to provide nuance to our paper and show how people generally view 'leadership'. Answers have not been used for purposes other than insight into people's conception of 'leadership'.

With our findings, we would dare to make conclusions. However, our conclusions are more guidelines and suggestions for areas that needs improved and deeper research. Our findings are not directly generalizable. Our external validity can be seen as a limitation. We did not prove one clear context in our interviews. We did however use a random sample of respondents, which would mean that our sample is heterogenous and therefore increases the external validity. However, on this extensive topic, and our minor research, it is difficult to claim harsh statements when it comes to causality.

We have contributed with findings, and we would state that we found that intersubjectivity plays a mediating role within social constructivism and the acceptance for constructs. However, one can as if our research was the most appropriate? For this paper, the intrinsic validity also has some treats regarding finding the appropriate research method for cause and effects, which leads to

concluding causalities. We have conducted a systematized literature review (Grant & Both, 2009), which already has clear limitations itself, where the authors themselves are not experienced or skilled enough to conduct more complete and detailed research. Yet, with the interviews from a folk psychology perspective, and investigate the common thoughts around the construct of 'leadership', this supports upon the research method and decreases the threats of our intrinsic validity. Although the research design was not as comprehensive as it could have been, using a mix method design for our topic, can be seen as sufficient.

8. Conclusion and Further Research

We have investigated a rather philosophical branch within social science, namely social constructivism. By investigating definitions and conducting interviews, we provided grounds for how the construct of 'leadership' is interpreted. From our extractions of definitions, we have shown different interpretations of the construct of 'leadership' itself. These definitions are from an academic perspective which we have compared towards how some random people on the street has interpreted the construct. Similarities can be seen in the definitions and the respondents' answers; however, the interesting aspect is the difference between academical definitions and common people's interpretation. That begs the question why the people researching 'leadership' interpret the construct differently from the people experiencing it. We would dare to claim that the construct of 'leadership', and it's foundations are so wage, that it should not be used to the extent it is today. As Jan Ketil Arnulf writes in his book *En kultur kalt ledelse*, perhaps 'leadership' is on a wave or trend, (Arnulf, 2018).

Our research within intersubjectivity provides arguments for the role it plays when deeming certain constructs as true. We live in a social world, and we are social animals. To a certain extent, each and every one of us want to feel accepted and recognized. A fundamental route to this acceptance is by confirming to the existing norm, and by confirming to the existing norm, we implicitly adapt certain beliefs without questioning them. The main contributing aspects of this paper is the implementation it can have on further research. We would state that intersubjectivity plays a role in the acceptance of the construct of 'leadership', and constructs in general. Though, we highly recommend more research on intersubjectivity as a mediator towards social constructivism. Our thesis gives good

arguments for this relationship, yet our findings is not hard fact, and this thesis has some limitations. There are some others points we do recommend further research on as well.

As mentioned earlier, heroes of 'leadership', and the causal effect among 'leaders' success and the work they do, is a topic for further research. This is a topic that continues to develop and there is already research on this, though the answers are not facts, and also not generalizable. With both his books *fooled by Randomness* and *The Black Swan*, Taleb proven that there is a lack in insight to what causes poor decisions. This incorporates both terms for the future, where decisions are made on wrong premises, as we fail to predict or estimate future events, - and in our interpretation of results from the past and our abilities to miss the causal effects and overestimate the results and performances (N. Taleb, 2005; N. N. Taleb, 2007).

Rhetoric has been a theory in use for this thesis. During our readings of rhetoric and gaining more knowledge on this topic, we tried to find studies to show the effect of rhetoric. However, Jens Kjeldsen (2015) argues for that there is a lack in studies which actually go deeply into the effect and effectiveness of rhetoric (J. Kjeldsen, 2015). This would also be a topic that would gain from more research.

Lastly, future research on the mediating role intersubjectivity has on accepting social constructs is of interest. As shown, social constructs can be seen as creations of knowledge, and they get ascribed an objective value when accepted by society. Intersubjectivity offers interesting views on how our beliefs, meanings, values and norms are governed by our strive for recognition, what we are learned, and the use of language. Some correlations can be seen, as the use of language are elementary topics within both fields of study. We purpose further research on the mediating role, as our findings suggest that intersubjectivity might include mechanism that dictate what we as a society deems as true.

Appendix A

Article search

Articles addressing the topic of leadership are plentiful and get continuously published. Writing upon a topic provides grounds for implicitly assuming that definitions on the topic are included, to a certain extent. Articles were therefore utilized as a source for gathering definitions of leadership.

However, results yielded were poor. Quality assessing 537 articles provided 7 articles to be included. Definitions retrieved from these articles are not further included in the dataset as sources are not satisfactory. Definitions and articles that made it through the screening process are listed beneath.

Search engine	N = Results	Articles included	Not include after criteria assessment
Web of Science	14* 34** 30***	0* 0** 0***	14* 34** 30***
PsychInfo	11* 122** 18**	0* 0** 0***	11* 122** 18***

Oria	0* 12** 17***	0* 2** 1***	0* 10** 16***
Microsoft academics	38* 8*** 86***	0* 1** 0***	38* 7** 86***
Google scholar	11* 68** 52***	0* 3** 0***	11* 65** 52***
	N (total) = 537		

Search word
Leadership definition *
What is leadership **
Defining leadership ***

Definitions from articles:

Definitions included		
Article	Author	Definition
What is leadership?	Silva, Alberto	"the process of interactive influence that occurs when, in a given context, some people accept someone as their leader to achieve common goals"
What is leadership?	Eddy, Ron	Refers to Stogdil
Defining leadership	Harmon, Rick	No own definition
What is leadership?	Bolden, Richard	"...leadership is like the Abominable Snowman, whose footprints are everywhere but who is nowhere to be seen.” (Bennis and Nanus, 1985) p.5 “Leadership appears to be, like power,

		an ‘essentially contested concept’” (Gallie, 1955 cited in Grint, 2004, p1, p.4)
What is leadership?	Max Depree	The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between the two, the leader must become a servant and a debtor. That sums up the progress of an artful leader
What is leadership?	Donald J. Klingborg	The process-oriented, non-specific practices of challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart ¹⁰
What is leadership?	Kevin Kruse	Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal.

Appendix B

Highest ranked books on the two search engines

A substantial number of books were found within our search criteria. In order to be able to screen a substantial amount, books with over 2000 citations were. This was also to increase the quality of the literature. The books listed beneath were further assessed, removing duplicates and comparing citation ranking between the two sights. This provided a list over the 14 most cited books within both search engines.

Microsoft Academics

Book	Citations	Rank
Schein, Edgar H. Organizational Culture and Leadership. 1996.	27158	1
Bass, Bernard M. Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations. 1985.	22637	2
Yukl, Gary A. Leadership in Organizations. 1981.	9528	3
Selznick, Philip. Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation. 1984.	9438	4
Bolman, Lee G., and Terrence E. Deal. Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership. 1991.	8025	5

Wheatley, Margaret J. Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World. 1992.	7052	6
Bass, Bernard M., and Bruce J. Avolio. Improving Organizational Effectiveness through Transformational Leadership. 1993.	6913	7
Northouse, Peter Guy. Leadership: Theory and Practice. 1997.	6698	8
Fiedler, Fred Edward. A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness. 1967.	4890	9
Vroom, Victor Harold, and Philip W. Yetton. Leadership and Decision-Making. 1973.	4693	10
Fullan, Michael. Leading in a Culture of Change. 2001.	3785	11
Bryman, Alan. Charisma and Leadership in Organizations. 1992.	3741	12
Selznick, Philip. Leadership in Administration. 1957.	3551	13
Greenleaf, Robert K. Servant Leadership: A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness. 1977.	3072	14
Heifetz, Ronald A. Leadership Without Easy Answers. 1998.	2802	15
Leithwood, Kenneth. Changing Leadership for Changing Times. 1999.	2636	16
Gardner, Howard E. Leading Minds: An Anatomy Of Leadership. 1995.	2252	17

Lord, Robert George, and Karen Jean Maher. Leadership and Information Processing: Linking Perceptions and Performance. 1991.	2178	18
Bass, Bernard M. Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact. 2005.	2132	19

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Book	Citations	Rank
Schein, E. H. (2010). Organizational culture and leadership (Vol. 2). John Wiley & Sons.	47438	1
Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2006). The leadership challenge(Vol. 3). John Wiley & Sons.	14905	2
Bass, B. M., & Stogdill, R. M. (1990). Bass & Stogdill's handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications. Simon and Schuster.	11043	3
Selznick, P. (2011). Leadership in administration: A sociological interpretation. Quid Pro Books.	10875	4
Yukl, Gary A., and G. Yukl. "Leadership in organizations." (2002).	10020	5
Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). Transformational leadership. Psychology Press.	9953	6

House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (Eds.). (2004). Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies. Sage publications.	9084	7
Fiedler, F. E. (1967). A THEORY OF LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS. MCGRAW-HILL SERIES IN MANAGEMENT	8877	8
Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness. Paulist Press.	8285	9
Fullan, M. (2007). Leading in a culture of change. John Wiley & Sons.	8087	10
Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (Eds.). (1994). Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership. Sage.	6878	11
Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R. E., & McKee, A. (2013). Primal leadership: Unleashing the power of emotional intelligence. Harvard Business Press.	6207	12
Stogdill, R. M. (1974). Handbook of leadership: A survey of theory and research. Free Press.	5562	13
Wheatley, M. (2011). Leadership and the new science: Discovering order in a chaotic world. ReadHowYouWant. com.	5109	14
Heifetz, R. A., & Heifetz, R. (1994). Leadership without easy answers (Vol. 465). Harvard University Press.	5040	15
Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2001). School leadership that works: From research to results. ASCD.	4965	16
Vroom, V. H., & Yetton, P. W. (1973). Leadership and decision-making (Vol. 110). University of Pittsburgh Pre.	4609	17

Rost, J. C. (1993). Leadership for the twenty-first century. Greenwood Publishing Group.	3946	18
Aaker, D. A., & Joachimsthaler, E. (2012). Brand leadership. Simon and Schuster.	3776	19
Bass, B. M., & Bass, R. (2009). The Bass handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications. Simon and Schuster.	3738	20
Kotter, J. P. (2008). Force for change: How leadership differs from management. Simon and Schuster.	3720	21
Covey, S. R. (1992). Principle centered leadership. Simon and Schuster.	3675	22
Finkelstein, S., Hambrick, D., & Cannella, A. A. (1996). Strategic leadership. St. Paul: West Educational Publishing.	3624	23
Tichy, N., & Devanna, M. (1986). Transformational leadership. New York: Wiley.	3364	24
Gardner, J. (1993). On leadership. Simon and Schuster.	3138	25
Goleman, D. (2000). Leadership that gets results. Harvard business review, 78(2), 4-17.	3131	26
Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement. Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 350 Sansome Street, San Francisco, CA 94104 (US sales); Maxwell Macmillan International Publishing Group, 866 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022 (sales outside US)..	3064	27

Fullan, M. (2005). <i>Leadership & sustainability: System thinkers in action</i> . Corwin Press.	3040	28
Wheatley, M. J. (1994). <i>Leadership and the new science: Learning about organization from an orderly universe</i> . Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 155 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94104-4109 (paperback: ISBN-1-881052-44-3, \$15.95; hardcover: ISBN-1-88105-2-01-X, \$24.95)..	2980	29
Conger, J. A., & Kanungo, R. N. (1998). <i>Charismatic leadership in organizations</i> . Sage Publications.	2916	30
Spillane, J. P. (2012). <i>Distributed leadership</i> (Vol. 4). John Wiley & Sons.	2817	31
DePree, M. (2011). <i>Leadership is an art</i> . Currency.	2789	32
Peters, T. J., & Austin, N. (1985). <i>A passion for excellence. The leadership difference</i> .	2716	33
Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). <i>Changing leadership for changing times</i> . McGraw-Hill Education (UK).	2520	34
Juran, J. M. (2003). <i>Juran on leadership for quality</i> . Simon and Schuster.	2376	35
Gardner, H. E. (2011). <i>Leading minds: An anatomy of leadership</i> . Hachette UK.	2249	36
Kernell, S. (2006). <i>Going public: New strategies of presidential leadership</i> . CQ Press.	2180	37
Lord, R. G., & Maher, K. J. (2002). <i>Leadership and information processing: Linking perceptions and performance</i> . Routledge.	2161	38

Hargreaves, A., & Fink, D. (2012). Sustainable leadership (Vol. 6). John Wiley & Sons.

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Fullan, M. (Ed.). (2003). The moral imperative of school leadership. Corwin press.

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Appendix C

Overall Citation ranking

Using citations are a measure for quality assessing the books was inspired by (kilde). Layout is copied from (kilde). The overall ranking follows a numeric path from 1 to 14. We also included 6 books, which got high citations on one search engine, but which was not found within the other search engine. From the total 20 books, 30 definitions were retrieved from 7 of them. This is due to books not including definitions, and books not accessible to us.

M.	G.	Overall		
A.	S.	Ranking	Author	Year Title
1	1	1	Schein, Edgar H.	1996 <i>Organizational Culture and Leadership</i>
2	2	2	Bass, Bernard M.	1985 <i>Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations</i>
4	4	3	Selznick, Philip.	1984 <i>Leadership in Administration: A Sociological Interpretation</i>
3	6	4	Yukl, Gary A.	1981 <i>Leadership in Organizations</i>
5	5	5	Bolman, Lee G., and Terrence E.	1991 <i>Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership</i>

8	3	6 Northouse, Peter Guy.	1997 <i>Leadership: Theory and Practice</i>
9	8	7 Fiedler, Fred Edward.	1967 <i>A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness</i>
			<i>Improving Organizational Effectiveness through Transformational</i>
7	11	8 Bass, Bernard M., and Bruce J. Avolio.	1993 <i>Leadership</i>
6	14	9 Wheatley, Margaret J.	1992 <i>Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World</i>
11	10	10 Fullan, Michael.	2001 <i>Leading in a Culture of Change</i>
			<i>Servant Leadership: A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power and</i>
14	9	11 Greenleaf, Robert K.	1977 <i>Greatness</i>
		Vroom, Victor Harold, and Philip W.	
10	17	12 Yetton.	1973 <i>Leadership and Decision-Making</i>
15	15	13 Heifetz, Ronald.	1998 <i>Leadership Without Easy Answers</i>
12	32	14 Bryman, Alan.	1992 <i>Charisma and Leadership in Organizations</i>

Layout copied from Bolman, Lee G., and Terrence E. (1991) pp. 436-437.

The following six books were included, cause their high score in Google Scholar, and high citations for reviews and comments within Microsoft Academics

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2006). *The leadership challenge*(Vol. 3). John Wiley & Sons.

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

House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Javidan, M., Dorfman, P. W., & Gupta, V. (Eds.). (2004). *Culture, leadership, and organizations: The GLOBE study of 62 societies*. Sage

Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R. E., & McKee, A. (2013). *Primal leadership: Unleashing the power of emotional intelligence*. Harvard Business Press.

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Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2001). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. ASCD.

Appendix D

Definitions included from books

Books which got included after conducting our citations criteria were read until the point where definitions were presented. Some books were read as a whole, which were included in our overall paper, however, for the purpose of definitions, books were read until definitions were presented. Listed beneath are 30 definitions of leadership gathered from 9 books included. Some books provided more than one definition, which are included in the overall list, while others provided no definition, or were not accessible to us.

Leadership and Performance beyond expectations

Eisenhower *“Leadership is the ability to decide what is to be done, and then get others to want to do it”* (p. 17)

Truman *“A leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do, and like it”* (p. 17)

Leadership in administration: A sociological interpretation

Philip Selznick *“An institutional leader... is primarily an expert in the promotion and protection of values”* (p. 28)

Leadership in Organizations

Yukl *“Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives”* (p. 8)

Hemphill & Coons *“Leadership is “the behavior of an individual... directing the activities of a group toward a shared goal”* (p. 7)

Katz & Kahn *"The influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with routine directives of the organization"*(p. 528)

Rauch & Behling *"the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement"* (p. 46)

Richards & Engle *"Leadership is about articulating visions, embodying values, and creating the environment within which things can be accomplished"* (p. 206)

Jacob & Jaques *"Leadership is a process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve purpose"*(p. 281)

Edgard H. Schein *"is the ability to step outside the culture.... to start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive"* (p. 2)

Drath & Pauls *"Leadership is the process of making sense of what people are doing together so that people will understand and be committed"* (p. 4)

House et. al *"the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization...."* (p. 184)

Leadership: Theory and Practice

Peter G. Northouse *"leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal"* (p. 5)

Rost “*Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilizing by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers*”(p. 425)

A theory of leadership effectiveness

Dublin “*Leadership is the exercise of authority and making decisions*” (p. 7)

Hemphill “*Leadership is the initiation of acts which results in consistent pattern of group interaction directed toward the solution of mutual problem*” (p. 7)

Homans “*The leader is the man comes closest to realizing the norms the group values highest this conformity gives him his high rank, which attracts people and implies the right to assume control of the group*” (p. 8)

Reuter “*Leadership is an ability to persuade or direct men without use of the prestige or power of formal office or external circumstances*” (p. 8)

Cowley “*The leader is on who succeed in getting others to follow him*” (p. 8)

Cattell “*The leader is the person who creates the most effective change in group performance*” (p. 8)

Bales and Strodtbeck “*The leader is one who initiates and facilitates member interaction*” (p. 8)

Bass *“Leadership, in group discussion, is the assumption of the tasks of initiating, organizing, clarifying, questioning, motivating, summarizing, and formulating conclusion, hence, the leader is the person who spends the most time talking to the group, since he carries out more of these verbal tasks”* (p. 8)

Stogdill *“Leadership is the process of influencing group, activities toward goal setting and goal achievement”* (p. 8)

Sanford *“The leader is that person identified and accepted as such by his follower”* (p. 8)

Fred E. Fielder *“We shall here define the leader as the individual in the group given the task of directing and coordinating task-relevant group activities or who, in the absence of a designated leader, carries the primary responsibility for performing these functions in the group”* (p. 8)

Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World

“Leaders role is not to make sure that people know exactly what to do and when to do it. Instead, leaders need to ensure that there is strong involving clarity about who the organization is. When this clear identity is available, it serves every member of the organization” (p. 131)

Leading in a Culture of Change

Heifetz *“mobilizing people to tackle tough problems”* (p. 3)

Sergiovanni *“Authentic leaders, in order words, display character, and character is the defining characteristic of authentic leadership”* (p. 14)

Leadership and Decision-Making

Cronbach *“Leader behavior is assumed to be attributable to individual differences, situational variables, and the interaction between them”* (p. 8)

Culture, Leadership, and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 societies

House et. Al *“Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization of which they are members”* (p. 15)

Appendix E

Interview round

Interviews were conducted at Nationaltheateret in Oslo, Norway. This is a heavily commuted area, offering people of all classes, genders and races. The purpose of conducting interviews was to gather a general conception of ‘common’ peoples’ interpretation of leadership.

Answers provided from our ten respondents are listed beneath. The interviews were semi-structured with the two overall questions: What is leadership? – and Do you believe that there is a need for leadership? Answers are provided in full, with coded transcripts presented in an separate appendix.

Person 1.

2) What is leadership?

- a. (Had to think for a while) Leadership is to have control, not control in a negative sense, but to a certain degree to control people in a certain direction, where the people being led also have autonomy. Leaders have to have power, although power should not be shown excessively

3) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. There is a need for leadership as it leads to direction. Without leadership people would just walk around.

Person 2.

1) What is leadership?

- a. (Was a bit unsure and focused a lot on leadership in organizational settings) Leadership is also changing, as it continues to change. Leadership is dependent on the context, but it can be seen as facilitating others. A leader has to listen to the people under them and work with them.

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. There is a need for leader because it is good. Leaders work as a joint between the workers and the top of an organization. Those on the bottom have to be heard by those on the top, therefore, there is a need for a middle leader.

Person 3.

1) What is leadership?

- a. Leadership is being responsible for a team and at the same time being part of the team. The leader guides the team towards a goal, and works alongside with them.

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. Of course. If no one managed everything, it will become chaotic. I believe in the need for leadership as we need someone to be responsible for the groups dynamics.

Person 4.

1) What is leadership?

- a. (Had to think for a while) What is actually leadership? It's not an ability or skill, but at the same time it is sort of an ability and skill. A leader is the person dominant in a group, sort of controlling the group, but at the same time motivating the group.

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. I believe there is a need for leadership because there have always been leaders historically. However, extreme form for leadership are never good.

Person 5.

1) What is leadership?

- a. Leadership is guiding people, and at the same time respecting their views. At some point, there's got to be leadership. Someone has to have the final say, without a leader, decisions would be hard to make. Leaders have to take all opinions into consideration and make the final decision.

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. Yes I do, however, extreme forms for leadership is not good, such as dictators. People need someone to represent them, therefore, leaders represent the people under them.

Person 6.

1) What is leadership?

- a. What leadership is, is depending on the viewpoint you have. In a sense, leadership is giving directions to other people. Leaders should not be selected, they should naturally have the qualities a leader needs.

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. Leadership is a natural concept. It can be seen when you are born into a family and in the animal kingdom. So of course, there is a need of leadership. Maybe not in the sense of obtaining profits, or in organizational setting. There, people get chosen to be leaders, and they do not always fit. Leadership is created because there is a need. But in the natural sense, there has always been a need for someone in charge, a leader.

Person 7.

1) What is leadership?

- a. (used some time to think) People follow a leader where they go. Not because they are leaders, but because of how the leader thinks and acts. Leaders are leaders because people believe and want to follow them.

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. Yeas. We could not function without leadership. We need someone to believe in, and at the same time that they believe in you.

Person 8.

1) What is leadership?

- a. Leadership is about commanding respect. People have to trust and believe in the leader. However, the leader has to also be emphatic and care about you, at least good leaders.

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. Of course, we would be lost without leadership. We couldn't have countries without leadership, society would not work. With no leader, people would act chaotic and we would have no system. Leadership is a fundamental part of society.

Person 9.

1) What is leadership?

- a. Leadership is about someone who is responsible for something. Person 9 was a bit fuzzy and also very uncertain, after a while, power also appeared after a minor discussion around leadership

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. Tjaa, no, or sometimes yes.

Person 10.

1) What is leadership?

- a. Leadership is about to have the overall responsibility.

2) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. Yes, indeed. Yes, I would really appreciate a leader. Person 10 worked as a teacher, and said without the principle / headmaster it would be like a circus.

Appendix F

Coded interview answers

Answers have been analyzed and coded in order to map out overall categories and themes. We removed unusable fillers, providing a clearer picture of the essence within the answers. Answers were then color-coded to map out matching words and create overall categories. Color-coding was used, instead of for example an excel spreadsheet, as we have two pages of answers. On such a minor dataset, color coding is sufficient.

Coding the data provided five overall themes, which were placed in three overall categories represented at large by most respondents: Decision making, guidance and essentiality. Essentiality is not mentioned explicitly and is either color-coded, however, it is seen to be an overall theme within all ten respondents' answers.

Coding colors:

Power/ control	
Direction/ guidance	
Decision making/ responsibility	

Group/ teams	
Symbol	
Motivation	

Person 1.

4) What is leadership?

a. Leadership is to have **control**. **Control** people in a **certain direction**. Leaders have to have **power**.

5) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

a. Leadership leads to **direction**. Without leadership people would just walk around.

Person 2.

3) What is leadership?

a. Leadership is dependent on the context. **Facilitating others**.

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

a. Leaders work as a joint between the workers and the top of an organization. There is a **need** for a middle leader.

b.

Person 3.

3) What is leadership?

a. Leadership is being responsible for a **team**. The leader **guides** the **team** towards a **goal**.

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

a. If no one managed everything, it will become chaotic. The need for someone **responsible** for the **group's** dynamics.

Person 4.

3) What is leadership?

a. A leader is the person **dominant** in a **group**, **controlling** the **group**, at the same time motivating the **group**.

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

a. There have always been leaders historically.

Person 5.

3) What is leadership?

a. Leadership is **guiding** people. Someone has to have the **final say**, without a leader. Leaders have to take all opinions into consideration and **make the final decision**.

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. People **need** someone to represent them.

Person 6.

3) What is leadership?

- a. Leadership is giving **directions** to **other people**. Leaders should not be selected, they should naturally have the qualities a leader need.

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. Leadership is a **natural concept**. Leadership is created because **there is a need**. There has always been a **need** for someone in charge.

Person 7.

3) What is leadership?

- a. Leaders are leaders because people **believe and want to follow them**.

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

- a. We could **not function without leadership**. We **need** someone to **believe in**.

Person 8.

3) What is leadership?

a. Leadership is about **commanding respect**.

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

a. We would **be lost without leadership**. Leadership is a fundamental part of society.

Person 9.

3) What is leadership?

a. Leadership is about someone who is **responsible** for something. **Power** also appeared after a minor discussion around leadership

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

a. Sometimes.

Person 10.

3) What is leadership?

a. Leadership is about having the overall **responsibility**.

4) Do you believe that there is a need for leadership?

a. Without a leader, **it would be like a circus**.

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