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Developing Leadership Skills in Children

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Αναπτύσσοντας Ηγετικές Δεξιότητες στα Παιδιά

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Η παρούσα Διδακτορική Διατριβή εκπονήθηκε στο πλαίσιο των σπουδών για απόκτηση Διδακτορικού διπλώματος στο Τμήμα Εκπαιδευτικής και Κοινωνικής Πολιτικής του Πανεπιστημίου Μακεδονίας και εγκρίθηκε από τα μέλη της Εξεταστικής Επιτροπής

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Declaration

I hereby declare that except where specific reference is made to the work of others, the contents of this dissertation are original and have not been submitted in whole or in part for consideration for any other degree or qualification in this, or any other University. This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration, except where specifically indicated in the text. This dissertation contains less than 65,000 words including appendices, bibliography, tables and has less than 150 figures.

Περίληψη στα Ελληνικά

Αυτή η διατριβή εξέτασε πώς οι έφηβοι και οι νέοι αντιλαμβάνονται την ηγεσία. Πιο συγκεκριμένα, η διατριβή εξέτασε τις πεποιθήσεις και τις αντιλήψεις τους για το τι σημαίνει να είσαι ηγέτης στην Ελλάδα και κατανοήθηκαν οι παράγοντες που συμβάλλουν στις ιδέες και τις αντιλήψεις τους για την ηγεσία. Η διατριβή στόχευε να απαντήσει στα ακόλουθα ερευνητικά ερωτήματα: με ποιους τρόπους τα προγράμματα ηγεσίας επηρεάζουν τις σκέψεις και τις συμπεριφορές των εφήβων και των νέων σε σχέση με τις ιδέες τους για την ηγεσία, ποιοι παράγοντες επηρεάζουν τις σκέψεις και τις συμπεριφορές των εφήβων σε σχέση με τις ιδέες τους για την ηγεσία, ποια περιστατικά εντοπίζουν οι έφηβοι ότι επηρεάζουν τις σκέψεις και τις συμπεριφορές τους όσον αφορά την ηγεσία. Η διατριβή παρουσιάζει τα αποτελέσματα μιας συστηματικής ανασκόπησης και δύο ποιοτικών μελετών. Στην ενότητα συζήτησης, η διατριβή αντικατοπτρίζει τη συμβολή της έρευνας στη μελέτη της ανάπτυξης ηγεσίας μεταξύ των εφήβων. Περιορισμοί και θέματα αναστοχαστικότητας συζητούνται λεπτομερώς. Η διατριβή κάνει συστάσεις σχετικά με το πώς το ελληνικό εκπαιδευτικό σύστημα μπορεί να ενσωματώσει τα ευρήματα στο ελληνικό αναλυτικό πρόγραμμα σπουδών. Τα θέματα της διατριβής είναι σημαντικά για τους υπεύθυνους χάραξης πολιτικής στα σχολεία. Τέλος, συζητούνται μελλοντικές κατευθύνσεις για έρευνα.

Abstract in English

This thesis examined how adolescents and young people conceptualize leadership. More specifically, the thesis examined their beliefs and perceptions of what is means to be a leader in Greece and understood the factors that contribute to their ideas and concepts about leadership. The thesis aimed to answer the following research questions: in what ways do leadership programmes influence adolescent and young peoples' thoughts and behaviors with regard to their ideas about leadership, what factors influence the thoughts and behaviors of adolescents with regard to their ideas about leadership, which incidents do adolescents identify as influencing their thoughts and behaviors with regard to leadership. The thesis presents the results of a systematic review and two qualitative studies. In the discussion section, the thesis reflects on the contributions made by the research to the study of leadership development among adolescents. The thesis makes recommendations concerning how the Greek educational system can integrate the findings within the Greek curriculum. The implications of the thesis are important for policy makers and school administrators. Finally, future directions for research are discussed.

Prologue

My journey with PhD began in 2014. At that point I had completed my undergraduate studies in psychology in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and my master in inclusive and special education in the University of Edinburgh. Psychology and education had gained my interest. My MSc thesis was on cyberbullying, where I did a qualitative research on adolescents' views and experiences on cyberbullying. My thesis helped me interact with adolescents and hear their voices. Furthermore I came to appreciate the value of qualitative approach for in depth data collection and the interaction the interviewer has with the interviewee in the moment as a valuable tool for hearing their truth. That was especially important since cyberbullying was a sensitive issue and many adolescents became emotional while referring to their experiences. Mixed feelings regarding my desire to continue with further studies and my readiness to do so rose and at that point I realized that I was not ready to 'get into' the further road of research.

I started working as a psychologist, mostly as school psychologist in primary and high schools. As my career progressed I had the will to work in other areas and did work in parenting schools, in organizations for refugees, in centers with people with additional support needs, in lifelong learning centers and in prisons. In parallel with my professional route I started training in family systems therapy as I wanted to work as a therapist. PhD came in my life when I was looking for new ways to discover how we can improve the educational system and what role students can have in it. At that time I met my supervisor Professor Montgomery who shared similar thoughts. It was then that he created the programme *Diploma in Leadership Skills: Children of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow*. I started working there as a tutor to the adolescent participants and also working as a therapist in other domains. This therapeutic role has influenced my perspective on human behavior and especially in the approach we should have towards adolescents since it is a sensitive period where many changes occur in adolescents' development.

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

"Leadership is not about titles, positions, or flow charts. It is about one life influencing another".

John C. Maxwell

The term 'leadership' has different meanings among scholars. Approaches can differ in terms of their emphasis on personality characteristics, relational influence, cognitive and/or emotional abilities, character in relation to group orientation, and appeal to self versus collective interests. Definitions also vary in whether they are primarily descriptive or normative as well as in their relative emphasis on behavioral styles (Den Hartog & Koopamn, 2001; Vogel et al, 2020). Leadership is regarded in many cases as a complex, multicomponent advanced competency rather than a fixed personality trait. Within this definition leadership is regarded as a dynamic procedure, which can be developed by means of appropriate interventions (Sisk, 1993). However, our academic discourses about leadership and leadership behaviors are informed by and skewed towards the adult experience of leadership. Children of all ages can take leadership roles. However, research concerning leadership development has focused almost exclusively on adult leadership and there is gap in the literature with regard to how we should develop young leaders.

This thesis will examine how adolescents and young people conceptualize leadership. More specifically, the thesis will examine their beliefs and perceptions of what is means to be a leader in Greece, and understand the factors that contribute to their ideas and concepts about leadership. The three main theories of leadership (the path goal theory, the contingency theory and the transformational/transactional theory) have not adequately accounted for how young people develop as leaders and there is relatively little literature on how these theories apply to young adults and children. Therefore, the present thesis will examine this topic via a systematic review of the

literature followed by the use of qualitative approaches that will allow us to examine the way that leadership is constructed by younger people. The findings of thesis will have implications for educational policy concerning the integration of interpersonal skill development in the curriculum.

Aim of the thesis

To better comprehend youth leadership development, it is important to increase the current body of knowledge to incorporate adolescents and youths' conceptions of leadership. This thesis will explore leadership and leadership development from the perspective of adolescents and young adults to provide a new framework of leadership development.

More specifically the following research questions were formulated:

1. In what ways do leadership programmes influence adolescent and young peoples' thoughts and behaviors with regard to their ideas about leadership?

2. What factors influence the thoughts and behaviors of adolescents with regard to their ideas about leadership?

3. Which incidents do adolescents identify as influencing their thoughts and behaviors with regard to leadership?

What is leadership?

The problem of understanding leadership has not progressed significantly since the comments of Pulitzer Prize winning author J. M. Burns' (1978), who noted that "leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (p. 2). Despite the significant amount of literature regarding leadership, it remains a misunderstood and controversial topic in the organizational management, and leadership circles (Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994; Chemers, 2000; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Rickards, 2011; Gandolfi, & Stone, 2016; Vogel et al, 2020). Trying to define leadership and make models applied for up-to-date use is an old challenge that goes back to the times of Plato (Goffee & Jones, 2000). Scholars have tried to define the concepts of leadership and leader and to comprehend the important attributes that define effective leaders (MacNeil, 2006). Stogdill (1974) concluded that, "there are

almost as many definitions of leadership development as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept" (p.259). There are many competing frameworks and epistemologies concerning leadership. Typically, textbooks on leadership start by initially identifying a definition of leadership, which usually reflects the epistemology of the writer (Northouse, 2010). Thus, leadership can mean different things to different researchers.

Scholars in the field of leadership appear to be in agreement that the term leadership is not noticeably defined (Janda, 1960; Bennis, 1959; Ammeter et al., 2002; Nielson & Pate, 2008). For example, Rost (1991) in his book Leadership for the Twenty-First Century, states: "The word leadership (and, to some extent, related words such as lead, leader, and leading) are used in scholarly and popular publications, organizational newsletters and reports, and the media to mean very different things that have little to do with any considered notion of what leadership actually is. . . . In 1990, leadership is a word that has come to mean all things to all people" (p. 6).

There are many definitions of leadership to choose from. The following three definitions have been chosen to elucidate how the present thesis will focus on leadership as an interaction between the team members and the leader rather than a more traditional 'personality-driven' approach to the topic. These definitions are not intended to be exhaustive, but indicative.

> Leadership is defined as the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement (Rauch & Behling, 1984, p.46).

> Leadership is interpersonal influence, exercised in a situation, and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal (Tannenbaum, Weschler, & Massarik, 1961, p.24).

The above definitions concentrate on the use of group dynamics in developing leaders and emphasize the role of interpersonal relationships in achieving goals.

> Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations (Kouzes & Posner, 1995, p.30).

This definition of leadership focuses on the humanistic and non-technical ('art') aspect of leadership in motivating people. The above definitions were chosen as they reveal how conceptualizations of leadership have gravitated towards a focus on interpersonal factors and the importance of recognising the motivations of followers. Congruently, adolescents tend to lead through group consensus which suggests that this form of leadership is more collaborative and social (Michael & Mitton-Kukner, 2016). However, the degree to which the aforementioned definitions are appropriate for the development of adolescent leaders will be a central theme in this thesis. This thesis will seek to assess the degree to which the research on adult leadership experiences can be simply 'back-engineered' for adolescent leaders, or whether we need a significantly different approach that recognises that adolescent have different learning and development needs. Moreover, there is a more fundamental question about whether trying to imbue adolescents with the adult models of leadership dilutes their agency. It is possible that such approaches prevent younger people from contributing new models to field of leadership. In the next section the state-of-the-art regarding adult models of leadership will be reviewed.

A Brief History of Adult Leadership Theories

In order to move towards reviewing leadership among adolescents and young adults this chapter will first review the general theories of leadership. Leadership has attracted the attention of scholars for many decades now and has focused on traits, behavior, situations and other aspects. During the earlier period from 1930's to 1950's, leadership was widely regarded as a 'gift' that required certain traits. In the beginning of the 20th century, the leadership literature was mainly about trait theories (Bass & Bass, 2008; Hernandez et al., 2011), which suggested that good leadership derives from leaders' personal characteristics. These traits were considered to be innate and were often linked with history's great social and political leaders, giving rise to what became known as the "great man" theory of leadership (Northouse, 2001). Even though the evidence was mixed (Jenkins, 1947; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991) it was argued that traits matter, though they are not the only predictor of leadership. Leadership research pre-1945 was primarily concerned with identifying traits, behaviors and personality patterns that would differentiate leaders from non-leaders (Fiedler, 1996).

In the early 1950's, studies concluded that effective leadership is not just influenced by traits, but also by situations. Behavioral theories concentrated on describing leadership behavior that is effective in a variety of situations (Fleishman, 1953). The emergence of behavioral psychology in the 50's gave rise to a behavioral approach as researchers sought to develop new taxonomies of leadership actions and activities. House (1971), from the management field, brought in the path-goal theory, embedded in the expectancy theory of motivation and suggested that employees are motivated by rewards that are provided by leaders. Leaders present the path, taking into consideration situational factors that employees need to follow to accomplish respected outcomes or rewards. However, path-goal theory was not as commonly applied in comparison to the transformational and transactional leadership theories (Hiller et al., 2011), that is also embedded in the expectancy theory on motivation (Hernandez et al., 2011).

In the beginning of the seventies, leadership started to be viewed from a motivational point. As the interest in situational factors arose, leadership theorists turned to motivational theories to expand our understanding of leadership. Transformational leadership was introduced by Burns, a historian and political scientist, in 1978. It is a process of leadership which shows how to change and transform followers. Transformational Leaders are interested in "emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals" (Northouse, 2016, p. 162). It aims to influence followers to move toward a goal and accomplish above and beyond what is normally expected of them. The transformational approach was developed in contrast to transactional models of leadership, where leaders and followers enter the interaction to be able to satisfy their needs mutually. However, in transformational leadership, leaders and followers enter the interaction to have a more creative environment for the advantage of the entire organization (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Transformational approaches to leadership spawned approaches such as the leader-member exchange theory (LMX) theory, which emphasizes a social exchange viewpoint. LMX theory concentrates on the dyad between leader and subordinate (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). LMX theory and path-goal theory made a diversion from purely examining only the leader to explain leadership towards a focus

on the follower and the context (Hernandez et al., 2011) that take us to more current developments in leadership literature.

Increasingly, leadership theories have argued that leadership is a complex interactive system that is primarily situational. Besides attention for the leader as a source of leadership, attention was given to followers, peers, supervisors, work context and culture within varied organizations (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Leadership research has gradually moved towards a focus on the follower. According to Hughes et al. (1993) "now, more than ever before, understanding followers is central to understanding leadership" (p. 32). Several researchers have pointed to the significance of this leader-follower relationship (Hollander & Offerman, 1990; Lippett, 1982), and leadership research has paid attention to a relational and shared perspective (Avolio, Walumbva, & Weber, 2009). Leadership is no longer simply described as an individual characteristic or difference, but rather is depicted in various models as dyadic, shared, relational, strategic, global, and a complex social dynamic (Avolio, 2007; Yukl, 2006). These developments led to ideas about servant and authentic leadership.

Servant leadership emphasizes the idea of service in the leader follower relationship (Van Dierendonck, 2011). Greenleaf considered 'going beyond one's interest' as a fundamental tactic of servant leadership. The servant leader according to Spears (1995) should have the following characteristics: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community. It is significant for servant leaders to make a climate of trust where participants feel accepted, are not judged when make mistakes and recognize that they will not be turned down. Luthans & Avolio (2003) also introduced the concept of authentic leadership development into the literature which is defined as "a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development." (p. 243). This definition and subsequent work on authentic leadership was defined at the outset as multilevel in that it included the leader, follower, and context. Authentic leaders were assumed to demonstrate a passion for their purpose, practice their values consistently, and lead with their hearts

as well as their heads. They establish long-term, meaningful relationships and have the self-discipline to get results. Both authentic leadership and servant leadership theories have growing empirical support in business and education (Kiersch & Byrne, 2015; van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2011) for their positive, ethical impact, and leadership development according to these frameworks fits the 'leadership inward and outward' approach required by behavioral ethics principles.

The majority of the more well-known theories of leadership such as transactional, transformational, LMX, situational leadership theory, servant and authentic leadership were developed using adult experiences, and did not take account of youth leadership. Therefore, this thesis (in agreement with several researchers in the literature) argues that further studies are needed to decide how applicable these theories are for young people (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Murphy & Reichard, 2011). It is possible that many of the elements of these theories might apply to younger people in the right context (Murphy & Reichard, 2011), but we have no satisfactory research on this issue, to date. When it comes to young people, it is usually with a future direction, meaning that current leadership theories are viewed as representing the destination where young leaders will eventually arrive at. Therefore, the focus of this thesis is on the need to start understanding the experience of younger people, which fits with the existing evidence that early leadership training can shape the trajectory of younger people (Matthews, 2004). To date, modern case studies of youth leadership are rare and exceptional (e.g., Greta Thunberg), which means that other sources of information can be useful. Historically, young people as leaders have been depicted in fiction and thus in the next section the thesis will examine the representations of youth leadership in popular novels.

Youth Leadership as Depicted in Literature

Many authors have tried to answer the problem of what makes a leader. Do some people just have the right characteristics or is leadership something that comes from practice? Do leaders appear through social interaction whereby someone is selected by peers? Historically films and books have tried to answer to these questions and have provided us with interesting insights and thought experiments concerning the development of younger people as leaders (Reitan & Stenberg, 2019).

But what do these books show us about how society views leadership? In the following section, some of the classic stories concerning youth leadership are discussed. The examples reviewed are fiction, but they represent culturally representations of how society viewed youth leadership.

As shown in *Lord of the Flies* (1954) by William Golding a group of young British boys are isolated on a deserted island, where leaders emerge, and different leadership styles are displayed. Ralph is initially elected leader and with his intelligent and fair practices tries to create a civilized living arrangement for the boys, as well as alert passing ships of their presence on the island. His nemesis Jack, who is a jealous boy is given leadership over the hunters, before becoming disillusioned and seeking ultimate power over all the boys. Ralph demonstrates a better understanding of people, displays useful human qualities as a leader by working towards the betterment of the boys' society and knows the boys need stability and order if they are to survive on the island. He creates rules and a simple form of government to achieve this order. On the contrary Jack does not treat the boys with dignity or respect and does not treat them as equals. Ultimately, the book serves as a 'warning' against unsupervised young people and it reflects a time when children were not viewed as having agency. However, the irony is that the real story behind the book indicates that a group of shipwrecked boys collaborated very effectively as a group and did not become barbarians. The book was of its time, and Golding reflects that prevailing idea that young people need to be tightly monitored and controlled.

In stark contrast to the Lord of the Flies, Mark Twain's books, Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry (Huck) Finn are exemplars of adolescent leaders who were via their adventures inventive and displayed leadership skills. The common element between both Huck and Tom is their status as orphans. Interestingly, Cox and Cooper (1989) found that many successful British chief executive officers (CEOs) experienced the early loss of a parent or had been separated from their parents and, consequently, had to take responsibility for themselves at an early age. Obviously, the conclusion is not that orphans equal good leaders, but that early certain childhood experiences can be important in molding career paths to leadership. Like another popular character, Huck Finn, Holden tells his own story in his own words as if speaking aloud, in *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) by Salinger. Originally published for adults, it has since

become popular with adolescent readers since its main theme involves the central character Holden conflicted between the innocence and authenticity of childhood versus the adult world, where Holden resists maturation, a process he sees as characterized by loss rather than growth. Mark Twain's characters remind us of the importance of collaboration and team work, while Salinger's' Holden seeks authenticity and wrestles with his identity. Interestingly descriptions of youth leadership in literature were dominated by male characters until writers such as Enid Blyton and J K Rowling.

Throughout the books of J K Rowling, the story of Harry Potter provides many instances of leadership, power dynamics, teamwork, and conflict management. Leadership is more closely connected to comprehending how and where power can be found and acknowledging when to access it. What is significant to notice is that Harry, is not always the leader, which is consistent with modern approaches to shared leadership. Even though leadership characteristics are frequently detected in Harry, and he has power, Harry usually plays the role of the follower. He develops throughout each occasion by someone with greater influence and wisdom (Rosser, 2007). The rest of the team reinforce and support Harry to his role. The relational aspect of leadership is highlighted in the literature along with the relationship between leader and follower. Harry Potter, which is a globally popular character, is an interesting leadership model as he is always embedded within a group and depends heavily upon the support of the group. This highlights for us the importance of peer-groups and peer-leadership among adolescents. The experiences of Harry, while fiction, is consistent with a recent meta-analysis concerning the role of mentoring among adolescents (van Dam et al., 2018). The review shows that the relationship between mentoring and youth outcomes is not moderated by risk factors such as being in foster care which is much like the experience of Harry Potter. J K Rowling is not a social scientist but the Harry Potter phenomenon highlights how the author was able to understand the need of young people to belong in a group, share common goals, strive for ethical objectives, be supportive, and have trusting relationships among their peers and their tutors. The aforementioned list is a good place for us to start thinking of dynamics of adolescence leadership.

Can adolescents be leaders?

Despite the view that childhood and adolescence are important for adult leadership emergence and performance there is little empirical evidence confirming this view (Gottfried et al., 2011). Globally, children and adolescents are calling for action from governments on global warming and the environmental crisis. For example, one significant action came from six adolescents from Portugal who sued 33 countries for not doing enough to reduce emissions and fight climate change (Taylor et al., 2021). Equally Greta Thunberg, Vanessa Nakate, Malala Yousafzai have taken leadership roles, and in doing so have provided role models for younger people as to how to take agency. These three young adults are contemporary examples of leadership as a behavior and action, rather than leadership as something defined by qualities and status. This highlights the importance of studying the contextual development of leadership rather than relying on methods that seek to identify leadership styles.

It is useful to examine leadership during childhood and adolescence as what occurs during an individual's developmental years can have an impact on the leadership exhibited later in the workplace as an adult (Reitan & Stenberg, 2019). Thus, studying adolescent displays of leadership should further our understanding of adult leaders (Schneider et al, 1999). Creating leaders among young people is attracting the interest of educators worldwide. The development of young leaders has been aided by developments in technology and greater ease regarding travel, whereby communication and connection across national borders is possible and active. As a result, countries have the willingness to create leaders who are not only aware of national problems but also are ready to address them and are interested in making the world a better place for the generations to come (Lee & Olszewski – Kubilius, 2011). Through their interaction with their peers students can develop a strong sense of community, social integration and a rich network of resource (Shook & Keup, 2012).

Finally, not all examples of peer leadership are positive. There is considerable evidence of negative peer influence (e.g., Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling, 1996). However, the literature on negative youth experiences (e.g., gang leadership) is beyond the scope of this thesis. This doesn't mean that they are unimportant but that they represent a much richer sociological process that encompasses policy making

and socio-economic factors. Both positive and negative examples of adolescents' leadership can be viewed through the lens of peer and adult modeling, but there is relatively little literature on developmental models and leadership. Therefore, in the next section three theoretical approaches to learning and their relevance to youth leadership will be reviewed. The three approaches are; social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), the three stages of mastery in adolescence development (van Linden & Fertman, 1998), and Rhodes' Model of Formal Youth Mentoring (Rhodes, 2005).

Theoretical Learning Models and Youth Leadership

The Social Learning Theory developed by Bandura discusses learning by observation as a key concept. It posits that young people are heavily influenced by their social relationships and interactions with others. Parents and other adults are important in the socialization process and influence attitudes and behaviors that are learned and acquired by adolescents (Bandura, 1977). Specifically, van Linden and Fertman (1998) suggest that as facilitators of leadership development, adults should work with adolescents to help them understand themselves, communicate more effectively, improve interpersonal skills, manage their time and work with groups. Social learning theorists would agree that adolescence is a time for increasing one's understanding of self and mastery over environment. Adolescents according to social learning theorists have behavioral tendencies which can be modified by controlling environmental reinforcements or through observation (Bandura, 1977). Bandura further argues that children and adolescents learn new behaviors through modeling. Following on from social learning theory, Bandura expanded this theory to a Social Cognitive Theory which approaches individual learning through the interaction with the environment (Bandura, 1986). The theory suggests that the individual and the environment have continuous, dynamic and reciprocal effects on each other that shape learning. A core aspect of Social Cognitive Theory is learning through observation, where the individual learns through the observation of others in action and the consequences of those actions. Another core component of Bandura's theory is self- efficacy that describes how observation of others can be a measure for individual's own evaluation of competence.

As Zacharatos et al (2000) showed in their research, with 112 participants from 13 Canadian high school sports teams, adolescents who used transformational leadership behaviors in a team context (as rated by themselves, their peers, and their coach) were rated as more effective, satisfying, and effort-evoking leaders by their peers and coaches. Adolescents' attitudes and behaviors are strongly influenced by their perceptions of their parents' behaviors and attitudes. The results of this study extend previous research in leadership development. This study demonstrates that leadership development can be explained in a social learning framework (Bandura, 1977). The extent to which parents interact with their adolescents in a transformational manner affects the degree to which the adolescents themselves adopt these behaviors. These findings also show that those adolescents who display transformational leadership behaviors influence their peers, thereby extending our understanding of transformational leadership. However, many adolescents are never offered the chance to act as leaders, and adult leadership models are often inappropriate for teens that have unique developmental needs (van Linden & Fertman, 1998).

Van Linden and Fertman (1998) identify three stages of adolescent leadership development: awareness, interaction and mastery. During the "awareness" phase, adolescents come around to see themselves as potential leaders. They move from a confounding idea about having very little power or say over one's life to a more refined view of personal control and autonomy. Within the second phase "interaction" adolescents take leadership action to "try on" their new identity as leaders. This stage is marked with both eagerness for new experiences and disappointment due to lack of experience in handling with anxiety and challenges. Stage three, named the mastery stage, is characterized by an alert energy in an activity or a reason that the adolescent cares about. Throughout this phase, students get self-belief in their ability to take action or "walk" to a new challenge. Van Linden and Fertman (1998) address the distinction between transactional and transformational leadership so as to facilitate tutors that need to differentiate between doing leadership and being a leader. Transactional leadership concentrates on "the skills and tasks associated with leadership, such as speaking in public, delegating authority, leading meetings and making decisions" while transformational leadership "focuses on the process of

leadership and what it means to be a leader. It is concerned with how individuals use their abilities to influence people" (p. 12).

One of the most influential models of youth mentoring was developed by Rhodes (2002, 2005). The theory provides a unique relational perspective on the social-emotional, cognitive, and identity development processes that are purported to explain the positive effect of mentoring on a wide range of attitudinal, behavioral, and health outcomes for youth (DuBois et al. 2002). The theory positions mentoring as a crucial to adolescent development, whereby adolescence is a developmental stage where individuals are particularly vulnerable due to changes in parental and peer relationships, which bring to the surface questions about one's own identity and emotional intimacy (Rhodes, 2002). The theory places emphasis on interpersonal closeness as the gateway to effective mentoring and identifies three key features: trust, empathy, and mutuality. In terms of adolescent leadership development, role modeling is critical and identification with the mentor and leads to the internalization of the mentor's values, behaviors, and attitudes.

Both the Social Learning Theory of Bandura and Rhodes' Model of Formal Youth Mentoring introduce the idea that adolescence is characterized by asymmetrical relationships. In this regard, the approach in this thesis will be to understand how leadership is modeled and the degree of agency that adolescents experience. The discussion of social learning models leads us to the next section, which will review the way that extracurricular activities influence adolescent leadership development.

Extracurricular activities

Extra-curricular leadership programmes show benefit, as they give adolescents the opportunity to practice and develop social learning and leadership skills (Hancock et al., 2012). According to Veronesi and Gunderman (2012), extracurricular activities in schools and colleges can foster the development of leadership abilities and can move students from passive to active roles. Evidence also suggests that extracurricular student organisations serve as catalysts for the development of student leadership skills by helping students work more closely and more effectively with one another, though such activities are not mandatory and by definition students participate from their own desire to contribute.

Hancock et al. (2012), explored adolescents' participation in sports, and school and community extracurricular activities to measure the effect on leadership skills of different involvement roles and adult support. They found out that adolescent perceptions of their own leadership skills are affected by their participation in activities and by the support taken from adults. Participation in out curricular activities predicts future leader involvement (Bartone et al., 2007), and adolescents often develop their skills and self competencies through participation in extracurricular activities (Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Positive developmental experiences that occurred in extracurricular activities predicted a more positive general self-worth and social and academic self-concept (Bloomfield & Barber, 2011). This participation has been associated with increased school engagement, self-concept, and academic achievement (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006) and less opportunities for time to be spent in unsupervised risky activities (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). These associations have been found to be stronger when youth are involved in a variety of activities and have opportunities to assume leadership roles (Eccles & Templeton, 2002). However, it is evident that participation in multiple types of activities (e.g., band, sports) has been associated with additional beneficial outcomes for adolescents in structured settings where adults are present and supportive (Eccles & Barber, 1999; Fredricks & Eccles, 2006; Larson & Verma, 1999).

The value of extracurricular programmes was highlighted by Angela Duckworth (2016) in her book Grit which concludes that people who had devoted time in high school in extracurricular activities, from sports to scouts and had registered them at least for two years and presented progress had the best indicators for possessing a leadership role in adulthood. The ideas of grit and the growth mindset set have influenced the development of new theories concerning how we view young people in terms of educational achievement and career mobility. Duckworth in her studies explored education from a motivational and psychological standpoint instead of one the most common measurements across schools-IQ test scores (Hochanadel & Finamore, 2015). Grit is a concept that predicts fulfillment beyond talent and is defined as perseverance and passion in terms of a personality dimension toward long-term goals (Duckworth et al., 2007). In other words, grit is an internal psychological

strength figured out by the presence of long-term interest and passion with willingness to persevere through obstacles and setbacks to make progress toward goals aligned with or separate from passionate pursuits (Kleiman et al., 2013). Out of all the studies across the different industries one characteristic emerged as a significant predictor of success- grit which is defined as, "...passions and persistence for long-term goals" (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009, p.166). Thus, grit does not mean simply trying hard. Instead, it means making long-term goals and devoting efforts without giving in to obstacles, frustrations, or failures that might be encountered in the process of achieving them (Duckworth, 2016).

Alongside with Duckworth's research was the research of Carol Dweck on "growth mindset" where people perceive ability as a malleable skill and that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and persistent work. This standpoint develops a love of learning and a resilience that is necessary for considerable accomplishment (Dweck, 2010). Along with parents, caring adults can have a significant role in the learning, behavioral, and emotional development of children and adolescents (Bowers et al., 2015; Kesselring et al., 2016). Associations with extended family members, tutors, coaches, and other adults raise in importance during adolescence, as adolescents are biologically, emotionally, and developmentally wired for engagement beyond their families, and gradually gain psychological and behavioral independence from their parents (Bowers et al., 2014; Patton et al., 2016).

Overview of the Educational Context in Greece

This research is conducted in Greece and it is appropriate to describe the educational context of the study. The Greek educational system is centralized (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007) and driven by sets of national laws, presidential decrees and ministerial acts. The fundamental administrative agency for the education system across all fields, agencies and levels is the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. It takes the key decisions connected to long-term objectives. It also regulates various issues, such as curricula content, staff recruitment and funding (OECD, 2011). Historically, educational policy has been hindered by a lack of stability in the system especially in high schools as each new government reforms the criteria for entrance into universities causing instability to students and the associated stress. It is common

for Greek students to attend supplementary education afternoon courses in private institutions called phrontistiria, where they pay significant fees to support their formal schooling. The existence of these 'grind schools' reflect low confidence in the public educational system and probably more importantly highlight the over emphasis on test performance (cognitive skills) and undervaluing of soft skills (emotional skills).

Besides the aforementioned problems, suggestions for change and legislation by successive Greek governments have not been applied or have not been applied efficiently (OECD, 2011). Greece is one of only a few countries in Europe without external assessment of learning or external evaluation of schools and teaching or indeed any other comparative mechanism of quality assurance (except for its participation in PISA and university entrance examinations). There are no trustworthy indicators in place that provide information on the quality and effectiveness of the system. Strengthening school leadership is a crucial objective, not only in Greece, but internationally (OECD, 2011; Pont, Nusche & Moorman, 2008).

Greek public high schools are mainly characterized by students who are rarely engaged by teachers who report high levels of burnout and feel that the student's education will be supplemented by private grind schools. This all adds up to both teachers and students feeling a general lack of agency towards the education system, where there is little opportunity for students to engage in team building or other soft skills. In this sense, the present thesis is timely in that there is a greater recognition in the Greek educational environment that soft skills need to be integrated in the curriculum.

Significance of the Study

Understanding leadership development in children and youth is an important step in the process of improving and developing better leadership education. This study aims to fill a gap in our understanding of what youth leadership appears to be and what young leaders themselves say about how to best help them to develop their skills. These findings will have implications for future research, public policy, programme growth, and the wider community. Scholars working in child psychology and education have observed that there are many gaps in youth leadership research (Haber, 2012; Matthews, 2004; Mitchell & Daugherty, 2019; Sherif, 2019).

This study can help to inform youth policy at the school community and ministry level. In terms of policy, there has been a growing interest in children's social-emotional development. This thesis will enable the voice of youth to be heard; giving them the opportunity to suggest policy recommendations regarding the kinds of leadership programme they feel work better. Their contribution can help to show the way towards the kinds of programmes that youth most want to participate.

This study can help with the development of leadership education. The results will be addressed openly to schoolteachers and administrators, in addition to parents that engage youth in group activities, informing them about the kinds of leadership opportunities and education that have most helped adolescents to develop as leaders. Lastly, this research can positively impact society by improving the quality of education for the next generation of leaders. Adolescents who are given the opportunity to learn and practice leadership will go into adult life better prepared to solve problems and bring a change in their lives and society.

Overview of the thesis

In order to gather a comprehensive picture of the field, the thesis begins with a systematic review of the literature about the leadership programmes in young adults was conducted, and in Chapter 2 we present a synthesis of the studies that have evaluated leadership development programmes for young adults. The aim of this review was to identify the literature concerning young adults as leaders and examine the evidence base for the benefits associated with leadership programmes with young adults. Furthermore, we identified the factors that contribute to leadership in younger adults and adolescents and better comprehended the issue of leadership.

Following Chapter 2, Chapter 3 is devoted to explaining the methodological background to the thesis. The rationale for choosing qualitative methods is explained in detail. Moreover, this chapter provides detail on the analytic strategy, data collection methods, ethical considerations and reflexivity. Additionally, the ontological and epistemological is discussed in detail.

In Chapter 4 we explored the experiences of young adults in leadership through semi structured interviews where participants shared their experiences and beliefs on

leadership behavior and the leadership role. The analysis of the data helped us better understand how the participants conceptualize leadership behavior and the experiences connected to leadership. Furthermore, we checked the issues that need to be comprehended and identified the themes that were to be addressed in the diary study.

In Chapter 5 we explored the experiences of school children in a leadership training programme using the diary study approach as we were interested to explore memorable incidents that participants had as a result of their participation in the programme and also the type of incidents that they encountered. We were also interested in the skills they developed and the extent to which the used them in their daily lives. Participants completed diaries over a period of six month.

In Chapter 6 is the general discussion where the results from the studies are discussed. This chapter outlines the practical implications for leadership development in the field (in general) and in the Greek context (in specific). Theoretical and scientific contributions of the thesis are discussed. Finally, issues around limitations of research are identified and discussed in detail.

Chapter 2

Developing leadership skills among adolescents and young adults: A review of leadership programmes

Introduction

The term 'leadership' has different meanings among scholars. Approaches can differ in terms of their emphasis on personality characteristics, relational influence, cognitive and/or emotional abilities, character in relation to group orientation, and appeal to self versus collective interests. Definitions also vary in whether they are primarily descriptive or normative as well as in their relative emphasis on behavioral styles (Den Hartog & Koopman, 2001). Leadership is regarded in many cases as a complex, multicomponent advanced competency rather than a fixed personality trait. Within this definition leadership is regarded as a dynamic procedure, which can be developed by means of appropriate interventions (Sisk, 1993). However, our academic discourses about leadership and leadership behaviours are informed by and skewed towards the adult experience of leadership.

Why should we examine leadership among young adults?

Children of all ages can take leadership roles. However, research concerning leadership development has focused almost exclusively on adult leadership and there is gap in the literature with regard to how we should develop young leaders. Historically, organizations such the Scouts/Girl Guide movement and sports clubs have provided restricted opportunities for young adults to experience themselves in a leadership role. School is the first formal organization that the majority of individuals experience. As noted by Montgomery and Kehoe (2015), school is our primary organizational experience in childhood and adolescence and it is communicated to children as being their most important organizational experience throughout childhood. On this basis they suggest that it is reasonable to assume that our primary learning about organizational culture and organizational roles begins there. Children spend (on average) a remarkable 12 years (or 15,000 hours) of the most formative years of their lives in school as an organization (Murphy, 2012). Thus, it's reasonable

to hypothesize that our adult organizational behaviours are rooted in how we experience school.

Wingenbach and Kahler (1997) suggest that secondary school students have the ability to develop leadership skills via decision making, getting along with others, learning the organization of self, self-awareness, and working with groups through taking part in many youth leadership organizations in school and/or community activities.

Today, promoting and understanding leadership among young people is attracting more attention as the lines between the 'teen' years and young adulthood becomes blurred. Indeed, improved technology and greater mobility has 'shortened' the distance between countries and as a result, leadership is about the local and the global (Lee & Olszewski – Kubilius, 2011). Not surprisingly, younger adults are taking the lead with regard to use and adaptation of social media and new technologies.

It is useful to examine leadership during childhood and adolescence as what occurs during the developmental years can have an impact on the leadership behaviours exhibited later in the workplace as an adult. Thus, studying adolescent displays of leadership should further our understanding of adult leaders (Schneider, Paul, White, & Holcombe, 1999). Cooper, Healy, and Simpson (1994) reported that students who possess leadership positions in student organization achieve better than non-leaders on scales such as educational participation, career development, involvement in cultural and standard of living planning.

Adolescent leaders are more likely to take up managerial positions as adults, and leadership skills developed early on can have a positive impact on future wages (Kuhn & Weinberger, 2005). For example, in the Project TALENT male students were surveyed during high school in 1960 and were followed longitudinally for 11 years after high school. Men who were either team captains or club presidents (but not both) between 1958 and 1960 earned 3.0%–4.3% higher wages 11 years after high school graduation, comparative to men who were only members of teams and/or clubs. Men who were both a captain and a president earned 6.9% more than those who participated in both teams and clubs but did not hold any leadership position.

Adolescence is an important time for leadership growth. Increasing leadership in adolescence can reinforce self-esteem and be a catalyst for flourishing adulthood. Yet many adolescents are never offered the chance to act as leaders, and adult leadership models are often inappropriate for teens that have unique developmental needs (Van Linden & Fertman, 1998).

Leadership theories and youth development

The three main theories of leadership (the path goal theory, the contingency theory and the transformational/transactional theory) have not adequately accounted for how youths develop as leaders and there is no literature on how these theories apply to young adults and children.

Despite ever increasing attention being paid to transformational leadership in the literature and its wide theoretical (Bass, 1998) and practical acceptance (Avolio, 1998), the development of transformational leadership behaviors has rarely been examined and remains little understood especially among young people.

Bass (1960) initially speculated about family factors that would promote the development of leadership in children. He suggested that leadership potential is greatest among the youngest siblings of the family, for children in families of four or five children, and for those children whose parents provide stimulating environments, opportunities for decision making, encouragement, and acceptance. Instead, if indeed leadership behaviors are relatively stable (Krosnick & Alwin, 1989), then the transformational leadership behaviors that exist during adolescence may have critical implications for later leadership.

Leadership programmes for young adults

During the last 10-20 years developing leaders at earlier ages has gained traction and is evidenced by the introduction of leadership programmes for undergraduate university students (Oakland, Falkenberg & Oakland, 1996). Moreover, leadership training for secondary school adolescents have gained increased acceptance as a priority area for research and development (Barker, 1997).

The development of college students as leaders has long been a goal of higher education (Boatman, 1999; Brungardt, 1997; Cress, Astin, Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 2001) and a growing number of leadership programmes have emerged at institutions across the USA (Astin & Astin, 2000; Zimmerman-Oster, 2003). Student leadership programmes take many forms, from one-day workshops to stand-alone extracurricular programmes to full degree granting programmes (Micari et al., 2010). If our aim is to understand leadership development among young adults, examining the programmes that purport to do this is a good starting place.

Aims and objectives

The field of leadership has been dominated by a focus on adult leaders. There is a significant gap in the literature concerning the development of leadership among young adults and the factors that contribute to leadership in young adults have not been systematically assessed. Despite the large body of research on leadership and leadership behaviours, it is noteworthy that little research exists with regard to the experience of developing young adults to be leaders.

The aim of this review was to identify the literature concerning young adults as leaders and examine the evidence base for the benefits associated with leadership programmes with young adults. Specifically, we will examine the content and process issues concerning leadership development programmes for young adults.

Method

The review covers published articles from 2003 to 2015 and is restricted to studies published in the English language. The following electronic databases were searched: Scopus, PubMed and Science direct. The search terms were: ("leadership program" OR "leadership training AND (child* OR student OR adolescen* OR teen* OR young OR high school OR university OR college) AND (intervention OR development OR skills OR mentor*OR education).

For inclusion the articles had to fulfill the following criteria: first, the article had to be original research that reported on an actual leadership programme aimed at young adults. Literature such as letters, editorials, and book reviews and theoretical papers were excluded. Second, the abstract was reviewed to determine whether leadership
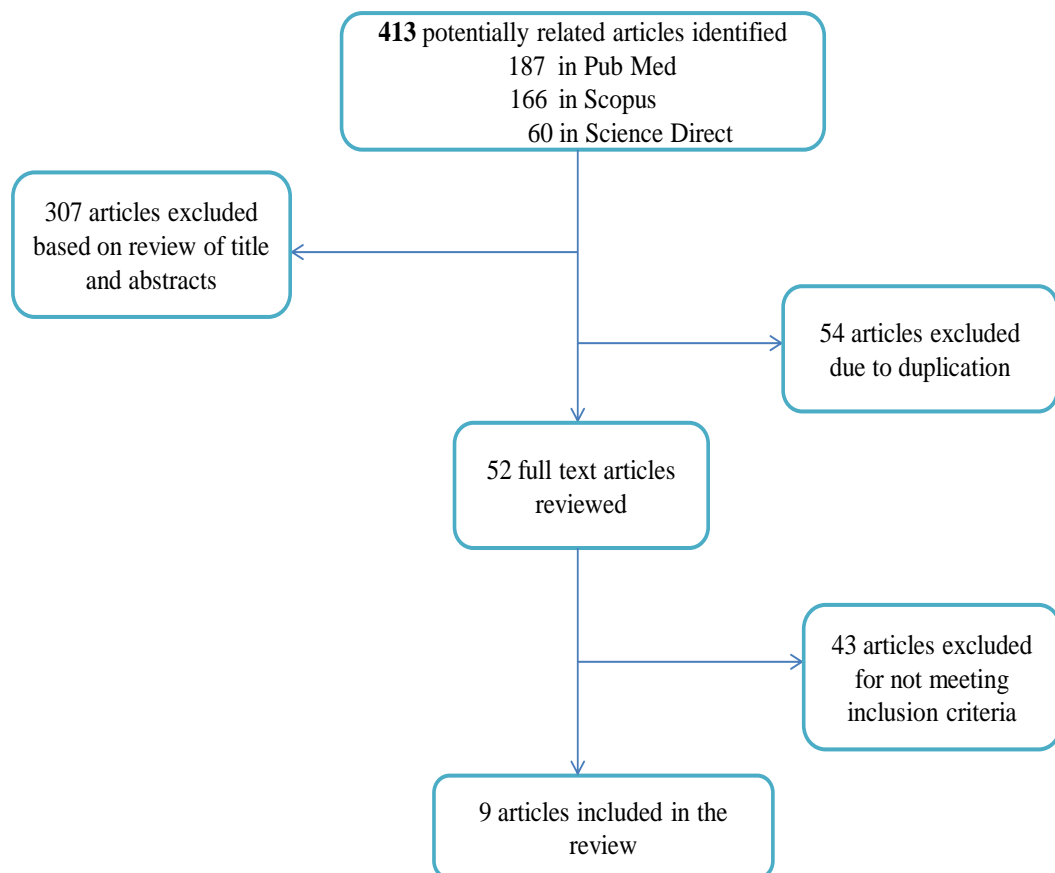
training was the primary, rather than peripheral focus of the article. Furthermore, articles had to be published in English and be peer reviewed. Specifically, we included studies that discussed the content, components, processes, goals, and duration of the programme.

We initially aimed to include only secondary school children both in school and outdoor education, but we expanded our criteria to include university students as there was limited research on school children.

Identification of the studies

The process of the literature review is shown in Figure 1. The combination of keywords yielded 413 potentially relevant articles in 3 different databases, 187 in Pub Med, 166 in Scopus and 60 in Science direct. Fifty-four articles were excluded due to duplication across the 3 different databases resulting in 359 articles. After reviewing the titles and abstracts of the articles, 307 of them were excluded. Fifty-two full text articles were studied and 43 were excluded for not meeting one or more of the inclusion criteria. The most common reasons for exclusion were that they were leadership programmes among adults and/or they did not provide much information about the content of the programme and outcomes. Finally, nine were selected for the present review as they meet all the inclusion criteria.

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│ 413 potentially related articles     │
│         identified                   │
│       187  in Pub Med                │
│       166  in Scopus                 │
│       60 in Science Direct           │
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┌──────────────────────┐
│ 307 articles excluded │
│ based on review of    │
│ title and abstracts   │
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┌──────────────────────┐
│ 54 articles excluded  │
│ due to duplication    │
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│ 52 full text articles │
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│ 43 articles excluded  │
│ for not meeting       │
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│ 9 articles included   │
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Results

Nine articles were selected for the present review. Detailed information regarding their content, objectives, duration, participants and outcomes is presented in Table 1. The results indicate considerable heterogeneity among the programmes used in terms of duration, objectives, methods and outcomes.

Study	Sample	Age of participan	Objectives	Measures	Duration	Measurement	Results
				Table 1			
Chan (2003)	43 men-73 women high school students (Hong Kong)	M=15.74 SD=0.96	Evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership program	Leadership characteristics (communication skills, creative& divergent thinking, problem solving)	Five days	Pre & post questionnaires 6 weeks Control group	Students gained confidence as leaders, especially in skill areas of communication and public speaking, in regulating emotions and generating alternatives in social problem solving.
Gregoric& Owens (2012)	14 men-14 women high school students (South Australia)	Range =16-17	Evaluate the relationship between a peer support leadership training program and the development of peer leaders' social skills	Social skills	Two days	Pre and post questionnaire quantitative and qualitative method Ten weeks later	The training had a positive impact on participants' overall social skills, cooperation, decision making, conflict resolution and self esteem but limited improvement in belonging to the community.
Hendricks et al (2009)	10 women undergraduates (Australia)	NR	Train nurses to improve their leadership capabilities	Leadership characteristics (communication, goal set, positive to change, confidence)	Six months	Pre and post questionnaire	Participants increased their ability to influence, persuade and motivate others; to effectively communicate; to team build and work collaboratively; to develop problem solving and perseverance skills to overcome obstacles & to serve as agents for positive change.
Hoyt& Kennedy (2008)	10 women high school students	M=15.9	To promote leadership among participants	Views on leadership	Six weeks	Pre and post interviews	The girls felt empowered to lead in diverse ways, claim their identities as leaders. There were distinct thematic changes with respect to how participants viewed leadership.
Wong et al. (2012)	180 high school students (Hong Kong)	M=15.18 SD=0.62	Evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership training program on self- esteem and self – efficacy	Self-esteem and Self-efficacy	Six months	Pre and post questionnaire Control group	The overall self-esteem and self-efficacy scores increased after the program.

Cohen et al. (2011)	30 undergraduates (Australia)	NR	Improve leadership knowledge and enhance the leadership skills	Leadership knowledge and skills	Twelve months	Pre and post questionnaire	Students reported increased skill development and enhanced employment prospects. They practiced their skills, gained confidence and improved their communicational skills.
Said et al. (2013)	111 men-112 women undergraduates (Malaysia)	NR	Evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership training program	Effectiveness of the program	Three to five days	Pre and post questionnaire and focus groups seven months later	The participants increased and enhanced their knowledge of leadership.
Cohen et al. (2012)	35 men-129 women junior high school students (Israel)	NR	Study the relationship between participation in the program, changes in attitudes toward people with disabilities & self image	Attitudes towards people with disabilities	167 hours 4.5 hours/once a week	Pre and post questionnaire, eight months later Control group	Positive change in attitudes towards people with disabilities but the program was not shown to influence the self-image of the participants.
Chen et al. (2009)	114 vocational high school students (Taiwan)	NR	Explore the effect of leadership training of group activities	Leadership abilities	1 day (leadership camp)	Post questionnaire, teachers' reflection & students' self-report 4 weeks later	Participants reflected on personal growth in problem solving skill and leadership

Overall, the studies were characterized by two macro objectives; to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme and to enhance participants' leadership skills.

In terms of geographical spread three studies were conducted in Australia, two in Hong Kong, one in the USA, one in Malaysia, one in Israel and one in Taiwan. The duration of the leadership programmes ranged from 1 day (Chen, Chou, & Lee, 2009) to one year (Cohen, Chang, Hendricks, Cope, & Harman, 2011). In two studies the duration was not specified (Gregoric & Owens, 2008; Hendricks, Cope, & Harris, 2010). The number of participants ranged from 10 (Hendricks et al., 2010; Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008) to 242 (Said, Lee, Pemberton, & Ahmad, 2013). Roughly two-thirds of the participants were students attending high school and the remainder were university undergraduate students. Consequently, 5 out of 9 studies involved high school students and 4 out of 9 studies involved undergraduates. In 5 out of 9 studies the age of the participants is not reported.

The majority of the studies did not have a control group. Only three studies used a control group (Chan, 2003; Cohen, Roth, York, & Neikrug, 2012; Wong, Lau, & Lee, 2012). In Chan (2003) the control group had the same selection criteria as the research group but the control group participated in a programme that had no similarity to the leadership programme of the intervention group. In Wong et al. (2012) and Cohen et al. (2012) students were randomly allocated to an intervention group and a control group and the control groups did not participate to any programme.

The studies included in the review were heterogeneous with regard to their objectives and the way of reporting the findings. In order to evaluate the studies in a coherent way, the studies have been analysed via the four phases of the leadership programmes: selection criteria for the students, theoretical background to the programmes, content of the programmes, and outcomes of the programmes.

Selection criteria for the students

There was considerable variation with regard to the selection criteria used. Selection criteria were reported in all studies except one (Chen et al., 2009) where the participants came from four vocational high schools but did not report how the schools were selected.

In two studies students were selected by their teachers (Chan, 2003; Cohen et al., 2012). The students were nominated by their school on the basis that they were considered to either have a high IQ score or to be academically gifted or if they had shown specific talents in the areas of creativity or leadership and their desire for social involvement and selection.

In three studies (Cohen et al., 2011; Hendricks et al., 2010; Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008) students volunteered and then were chosen by the researchers and their selection was based on some form of standardized assessment procedure. As a selection tool they used both written essays and interviews and participants were selected on the basis that they were both willing and could complete the programme. Hoyt & Kennedy (2008) selected applicants that did not regard themselves to be qualified as "leaders" to participate. They were selected using a written essay and interview to identify individuals who expressed the commitment to examine and develop their own leadership and the leadership of others.

In three studies (Gregoric & Owens, 2008; Said et al., 2013; Wong et al., 2012) students volunteered to participate within the context of their school that took part in the study. In the study of Gregoric & Owens (2008) participants came from a public high school in a low socio-economic area. Overall, the majority of the studies targeted people who expressed an interest in developing leadership skills and who held a belief that the programme was going to be useful to them.

Theoretical background to the programmes

Overall, the reviewed studies made distal references to theory. Gregoric and Owens (2008) emphasized social development and social skills development as a significant factor for the transition from childhood to adolescence. In Hendricks et al. (2010), the leadership programme that they implemented was based on the work of Bennis (2003) where he distinguished six personal qualities of leadership which are: integrity, dedication, magnanimity, humility, openness and creativity. According to this approach leadership was regarded as involving self-awareness and communicating it to others, building trust among others and taking effective action to realize one's personal leadership potential.

In Hoyt & Kennedy (2008), a distinction was made between transactional and transformational leadership. The authors grounded their approach on the leadership development during adolescence where they indicated that participation in community service and civic engagement plays a major role in the personality of the future adult. In Wong et al. (2012), the programme was founded on the "Service Learning Approach" where learning happens through a cycle of action and reflection when students cooperate with others putting in action what they have learnt and reflecting upon their experience.

In Cohen et al. (2011) the programme was developed to reflect trait theories which proposed that leadership characteristics are rooted in the personalities of leaders. They utilized the work of Bennis and considered leadership to comprise personal characteristics such as self awareness, developing trust when cooperating with others, being able to communicate in an effective way your vision to others and being conscious of one's leadership strengths. Chen et al. (2009) based their approach upon cooperative learning which is the instructional use of small groups in order for students to work together and make the best of each student's learning.

The content of the programmes

The content of the programmes was reported in all studies (except Said et al., 2013). In the Chan (2003), the programme had five modules of five full-day sessions of training, which included communication skills, public speaking, creative thinking, problem solving, leadership skills and group dynamics, and peer support and organizing school activities. Following on from the course, students were selected to take up leadership roles in student activities in their respective schools. Gregoric and Owens (2008) used a two-day training workshop that was conducted by a coordinating teacher in order to facilitate students to become peer leader. The activities involved warm up activities, cooperation, communication, emotions and feelings, relationships, friendship, rules, group dynamics, decision making, problem solving and self-awareness.

In Hendricks et al. (2010), the programme studied three components: leadership knowledge, leadership skills and leadership inaction. Sessions were separated into leadership knowledge that involved a one day Leadership Retreat, a foundation

leadership session for half a day and six 2-hour sessions over a period of 6 months. Participants then participated in a leadership in-action project where they worked in a leadership capacity with a leader mentor from a local health care organization to provide strategic leadership in a negotiated community development project and they completed a minimum of 30 hours of work on their respective projects. In Hoyt and Kennedy (2008), the intervention consisted of a six-week curriculum that focused on leadership exploration through education, observation and action. This programme included rigorous coursework, multi-generational mentoring, and service/experimental learning in many forms, including independent youth-designed activism projects to be implemented within the participants' communities after programme completion.

In Wong et al. (2012), the programme included leadership activities, volunteer services and school-based moral educational programmes. Students could offer their services for children with disabilities and people living in underprivileged areas. The activities were designed to enhance students' organizational capabilities, problem solving skills, team building techniques, fostering of care and concern towards others, sharing of successful experiences and build up expertise on activity design among the programme participants. In Cohen et al. (2011) the programme offered both theoretical sessions and practical experience where they included workshops and seminars that entailed three curricular components: leadership knowledge, leadership skills, and leadership in action. The curriculum included coming to terms with the theoretical knowledge and students were then given the chance to practice their leadership skills by taking part in a series of expert-driven seminars, via role-playing, perspective taking and management of groups. Furthermore, students cooperated with local industry-leaders in order to offer strategic leadership in developing and implementing a community project.

In the Cohen et al. (2012) study, participants took part in workshops from the beginning of the programme that presented information about disabilities. Later, they began volunteer projects that offered services to people with disabilities within various frameworks and had active participation in various interest groups such as music, art, cooking and sports. At the same time the programme advisor continued to meet with the members once a week. In Chen et al. (2009) the leadership training

camp was based on an approach towards leadership development via the use of fables/ stories. The courses adopted the methods of competitive team activities, story-telling and questioning, story building up and enacting and experiences sharing. However, it is noteworthy that the description of the actions undertaken during the action phase was not always described in enough detail.

Outcomes of the programmes

The outcomes of the programmes were highlighted by all studies. Eight of the nine studies were based on quantitative methods with questionnaires except for one that used a qualitative approach with interviews (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008). Three studies used both methods (Gregoric & Owens, 2008; Said et al., 2013; Chen et al., 2009). All of the studies made a pre and post measurement except for one that made only a post measurement (Chen et al., 2009). In the majority of the studies there was a generally positive evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme with regard to the initial objectives.

Chan (2003) conducted a within subject analysis and also a comparison analysis between the research and the control group. The results showed that there were no significant differences between the control and the research group on creativity and leadership measures before the training but they did not include post training results for the control group. Within subject results indicated that there was improvement in divergent thinking, in communication and public speaking. Gregoric & Owens (2008) used both questionnaires and case studies. The results indicated the helpful impact on the effectiveness, cooperation, communication, empathy, belonging to school, relationships at home, friendships, decision making, conflict resolution and confidence. There was less impact on the sense of belonging to the community. In Hendricks et al. (2010), the participants reported that the programme was beneficial to them in terms of the transfer of knowledge, attitudes and skills. They became more confident and positive to confront the challenges they face and met their personal goals through the ability to manage conflict and negotiate. They found a statistically significant change in leadership skills and behaviour.

In Hoyt & Kennedy (2008), the participants reported that they became more aware of the ways to overcome barriers and felt the strength to lead in various ways and

became more confident to lead. The interviewer had prior association with this leadership programme as a tutor of the course. Additionally, a focus group was conducted with the participants. In Wong et al. (2012), the intervention group was found to have improvements of both self-esteem and self-efficacy scores while the control group showed a decrease in both scores. However the differences in these changes were not found to be statistically significant.

In Cohen et al. (2011) participants reported the change in their leadership knowledge and skills. As the results indicated prior to the programme students were not aware of leadership knowledge or the required skills to be an effective leader. After the programme participants reported increased skill development, greater application of their leadership skills in everyday life and the development of confidence and improved employment prospects. In Said et al. (2013) the participants replied to a survey instrument and some focus groups were used as an additional resource. Participants reported that they benefited from the programme and they learned practical knowledge and skills and were able to apply these skills at their training sites.

In Cohen et al. (2012) the attitudes of the research group toward people with disabilities at the end of the programme were significantly more positive than their attitudes at the beginning of the programme. On the other hand in the control group no significant differences were found. In Chen et al. (2009) the participants reported more confidence in themselves, more confidence to interact with others and more willingness to find solutions to problems.

Discussion

Overall, the studies reviewed were heterogeneous and lacked methodological rigour. There are a number of fundamental methodological issues common to many of the studies that need to be acknowledged before we reach conclusions. On the one hand, there is some evidence that young people experienced the programmes positively and that improvements were noted on a range of psychological outcomes such as self-esteem and their general awareness about possibilities to experience leadership roles. However, the studies have significant problems regarding selection effects and programme content. It's difficult to discern the degree to which teachers were either

directly or indirectly influencing selection, and the degree to which selected schools were representative of the wider population. Additionally, the content of the programmes were weakly tied to the reported outcomes and lacked any rigours theoretical foundations guiding their design. Thus, developing a synthesis of the different studies is problematic. The review presents more questions than answers. For example, more detailed information on the epistemological roots of the programmes would allow us to ascertain whether they were adults programmes designed for young people, or bespoke programmes that were evolved specifically to address the perspective of a young adult.

Interestingly, none of the studies reviewed examined the influence of parenting behavior on the leadership abilities of the children. For example Zacharatos, Barling, and Kelloway (2000) examined the influence that parental modeling can have on the development of adolescents' leadership. Their research focused on a sample of 112 Canadian high school students who were members of different sports teams. Adolescents' perceptions that their parents demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors were associated with a greater likelihood that these adolescents exhibited similar leadership behaviors. Also, those adolescents who displayed transformational behaviors were rated as more satisfying, effective, and effort-evoking leaders by their peers and coaches in their particular team context. Moreover, Murphy and Johnson (2011) have examined the so-called seeds of leader development that germinate and root at various stages before adulthood. They suggested that relevant developmental experiences may occur more readily during sensitive periods of childhood and adolescence, which influence development during adulthood. The authors ultimately argued for additional longitudinal examinations of leadership development over the lifespan as a means to help advance current leader development practices.

The reviewed studies did not adequately contextualize their results with regard to the school/university environments of the participants. Children can be capable in a wide range of activities; however schools by design are likely to take into consideration only one way of being intelligent. Schools have a tendency to value critical scholastic skills and askew creativity (Sternberg, 2003). However creative and practical skills are quite significant for a person's development and success and can have a positive impact after the ending of formal schooling (Sternberg, 1999).

Implications of the review for how schools can approach leadership

Specifically, we would recommend that future research seeks to address the contribution of schools in the development of leadership skills among students. It would also be interesting to examine whether schools play a role in reinforcing children to believe that they lack leadership abilities, based on ethnicity, class or gender. At a methodological level, further work should include appropriate control groups. It is interesting to note that we did not find any training programme concerning excluded young adults (e.g. gang members) in leadership, involving children that are marginalized and have dropped out of school. Thus, it suggests that such leadership programmes are influenced by a selection bias.

The majority of schools involve their students in leadership roles (e.g., house captains, prefects, and sports captains, buddy programmes between older and younger students). Therefore, they run the risk of inserting young people in roles without the appropriate support or structure on a 'learn-by-doing' approach. Moreover, it's likely that the selected individuals are those that excel scholastically and/or whose behavior conforms to the norms of the school communicating a broader message to the school community as to what 'makes' a leader.

It is surprisingly that when teachers talk about the mental growth of their students they do not refer to the development of their imagination (Gajdamaschko, 2005). On the whole schools undervalue creativity. In many cases teachers consider creativity to be the same as intelligence or that schooling cannot or should not assess creativity, or in other cases they are unaware of how to teach creativity (Sternberg, 2003).

Limitations

The review was limited by the file-drawer problem, whereby it is possible that we may have missed important unpublished work. Additionally, only articles in English were reviewed. The heterogeneous nature of the studied reviewed was a barrier to synthesizing the results of the programmes in a meaningful way.

Conclusions

There is growing evidence that we significantly underestimate the ability of children to understand the vagaries of work and the way that work impacts on adults (Galinsky, 1999). Moreover, there is a contradiction in educational systems that tend to valorize conformity and rote-learning rather than initiative taking.

Currently, society has many expectations from leaders on how to run their organizations and manage to succeed in difficult situations. For example, Gregersen, Morrison, and Black (1998) have identified four strategies that are particularly effective in developing global leaders: foreign travel, with involvement in the country's way of life; working closely within teams with people coming from varied backgrounds and perspectives; training that involves classroom and action learning projects; and overseas assignments, which serve to broaden the viewpoint of future global leaders. One could argue that the aforementioned qualities could be imbued among young people easier than 'experienced' executives. Finally, none of the evidence that we have reviewed has explored whether we can engage young people in defining and redefining leadership. The global economic crisis that is ongoing since 2008 begs the question of whether we need leaders with entirely different values, and younger people represent a perfect starting point.

Finally, the degree to which adult models of leadership are appropriate for younger people is an open question. Do we embrace a top-down approach whereby we feedback the skills and lessons of successful leaders to a younger generation, an apprenticeship approach. Alternatively, do we support a bottom-up approach whereby we empower younger people to rethink leadership models and provide the opportunity for them to organically develop different models of leadership?

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter will describe in detail the methodological and epistemological approach to be adopted in the rest of the thesis. The systematic review revealed very limited published research findings on leadership among adolescents and studies on leadership among emerging adults (18-23) and mainly focused on leadership in undergraduate students. As discussed in Chapter 1 (Introduction), there are several leadership models for adults, but very little has been suggested about leadership models/frameworks/approaches among adolescents. In the same chapter (Chapter 1), we also provided an account of potential reasons why imposing adult leadership models on youth leadership might not be effective and productive. The systematic review of the literature on leadership programmes for young people (Chapter 2) did not reveal any solid frameworks or models for youth leadership development and rather indicated that most of the programmes are built tacitly upon concepts concerning existing social learning theories/approaches.

Rationale for Choosing Qualitative Methods

The state-of-the-art is indicative of a major research and literature gap on adolescent leadership development and adolescent leadership models. Quantitative methods require a pre-existing model or approach to be tested in the form of hypotheses and/or predictions – and Chapters 1 & 2 both led to the conclusions that no such models have been established for adolescent leadership development. Thus, exploration of adolescent leadership without being anchored in any specific models and theories emerged as the most meaningful way to add to the state-of-the-art of this phenomenon. It is well-established that qualitative methods are the adequate "tools" to utilize when focusing on exploring ideas and formulating frameworks that will provide with an understanding of a relatively unchartered domain, like adolescent leadership development.

In study 1, we will utilize qualitative methods to explore the experiences of young adult leaders who assumed leadership roles in youth organizations, in order to understand how their experiences during adolescence inspired and informed their

understanding of leadership. In contrast to psychological-individualistic and biological-predispositional theories of leadership – that might fit better with quantitative methods – we inform our approach by Howard Becker's inherently social explanation of "deviant behavior" who suggested that deviant behavior is the result of a three-phase sequential learning process: learn how the behavior can lead to the "correct" effects, act on the behavior while being aware that the sensations are the outcome of this behavior and savor the sensations in a way that will lead to an "acquired taste" (Becker, 1963). This sociological approach to deviant behavior might share some general similarities with the way van Linden and Fertman (1998) approach adolescent leadership development in three stages (Chapter 1). Although deviant behavior is a negative term (as it refers to behaviors that deviate from the "healthy normal standards" such as drug use, vandalism, criminal actions, etc.), one could hypothesize that adolescents' interest in leadership development could also be seen as a "deviation" from the "normal"; engaging in leadership training and/or initiatives while in adolescence is not a common adolescence behavioral pattern that can be depicted in a normal-distribution graph. Utilizing the paradigm of Howard Becker (1963; 2017), getting closer to the phenomenon under investigation by interviewing people who had recently experienced adolescent leadership development was considered as the most appropriate approach in Chapter 4.

In Chapter 5, we will also utilize qualitative methods to explore the experiences of adolescent students who attended a leadership development training programme, in order to understand how their experiences during this programme inspired and informed their understanding leadership and their behaviors as leaders. Utilizing the sociological/ethnographic approach, we explored adolescent leadership development in a naturalistic environment, a leadership development programme for adolescents. We will analyze diary entries of critical incidents that the students recorded describing how they handled conflicting and stressful situations, reflecting on their skills and behaviors as potential leaders and we will also comment on the observations of the lead researcher. Critical incidents (or memorable incidents) represent the point at which important information is revealed as to what attitudes and behaviors are valorized (Brady et al., 2002). Previous studies on adolescent leadership development programmes have used mostly quantitative methods and fewer studies have utilized

interviews and/or focus groups (as explained in Chapter 2). Critical/Memorable incidents analysis collected in the form of short narratives of incidents that the students' judge to be important and relevant to their learning experiences is a well-suited method that can provide in-depth information on the impact of conflicting experiences in students (e.g., Montgomery et al., 2021). Recording critical incidents positions the students in a situation that allow reflection upon experiences that facilitate personal growth (Mezirow, 1991) which in turn allows the researchers to access those experiences and the meaning the participants have attributed to these experiences.

Of central consideration to the thesis was to provide the participants with opportunities to articulate the meaning of their experiences, using multiple modes of expression. The thesis aimed at collecting qualitative data, allowing the participants to express their views and experiences in both width and depth, without the limitations of close-ended questionnaires or/and Likert Scale Inventories. Qualitative methods allow the researcher to collect data in diverse modes and explore the participants' experiences in both explicit and implicit ways (Merriam, 2009). This essential principle of qualitative research informed our thinking and approach to this thesis; the two studies were designed to allow the collection of different modes of data, to allow a richer depiction of the complexity of the experiences of the participants. To that end, the design of studies was rooted in the qualitative research methods, as we were interested in better understanding the experiences and the conceptualizations of the participants on adolescent leadership.

Researching Adolescence as a Leadership Phenomenon

Adolescents usually lead through group consensus (Michael & Mitton-Kukner, 2016) which could suggest a natural propensity towards collaborative and social leadership. The Social Policy Research Associates (2003) observed that according to youth, "leadership (…) is about learning how to participate in group processes, build consensus, and subsume personal interests and ideas to those of the collective" (p. 7). For both adolescents and emerging adults, relationships matter more that institutions when it comes to leadership and their understanding of leadership is different compared to older adults. Leadership in adolescence can be viewed as "a physical

sensation", a natural tendency to share creativity, ideas and energy and less focus on personal insecurities and individualized interests (which are more common among older adults). Scholars have identified that adolescent leadership is more about creating opportunities for expression and creativity rather than imposing identity and power over others – characteristics that we could potentially identify in "adult" leadership models of authentic leadership, servant leadership and in a simpler version of transformational leadership.

Rationale for Different Age Groups

The systematic review revealed very limited published research findings on leadership among adolescents and studies on leadership among emerging adults (18-23) mainly focus on leadership in undergraduate students. During the thesis the terms adolescents and young adults are frequently mentioned. Recent work has expanded the definition and age range of adolescence to include young adulthood, often up to about 25 years of age (Jaworska & MacQueen, 2015). However in this thesis it has been maintained the historically, typically span from 12 to 18 years of age, which roughly corresponds to the time from pubertal onset to guardian independence (Jaworska & MacQueen, 2015). As for the young adults they include the years among 19-25. Chapter 4 will be a qualitative exploration of leadership perceptions among emerging adults – young adults aged 21-23 years old – positioned as leaders in youth organizations. We were interested in their retrospective understanding of how their experiences in adolescence might have affected their perceived leadership development and the ways this might be informing their positioning as leaders in the present. As explained in the introduction (Chapter 1), adult leadership models cannot be used in order to understand youth leadership, as adolescent experiences are qualitatively different compared to adults' experiences, due to developmental differences, social roles and expectations among other factors. Emerging adults are closer to the adolescence experiences from a time perspective and this short time – frame allows them to maintain a reflective but also present orientated stance towards their leadership experiences during adolescence.

Analytic Strategy

Qualitative data collected via interviews and diaries were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Thematic analysis (TA) has entered the "canon" of qualitative research as a well-known and widely-used method of analyzing qualitative data since the publication of the original article of Braun & Clarke in 2006 – although the term "thematic" has been widely used in the past in the context of quantitative content analysis (Christ, 1970) and other thematic approaches to qualitative data (Benner, 1985; Dapkus, 1985).

According to Braun et al., (2016, p. 2) "TA offers a method for identifying patterns ('themes') in a dataset, and for describing and interpreting the meaning and importance of those". In their recent paper, Braun and Clarke describe that "there are different conceptualizations of a theme – domain summaries versus patterns of shared meaning, underpinned by a central meaning-based concept" (p. 593). The TA as developed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012, 2013) is not grounded in specific theoretical paradigm and can be applied across different ontological/epistemological paradigms (Braun et al., 2016). This fits within the 'big Q' qualitative approach, the application of qualitative techniques within a qualitative paradigm, as opposed to the "small q" qualitative research, used to classify qualitative research in more quantitative – positivist models (Kidder & Fine, 1987).

The use of reflexive TA in the two studies of this thesis falls within the "Big Q" versions of TA – which proposes that the meaning in qualitative data is understood as more contextualized and provisional, as opposed to the "small q" versions, that are more rigid and support the "finding" of clear and fixed meanings in the data (Braun et al., 2016). Following the "Big Q" approach, we chose the flexible version of TA described by Braun et al., (2016) and which was further developed by the & Clarke (2019a) as reflexive thematic analysis, which allows the researcher to chose between a semantic and a latent focus of analysis. Moreover, in their recent reflections and guidelines, Braun & Clarke (2019) suggest that "qualitative data analysis is about telling "stories", about interpreting, and creating, not discovering and finding the "truth" that is either "out there" in findable form, or buried deep within, the data" (p. 591), supporting a qualitative approach that does not follow the codebook TA or

coding reliability TA of the more neo-positivist qualitative methodologies (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The authors underline that the term "generating themes" is preferable as themes do not "exist" in the data, waiting to be "found" in an pre-existing framework (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

As Braun et al., (2016) clarify, in practice; TA includes both semantic and latent focus. Thus, both focuses can be identified in the two studies. However, there was an attempt to aim for the dominance of either one based on the method of data collection. In Chapter 4, we explored the leadership-related experiences of young adult leaders who had leadership roles in youth organizations via interviews; we mainly aimed for the latent focus approach, allowing coding, and developing the analysis mainly around more implicit concepts that what was explicitly expressed by the participants. In Chapter 5, we explored the experiences of school children in a leadership development programme via diaries; we mainly utilized the latent focus approach as well, with less element of semantic focus. Inductive analysis enabled us to identify recurring patterns – themes- across participants' accounts. We followed the principle of "*keyness*" (Braun & Clarke, 2006) rather than the frequency of occurrence; thus, what counts as a theme was determined by whether it was essential to addressing the research question, as more frequent occurrence is not necessarily equal to bigger significance (Campbell et al., 2021). Given that we followed the latest version of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019), we considered both semantic and latent themes (Campbell et al., 2021), with our main focus on latent themes – especially as far as the underpinning mechanisms of the participants' experiences of leadership development were concerned. The analytic process followed the six phases of reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) following the worked example of David Byrne (Byrne, 2021). The six steps have remained the same as in the initial Braun & Clarke (2006) TA paper, informed now by the flexibility of the revised reflexive TA (Table 1, the six phases of reflexive TA, adapted from Braun & Clarke as cited in Campbell et al., 2021). Once we identified themes, we then located connections amongst the themes and sub-themes that emerged in relation to the research questions of each study – and in relation to the broader research questions addressed by this thesis.

Table 1. The six phases of reflexive TA, adapted from Braun & Clarke (as cited in Campbell et al., 2021, p. 2014).

Analytic Phase	Description	Actions Taken
Data familiarization	Immersion in the data to understand depth/breadth and initial search of key-meanings/ideas	• Transcription of audio data verbatim • Re-reading dataset • Notes
Initial code generation	Initial codes generation to organize data – all data equally significant	• Organization of data in meaningful groups and coding (labels)
Generating (initial) themes	Generating initial themes by sorting initial codes and first attempt to identify meanings and relationships between codes	• Mapping • Themes writing and definition of basic properties
Theme review	Identification of more coherent patterns on the coded data level and review of the whole data set	• Ensuring data sufficiency and "keyness" of themes • Managing overlapping themes • Refining themes and codes
Theme defining and naming	Identification of a "story" of each theme and fitting the themes in a "broader story" to address research questions	• Reviewing data and themes to organize a "story"
Report production	"Story" told by the data presented in a concise and interesting account within and across themes	• Producing argumentation to address research questions • Discussion beyond the description of themes

Thematic analysis has been used to examine the experiences of adolescents who participated in leadership programmes (de Jongh et al, 2014; Parkhill, Deans, & Chapin, 2018). Parkhill et al (2018) using a constructionist approach and interpretivist

framework found the following themes; the development of resilient attitudes; the identification of a personal leadership style; and the development of a sense of group belonging. De Jongh et al (2014) explored a group of learners' experiences of their participation in a leadership camp and how this developed their leadership skills. The researchers conducted two focus groups were conducted with six learners and identified four themes using the thematic analysis of the data; becoming myself, learning life's lessons; 'I can take on the world', and health promoting schools. Thematic analysis can be used to analyze most types of qualitative data including qualitative data collected from interviews, focus groups and diaries. The theoretical and research design flexibility of TA allows researchers advantages such as; multiple theories can be applied to this process across a variety of epistemologies (Braun & Clarke, 2006), allows for inductive development of codes and themes from data (Guest et al, 2012), and applicable to research questions that go beyond an individual's experience (Saldana, 2009).

Ontology and Epistemology

Critical realism has gained more and more interest during the past 20 years, evolving as a very attractive alternative to both interpretivist and positivist research methodologies (Dobson, 2002; Smith, 2010; Fletcher, 2017). Critical realism combines a realist ontology with an interpretive epistemology (Bhaskar 1998; Archer 1995), which assumes that there is a real world, but our knowledge of the world is socially constructed and therefore fallible (Bygstad & Munkvold, 2011). Critical realist methodology becomes especially useful in mapping out a theory of causality which is compatible with qualitative research methods. According to critical realists, the world consists of layers of different levels of reality. While quantitative methodologies aim at investigating the existence of linear causal relationships (e.g. experimental studies) between variables – the actual domain – a qualitative approach to causality allows to explore how a pattern of behavior might be caused by a causal mechanism that cannot be directly identified externally and that can only be fully investigate in the real domain (the open systems). The two qualitative studies conducted during this thesis will aim at exploring how potential causal mechanisms have contributed to the "shaping" of leadership views and understanding among young people in the social world, through real open contexts, which often interact in

unpredictable ways. We are interested in exploring the subjective experiences and views of young people regarding what they understand as leadership and effective leaders as well as the factors they believe have "caused" their leadership development; this objective can be better explored via the lens of critical realism that support the "fallibility of knowledge", which results from the complexity of the world itself: "…our knowledge of it [the world] might be wrong or misleading and so the job of social investigators is to keep searching for knowledge about causal mechanisms in different research contexts" (Benton & Craib 2001, p. 120).

From a realist perspective, causes are not understood as constant conjunction relationships, but they are rather seen as productive powers, explaining outcomes that very often scientific research is not in a place to predict. The subject of leadership development in young people is approached as one with multilevel causal complexity, where the time sequence of experiences is of critical importance – in the same way that in the real-world sequence of time is important to understand complicated causal complexities. Thus, this thesis is not aiming towards generating potential "law-like" relationships between factors and leadership development among young people. It aims at identifying potential mechanisms of causality at work, as for example "when young people are exposed in situations where taking initiative had positive outcomes, they tend to experience "taking initiative" as an important positive quality of youth leadership". The emphasis is on explaining how adolescents form their understanding of leadership, which experiences they describe as influential and what real entities and structures could be identified as mechanisms. Mechanisms are at the center of a critical realist methodology and on a general level they can be defined as causal structures that can potentially trigger events (Bygstad & Munkvold, 2011). The complexity of leadership development especially during a very critical developmental stage like adolescence requires for a methodology that accounts for a contextual understanding of the outcomes of the various mechanisms involved. Critical realism allows for a contextual approach; thus we are exploring contextual mechanisms that might produce different outcomes in different contexts, under the limitations that this is bearing for the generalizability of the research findings. By informing our approach with the critical realism methodology, we assume that the real entities and structures that will be presented as potential mechanisms are mainly used to explain the

phenomenon of adolescent leadership and not to predict it; we utilize the principle of contingent causality (Smith, 2010). The utilization of contingency causality has been very frequent in the study of leadership (Houghton & Yoho, 2005; Yun et al., 2006).

Data Collection Methods

The thesis used interview and diary approaches to gathering data. In this section, both approaches are described in detail.

Semi-structured interviews, one of the most common methods of data collection in qualitative research, are excellent for gathering in-depth accounts of 'personal experience' (e.g., McArdle, McGale & Gaffney, 2012). The research interview provides the participants with possibilities of being in the world usually not present in their daily lives and that these alternative ways of being were experienced by them as more liveable (Phoenix, 2007). For example, when participants talk about their leadership experiences, this methodologically is an indicator to pinpoint their positioning in different contexts with others. Positioning is a very important notion in qualitative research and when participants will be positioning interchangeably as potential leaders, followers or students, it will be pinpointed in the analysis.

Within the social sciences research, a diary approach is commonly used in clinical and educational contexts to evaluate human behavior, the process and content outcomes in educational settings (Pellegrini & Bartini, 2000). Numerous studies have used diaries as an evaluation strategy to examine programme effects, the perceptions and feelings regarding the programme and the perceived benefits of the programme (Schmitz & Wiese, 2006; Shek, 2010). People offer frequent reports on the events and experiences of their daily lives and these reports capture the particulars of experience in a way that is not possible using traditional designs (Bolger et al., 2003). The diary method can more effectively and accurately address the need to explore questions concerning process and change within a person over a period of time, in comparison with survey data. Moreover, it allows people to express themselves in their own words and report on the subject under investigation. Given that participants typically write in their diary shortly after an activity occurs, they still have in mind the memory of the events and this can reduce retrospective bias (Götze et al., 2009). Diary studies allow respondents to do the capturing whenever needs arise. On the other hand, diary studies can suffer

from missing data as participants can forget to record entries or are selective in reporting (Sohn et al, 2008).

Ethical Considerations

There exist several ethical challenges that have implications for qualitative research. These come up mainly from the emergent nature of the methodology involved. The ethical challenges that are related to qualitative research apply to the issues of informed consent procedures, the relationship between the researcher and the participant, the ratio between risk and benefit, confidentiality and the dual role of the researcher might have (Houghton et al., 2010). There should be awareness that the adult centeredness of most societies and the unequal power relations that exist between children and adults are duplicated in the research process (Harden et al., 2000; Punch, 2002).

Ethics informed consent was obtained from all participants before their participation in the study. From the adolescents' participants the consent form was signed from their parents. The consent form that was addressed to the parents of the adolescents and to young adults clearly stated what they will be doing; drawing attention to anything they could conceivably object to subsequently. Participants were informed in detail of the purpose and the process of each study and were informed that their participation was voluntary and they were free to withdraw at any time. Furthermore the measures taken to ensure the confidentiality of data were communicated to the participants.

At the time of the studies there was no ethics committee in the University of Macedonia. The Committee for Research Ethics of the University of Macedonia was established in 2018 according to Chapter E' (Articles 21- 27) of Law 4521 (Government Gazette vol. A '38 / 2-3-2018). The research was conducted under the guidelines of Code of Practice for Research (UKRIO).

Ethics and children

Conducting research with children can involve complex epistemological and methodological questions that can arise in contemporary research practice. Research with children should not take the age-based adult/child distinction for granted; rather

research should be participant-appropriate as opposed to 'child-friendly' research. Historically, data obtained from children were viewed as unreliable and invalid because it was believed that children were too immature to understand their worlds, and lacked the necessary verbal and conceptual abilities to convey their experiences (Docherty & Sandelowski, 1999). Our modern approach is that, as with adult participants, children's accounts have their own validity in terms of being their perspective on how the world appears to them and are narratives created within the context of an interview and may not be accurate representations of events (Harden et al., 2000). Globally, there has been a growing recognition of children's rights particularly in relation to their involvement in decision making as a result of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989). Finally, reflexivity is seen as another means of managing the culture gap and enabling adult researchers to be aware of their own assumptions about childhood and how this may influence the research process and their understanding of those they study (Davis, 1998). Therefore the thesis included a separate section on the reflexivity issues.

Reflexivity

As researchers it is important to be systematic regarding explaining our potential risks for bias (Levin, 2012). In this regard, the potential bias of the researcher can explored through reflexivity (Mays & Pope, 2000). Once I started my journey into research I was aware that reflecting on my route would guide me in many steps of this road. My past experiences have had an important impact on this thesis. My background in psychology, my therapeutic role and my professional experience as psychologist have contributed to my stance towards people to be able to have empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1980). This approach was further applied in this thesis since the participants of the studies were adolescents and young adults. Throughout the data analysis my scope might have been affected by this.

As mentioned in the prologue, when I first heard the general topic of the proposed thesis mixed feelings arose. Adolescents were a team group I wanted to interact with and hear their voices. This transition from childhood to adulthood had always fascinated me on the cognitive, social and emotional changes that occur during this

period. The topic of leadership was something new to me that I had no knowledge. I found myself having some stereotypes of leadership being linked to power, politics, management and business. I remember asking myself 'How can we study leadership among adolescents?' Working as school psychologist in Greek high schools I came to see that many adolescents were dealing with insecurity and felt that their voices were not heard. Observing adolescents and discussing with them in the school context made me realize that leadership development in adolescents could be beneficial to their transition in adulthood.

When I first started the PhD this field was quite new and strange to me and trying to comprehend its philosophy was somehow becoming more difficult since leadership is still a quite complex and misunderstood phenomenon. Trying to identify the steps of this thesis where I should follow I was trying to remember through the way the ultimate goal of this PhD, which was to comprehend adolescents views on leadership and their leadership development. I was looking forward to be able to develop a proposed leadership model for adolescents whose application would serve as a starting point in their leadership development.

Throughout the thesis I was part of the leadership programme (mentioned in Chapter 5) that still runs today for its 9th year. During the leadership programme I was aware that my role as tutor might have had an impact on my researcher's role. During the programme adolescents came to trust many significant issues they were facing at that time and trust was a hallmark along the way. This trusting relationship that might have contributed to bias in the research process could have also been a safe environment where students could express their views without being criticized about right and wrong answers which might also be one of their fears.

In the beginning of the thesis the absence of my leadership knowledge allowed me to adopt a beginner's mind and spent quite some time on understanding the concept regarding leadership. Though in many occasions I found myself 'going back' to read again and reflect on the points and research taken so far. Review revealed some issues but more questions were emerged as to how to continue. Interviewing young adults who possessed leadership roles would allow me to comprehend the thoughts of the participants on this topic. The Greek context appeared early in my research as an

'unanswered issue' concerning leadership. My work as a tutor in this programme enabled me to develop an in-depth understanding of the participants needs.

My professional and therapeutic role, during difficult economic times in Greece, was in conflict with the researcher role and that caused some time gaps in my research progress. Now that I have reached at the end of this struggling, challenging, new and tremendously beautiful journey I am grateful for all the time, effort, disappointment and doubtfulness because this is research and it is all about learning.

Chapter 4

Leadership development among young adults: Do we need a different model?

Introduction

Several definitions of leadership, as well as theories of leadership exist (Marland, 1972; Bass, 1990; Fiedler & House, 1994; Den Hartog & Koopman, 2001; Ciulla, 2004; Marcketti, Arendt, & Shelley, 2011). A challenge in recognizing young leaders has to do with the very nature of leadership itself. Adolescence is a crucial period for leadership development, as developing leadership in youth can reinforce self-esteem, and serve as a starting point for successful adaptation to adulthood (van Linden & Fertman, 1998), and can impact on adult outcomes (Schneider et al, 1999; Reitan & Stenberg, 2019). Within the leadership literature the experiences of young people as leaders is largely absent (Mac Neil, 2006).

Leadership has to do with the interaction of leaders with other individuals. It is a dynamic process (Murphy, & Johnson, 2011). When social networks, emotional awareness and emotion regulation are involved they turn into significant factors that affect the quality of interactions. Effective leadership is closely connected to the ability of a leader to solve multifaceted social problems that arise in social groups and organizations (Pastor, 2014). Usually, leadership development in students is a result of participation in youth organizations, and by joining a youth leadership organization students can increase their skills in many fields such as communication and decision making (Ricketts & Rudd, 2002). The objectives of this research are to comprehend leadership in the everyday circumstances, to further explore participants' experiences of leadership and concepts related to development of leadership and to comprehend factors that are related to leadership and leadership activities.

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of young adult leaders who assumed leadership roles in youth organizations, in order to understand more about how their prior experiences inspired and informed their understanding of themselves as leaders in their current positions.

The research questions are:

1. How do young adults who are positioned as leaders in youth organizations conceptualize leadership?

2. How do young adults who are positioned as leaders in youth organizations describe the characteristics of effective leadership behavior?

3. What are the mechanisms of leadership teaching and development that young adults who are positioned as leaders in youth organizations perceive to be effective?

Method

In total, 15 young adults were interviewed, and the sample was comprised of eight female and seven male participants. The mean age was 22 years old ranging from 21 to 23 years, and they were all university students (Table 1). All participants were currently active in youth organization and performed a leadership or coordinating role. Most of the participants were members in youth organizations whose mission is to enable youth to develop leadership qualities through their experiences in international internship and volunteer opportunities and projects as well as influence the world for the better. They all possessed a leadership role in the following sections (Table 1). Participant recruitment was conducted via invitations in online university platforms and social media groups/pages related to University Students combined with a convenience snowball sampling. Before the interviews, researchers explicitly explained the purpose of the study and confidentiality was guaranteed. Participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms in all stages of recording, analysis and reporting. Participation in the study was voluntary and participants gave their consent to the recording of the interview. Participants were interviewed individually in an office that was quiet and the average time of interviews were 30 minutes.

Table 1. Information about the participants

Participant	Sex	Age	Faculty	Leadership position
Mary	F	21	Economics	Instructor of Robotics for School Students
John	M	21	Economics	Volunteer Coordinator - TedX
Helen	F	21	Pedagogic	Instructor of Robotics for School Students
Michael	M	21	Political Science	Coordinator of a Youth Association
Kate	F	21	Pedagogic	Event Coordinator - TedX
George	M	22	Economics	Project Coordinator - TedX
Christine	F	22	Psychology	President of a Youth Association
Sophie	F	22	Business Administration	Coordinator - Undergraduate Students' TedX
Vicky	F	22	Special education	Coordinator of a Youth Association
Lucas	M	22	Business Administration	President of a Youth Association
Steve	M	22	Math	Instructor of Robotics for School Students
Karoline	F	22	Political Science	Coordinator of a Youth Association
Ann	F	23	Business Administration	Coordinator - Student's TedX
Jim	M	23	Law	Coordinator of a Youth Association
Jessica	F	23	Law	Coordinator of a Youth Association

The sample size was based upon data saturation since more interviews would not be likely to reveal new data. As there is no agreed method of establishing data saturation in studies that utilize semi-structured interviews, we utilize the definition of Given (2016, p. 135), who defines saturation as the point at which "additional data do not lead to any new emergent themes". This belongs in the model of inductive thematic saturation, where saturation appears confined to the level of analysis (Saunders et al., 2018). Analysis was ongoing during the period of data collections via the interviews

and the analysis of the last three interviews conducted did not lead to any new emergent themes, indicating the analysis had reached the level of inductive thematic saturation.

Data was collected using semi-structured interviews. Semi structured interviews were used as such an approach allows the researcher to frame the questions while providing the opportunity for open exploration of identified issues (Silverman, 2006). The semi-structured interview was deemed the most suitable for the present study. Semi-structured interviews consist of a preconceived interview plan, allowing however a great flexibility in the order that the questions are asked, in the modification of their context according to the interviewed party, as well as the adding and subtracting of questions (Iosifides, 2003). The interview guide practically guided (Appendix I), but did not define, the course of the interview.

To assess face validity, the interview guide was shared with 17 volunteers (20-24 years old) in order to ensure the relevance and the ease of understanding of the questions. Given that there have been few studies regarding leadership and young adults in Greece, it was important to ensure that prospective participants would not find the topic alienating or difficult to follow upon. Two of the questions were changed as the participants considered them to be not clear. The final interview guide included 20 open-ended questions which were developed on the basis of the literature that was reviewed in Chapter 2. The interview was conducted using only open-ended questions, allowing the participants to freely elaborate on their ideas and opinions without restrictions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Thus, the researcher ensured a direct, face to face conversation that provided a detailed perspective on the participant's views, ideas, feelings and experiences with regard to the research questions.

The interviewer transcribed the data collected from all the interviews. Reflexive Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to analyze the individual experiences of the participants and the meanings they attach to them (the methodology has already been fully described in Chapter 3 of the thesis). All participants were interviewed by the same researcher and were audio-taped and transcribed. Two researchers

independently analyzed the transcripts to increase the trustworthiness and credibility of the analysis and the findings.

Results

Theme 1: "Comprehensive" definitions of leadership

Participants shared their ways of defining "leadership"; those definitions are defined as "comprehensive" in this theme, as they were attempts to communicate the participants "wide mental grasp" of comprehensive knowledge. Excerpts included in this theme show the participants' attempts to cover their understanding of leadership in a broad manner, using broad and wide concepts that incorporate a lot of qualities, skills and behaviors which all together comprise their conceptualization of leadership. This theme consists of the following sub-themes: 1) Leadership, as the ability to "Inspire and Motivate" and 2) Leadership, as the "Leader". The definitions of the sub-themes reflect the broader concept around which the participants built their "comprehensive" definitions of leaders.

Sub-Theme 1: Leadership, as the ability to "Inspire and Motivate"

Leadership is defined by the sub-theme "inspiration and motivation"; in the following excerpts, the emphasis is on leadership as the ability to inspire or motivate other people. In the excerpt 1, the participant Andreas identifies the word "inspiration" as the "key-word" for his conceptualization of leadership, a language choice that is indicative of the weight that inspiration has in the attempt to define leadership; almost as if there can be no leadership without inspiration. In Excerpt 2, the participant Eva also uses the word "inspire", while the use of "even" seems to be suggesting that if somebody can inspire people just by sharing their experiences, they can be named "leaders".

Excerpt 1: *"I believe that leadership is inspiration. For me the key-word is inspiration in leadership…to be able to inspire the people around you about something…".* (Lucas)

Excerpt 2: *"I think people that are leaders, even if they just talk about their experiences, they inspire you. So, you start to see, try how you can do it as well, adapt it to yourself "*. (Sophie)

In excerpt 3, the participant Vaso makes a distinction between "manipulation" in a way that seems to exclude "manipulation" from her definition of leadership, and it seems that the word manipulation here is negatively loaded from the contrast expressed with the word "but"; she implies that "manipulating" is bad and opposite to motivating people towards the realization of their own goals via empowerment – "make you stronger". In this excerpt as well, the attempt to use an abstract mechanism to define leadership by is identified.

Excerpt 3: *"A leader is not somebody who will manipulate you into a specific direction but somebody who will make you stronger so you can follow your direction based on yourself "*. (Vicky)

Excerpt 4 incorporates the idea of inspiration and motivation. The word "capacity" shows a similar meaning for the participant with previous excerpts (as shown in excerpt 3) that either clearly state (Excerpt 1) or imply the notion of "ability" (Excerpts 2); Thus, leadership is reflected in the ability to inspire other people and motivate them to achieve their own dreams; however, it can be seen that this definition goes beyond the abstract act of inspiring and motivating towards what the participant believes should be the "outcome" of the inspiration, for someone to enter the "image of a leader".

Excerpt 4: *"...the image of a leader, has brought his team until an appropriate point so that the team can function without him being present firstly, and secondly with his capacity to transform his personal experiences into life lessons he can motivate the people below him to go after their dreams and also to feel strong enough that they can succeed"*. (Ann)

In some excerpts the definition of leadership is in fact the definition of the "leader"; a person with a specific ability to inspire and motivate people. However, we can see that the emphasis of the definition is put by the participant on the ability to inspire, and not the personal characteristics of the leader's individual profile. This is an

important structure, potentially indicative of a conceptualization that sees leadership as ability exhibited by a person and not as a person exhibiting an ability; The latent focus here is on the implicit emphasis.

Sub-Theme 2: Leadership, as the "Leader"

For other participants, leadership is defined by the sub-theme "Leadership, as the "Leader"; in the following excerpts, the emphasis is on leadership as the person who possesses particular qualities/characteristics, skills or exhibits particular behaviors. In excerpt 5, the participant George states that his definition of leadership is "through the leader, better"; thus, leadership is not comprehended as an action rather as a person. The implicit emphasis on the person (the leader) can also be extracted from the very generic phrasing following the first sentence; *managing* is a neutral word and *some affairs* are not suggesting of any significance being put on the processes or mechanisms between the person-leader and the achievement of a goal. Thus, leadership is comprehended as a person who by managing people and processes aims towards achievement of goals.

Excerpt 5: *"I can define leadership "through" the leader, better. [A leader] is somebody who manages a team or some affairs aiming to achieve a goal".* (George)

In excerpt 6, the participant Helen chooses the word leader and the emphasis is implied by a focus on the leader as a 'person' – a phrasing that emphasizes the act of leadership could alternatively be; *leadership is not sounding fake and also not making things difficult;* instead, it seems that the definition evolves around the person who does not show specific behaviors – and specifically it is the "real" leader that shows neither of the two behaviors. The leader is appointed "in charge" of something is implied not to be an actual leader if he/she sounds fake and makes things look difficult; there is no reference to skills or abilities which could potentially be suggestive of a person (ality)-based comprehension of leadership.

Excerpt 6: *"A real leader is a person who does not sound fake and also does not make things look difficult when they are in charge of a project or a team".* (Helen)

Excerpt 7 as opposed to excerpts 5 & 6 is somewhat more informative with regard to the participant's definition; however it seems that the comprehension is person-based

again. Although leadership is initially described as a "capacity", the capacity is described as "being the leader of yourself"; on a semantic focus level this can seem less informative; on a latent focus level, the participant is transitioning from the "leadership as a capacity" to the "leadership as a person" comprehension; Leadership is comprehended as a person with awareness of their strengths and weaknesses rather than, e.g. the capacity to manage one's strengths and weaknesses effectively.

Excerpt 7: *"Leadership is the capacity to, first of all, be the leader of yourself, which means to know what are your strengths that you can rely on but also to know your weaknesses…"*. (Karoline)

This latent focus here generated a comprehension based on the "leader" with an emphasis on the personal/individual aspects of being a leader rather than the ability to exhibit "leadership". This is an important structure, potentially indicative of a conceptualization that sees leadership in the opposite way to the previous sub-theme 1; leadership is a "person" and not abilities exhibited by people.

Theme 2: How the participants view themselves as leaders

The second theme was generated from the excerpts where participants shared their views of themselves as leaders. On the first level of the analysis, the focus is on the empirical domain, identifying observations and experiences perceived by the participants as meaningful to how they view themselves as leaders. In the following excerpts, the participants view themselves as leaders in relation to taking responsibility over something and in relation to how they behave towards other people. In excerpt 8, the participant is stating that she could view herself as a leader because she can take responsibility over something and successfully deliver it, as well as because she experiences putting a lot of effort in how she behaves towards other people. On the perceived level, the participant identifies an ability to "read" other people as meaningful to seeing herself as a leader, adding that this has helped her develop leadership skills.

Excerpt 8: *"I could be yes (a leader), why not? Because I can definitely be responsible in something that I will do, if I take it on, I will definitely want it to be perfect. I put a lot of thought in how I will behave towards other people. This I will*

mainly apply to children, because this is my main occupation but I think if you get familiar with the children, as personalities and with how you have to behave towards them, this is something that will cultivate leadership skills…you will need to "read" them, this is similar to what you will have to do later with adults". (Jessica)

In excerpt 9, the self as a leader is also viewed in relation to other people, however in this case, the participant can see herself as a leader only when being in a team – "leading teams" can be leaders, and thus she perceives that she can only be a leader when she is with a team and not independently, as an individual.

Excerpt 9: *"I believe that through teamwork leading teams might emerge…with good management and goal achievement. I don't think that I am a leader by myself, only with a team".* (Christine)

In a similar way, in excerpt 10 the participant also draws upon experiences and observations that involve the self as leader while being in a team. The example the participant describes is indicative of the participant's perceptions; the experience discussed is one where the participant connected different people from different areas to work together on a project. In this sense, the person can view themselves as a leader when they can connect people, "influence" them and "make them fanatical" about the project. There is also an attempt to align the perceived "strengths" that the person has (e.g. "I am a dynamic person…") with a definition of leadership; if a person can view themselves as a leader, this seems to depend on the context; in this case, it also depends on how people have responded to the participants' behaviors. In the level of the real domain, an implicit assumption can be generated here; that the participants' views of themselves as leaders are dynamic and very much experience based and dependent on how other people react to them and interact with them. Similarly, in excerpt 11, on the empirical domain, the participant chooses experiences that are perceived to be indicative of when she views herself as a leader; while the observations relate to the "effectiveness" of managing projects and people, the hidden mechanism could potentially be identified in the way that other people have responded to the participants' leadership attempts.

Excerpt 10: *"Yes and no (I see myself as a leader). It depends on the place. Look, I am a dynamic person, so I can attract people towards something that I like, in a team*

for example, if it is something that I like that the team will do. I am a dynamic character, so I will try to influence the people around us. If this is leadership, then I am a leader. But yes…hmm…with this definition I am a leader. For example, I am a person who connects the people around him, for example in TedX I found a friend who is an architect, a friend who is a photographer and a girl I knew here in Marketing, I connected them and they helped me in different parts. I am a person who will connect people and make them fanatical about an issue. In that sense I am a leader, you could say that". (Jessica)

Excerpt 11: *"Well…now I do (think of myself as a leader)…it is a heavy word to say…I think I acquired this awareness via the Youth Organization clearly…but when you get in the process of delivering a project with managing people, a second well with managing people well…you probably understand that there is something about you and you manage it right and deliver this project. I think I am a good leader but based on the model that I will communicate with the other (person), I will make fun, I will say a few more words and then I will handle the person in a good sense, that this is what we have to do now, of course there is a lot more I have to improve, I am very "soft", very mild, but until now I have had good results, I have not been in a situation where I would say "this has brought a very negative result".* (Christine)

Although the explicit focus is on the participants' skills and experiences that they perceive can portray them as leaders, the implicit pattern emerging is that in the examples shared, the other people did not "oppose" to their leadership attempts. From a leadership development perspective, this is an important underlying mechanism and when it comes to young people, whose self-views of leadership are at an emerging stage, fragile and sensitive to external validation (or invalidation), the degree to which people around them "embrace" their leadership seems to be a critical mechanism that can enable and/or constrain their actions. In contract to the previous, Excerpt 12 is indicative of the aforementioned mechanism; the participant Helen shared an experience where she viewed herself as good leader by supporting another team member feel good about herself. There is an explicit meaning attribution to viewing the self as a good leader in the phrase "I managed to make her feel strong for herself"; while this is an example of an experience shared with a person to whom the participant feels close ("I was also emotionally bonded to this person"), the potential

implicit importance of the relationship between the participant and her team member should not be underestimated.

Excerpt 12: *"I think that a leader is for difficult situations. One example where I applied good leadership was when one of my members at a certain point felt very disappointed, where she felt that the things, she did have no impact, that she worked many hours but no one saw that. And indeed, the other members had a negative opinion about her even though I could see that she did many things and was committed. For me it was very difficult to get out of the situation because I was also emotionally bonded to this person so I could show her the bigger picture. On the one hand you try but on the other hand you do not try in the correct way and you are not communicating it correctly. So, I managed to make her feel strong for herself and showed her which things she needs to improve. And just when she felt she could not continue I showed her the way"*. (Helen)

Theme 3: Safety Vs Fear

Sub-theme 1: Good leadership means enabling sense of control and psychological safety

Within their interviews, participants referred to some of their observations and experiences that indicate qualities they view as positive when it comes to leadership. On a semantic focus level, participant identified various behaviors and attitudes that they perceive to be positive; on a latent focus level, those different attributes seem to be all connected as necessary conditions to allow the team members to have a sense of control and feel psychologically safe. In the following excerpts, participants mainly speak from the position of the team member or the observer (with the exception of excerpt 13); they are sharing their experiences and their observations of other people as leaders.

According to excerpt 13, being able to understand the need for help and communicate that need is a positive leadership quality. The participant makes this observation based on her own experience while being the leader of a team; the use of the phrase "the best thing to do at the time" implies both a positive meaning attributed to this behavior as well as a great outcome that came out of it.

Excerpt 13: *"In a situation that I could not handle the time pressure I asked for help. I knew it was the best thing to do at the time"*. (Christine)

In excerpt 14, knowing what each member should do in a team is perceived as a positive aspect of leadership as well; speaking from the position of a team member, the participant shares her own experience of how clear role allocation helped her have a clear sense of the team and her duties; the sense of safety as stated in the phrase "I felt safe" has a very powerful meaning here as well as the choice of the word "control"; this also implies how important it is to be aware of the expectations team has from the members.

Excerpt 14: "*When I knew what I had to do I felt safe and could control my time and emotions. When you know your duties it is easier for you and the team*". (Ann)

Those two excerpts (13 & 14) share two inter-related implicit patterns; psychological safety and sense of control; similarly, the ability of a leader to control the way they express themselves and mediate conflict to restore safety in the team are also perceived as positive qualities (excerpt 15). Listening, expressing views, having empathy for the others, accepting the critic and be open to accept others' opinions apart from important interpersonal skills on a semantic level, are also implying that psychological safety and sense of control are provided (Excerpt 15). Having positive relationships among the team members was considered an important factor to the team building and to the effectiveness of team's goals.

Excerpt 15: *"… listen, have the dynamic to be able to express correctly what he/she thinks because it is very important to transmit what you are saying, it is not what you say, it is the way you say it, be a mediator, and be able when he/she is between two sides to function as the link that will connect them and not take one's side.."*. (Jim)

Having values, being authentic in your behavior, having optimism and humbleness were highlighted.

Excerpt 18: *"..the one that doesn't speak sophisticated or tries to make things look difficult but the one that is ready to change everything at any time and the one who has reached the team in such a level that is able to function without his/her presence and through his/her stories to convert his/her own personal experiences to life lessons*

so that he/she will motivate the team so that they will chase their dreams and feel strong enough to succeed". (Jim)

Participants reported that receiving justification and discussing the procedure was significant for them in order to understand the thoughts and actions of the team members. When they knew the reasons, that helped them feel more safe and in control.

Excerpt 19: *"She was always justifying why the members of the team had to do the specific task and that made us feel very good".* (Mary)

Sub-theme 2: Steering away from Authoritarian Leadership

Qualities of leaders that are viewed by the participants as negative seem to be falling under the label of "authoritarian style" behaviors. This is opposite to the previous sub-theme; observations and experiences in this sub-theme indicate absence of psychological safety and sense of control and are rather indicative of authoritarian leadership. In the following excerpts, participants reported attitudes and behaviors such as: imposing views, increasing the tone of voice, giving orders, sound dismissive, not listening. Increasing the tone of voice was considered as an old model of leadership practice that was connected with authority but now participants considered this behavior to cause stress and discomfort to the team – reducing their psychological safety and sense of control (Excerpt 21). Also, giving orders is considered as an ineffective way of communication since it shown inequality among the members of the team and participants considered it to be disrespectful and caused them feelings of unsafety (Excerpt 22). Listening to the team enables the communication and trust among its members. On the contrary they discussed the situation of not listening to the team as arrogance that did not lead to effective cooperation (Excerpt 24).

Excerpt 20: *"When someone wants to oblige us to accept his point of view it is insufficient. Imposing your view is not working and is not good for no one".* (Mary)

Excerpt 21: *"I found myself to act badly every time I spoke more loudly".* (Michael)

Excerpt 22: *"Telling to the team what to do and being like do this and do that made me feel insecure".* (Christine)

Excerpt 23: *"It was more like let's get over with this project".* (Kate)

Excerpt 24: *"If you are not listening to the team then you are a bad leader".* (Helen)

Both psychological safety and sense of control are important structures that enable actions and behaviors. Psychological safety and sense of control are in a reciprocal relationship; when the participants feel safer, the feel they can be more in control; when the participants are more in control, they feel more psychologically safe. This can be achieved via different pathways, like the different behaviors presented by the participants as observations and experiences (Sub-theme 1). On the other hand, authoritarian style, or laissez-faire behaviors are threats to the psychological safety and/or sense of control of the young leaders and enable negative reactions and experiences (Sub-theme 2). From a leadership development perspective, it is more likely for young people to evolve as good leaders when mechanisms that enable a stronger sense of psychological safety and control are activated.

Theme 4: Facilitation of leadership development at young age

Sub-theme 1: Facilitators related to "nurture"

Within their interviews, participants discussed potential facilitators of leadership development. The definition of this theme is "facilitators related to nurture" as the participants reflect retrospectively on forces that can help a young person shape their leadership development since early childhood and during adolescent years. According to participants, facilitators related to nurture include parents, teachers and extracurricular activities; as discussed in excerpt 25, parents act as role models to their kids since they provide them with opportunities to take up leadership roles and support them.

Excerpt 25: *"My mum has helped me mostly, my family overall. Through family you develop, and this is a main factor that helps you develop leadership. And for me it was one summer that I went camping and I wanted to leave but my mum did not let me. I stayed for a month alone with the other kids, she came to visit but contrary to other*

mums that took their children back home when they were crying she let me hardened. At that point I realised that I had to change some things and I found my strength". (Mary)

As discussed in excerpt 26, teachers that are engaged in their role were reported as role models that showed them the way to believe in themselves and that was beneficial to the participants since that gave them the confidence to believe in themselves and take up leadership roles.

Excerpt 26: *"A teacher has been real inspiring to my development. He helped me believe in myself and always try for the best, not to give up".* (John)

Extra-curricular activities and in particular attending scouts (Excerpt 27) is identified as a leadership facilitator related to nurture. The majority of the participants had been involved in various activities and they experienced the interactions they had with their peers and with their tutors as very meaningful.

Excerpt 27: *"Being in scouts from a young age helped me learn to interact with others. They were giving us feedback to learn to communicate effectively, not impose our opinion but learn to discuss with the team and listen to the others".*

This sub-theme refers to facilitators that the participants have experienced during their upbringing as children and adolescence; they are not hypothetical scenarios neither speculations, they are rather empirical assumptions of the participants of what they, in retrospection, believe has helped them in their leadership development so far.

Sub-theme 2: Leadership skills can be taught

Within their interviews, participants discussed how targeted trainings and programmes for the development of leadership skills can help young adolescents become better leaders. The leadership skills can be taught"; in contract to the "nurture" facilitators, that were related to their upbringing and personal experience, this sub-theme was mostly generated from their beliefs and perceptions, as the participants reflect retrospectively on forces that can help a young person shape their leadership development since early childhood and during adolescent years.

The following excerpts are related to the participants' perceptions on how they think teaching leadership to young people would be more effective. Experiential learning can be identified as a pattern among the following excerpts: leadership "can be taught though experiences" (Excerpt 28); "cannot be communicated via a course in the classroom or in the university" (Excerpt 29); "For children, they must experience it and take upon a leadership role" (Excerpt 30); "I think that a leadership programme… must be experiential" (Excerpt 31); "many workshops that simulate certain situations" (Excerpt 32).

Excerpt 28: *"Yes, sure I believe we can [teach leadership skills]. Of course, some characteristics are inherent but the vast majority, it can be taught through experiences, through people you are interacting with, how assertive you are going to be, which thing you will want to go after, for yourself. So, definitely, I believe some things can be taught"*. (Kate)

Excerpt 29: *"Yes, with a particular timeline, with a particular programme because this is something very important that cannot be communicated via a course in the classroom or in the university. With a particular programme for a number of years, during a time period, some things can be taught"*. (Sophie)

Excerpt 30: *"You cannot teach leadership the same way that you teach maths in a direct way or through tutorials but it is something that we have to experience. For children, they must experience it and take upon a leadership role, see it in action and step-by-step practice in order to transfer the skills in real life. We need to involve them in something with a passive position in the beginning so they can acquire them (the leadership skills). They have, then, to start in an energetic way, to undertake a project, even a small one but surely before that on an early stage one has to encourage them to do it"*. (Steve)

Excerpt 31: *"I think that a leadership programme, and I am influenced by the scouts and the experiences I have had so far, must be experiential. To come closer to informal circumstances is a tool for a leader so in a leadership programme, I regard that living in the nature, because to me nature is a great school for anybody and especially for people who have responsibility positions. To manage a team in difficult*

circumstances in an unsafe environment must definitely be a part of the programme, as well as the changes of conditions". (Ann)

Excerpt 32: *"Activities that will develop leadership so workshops, many workshops that simulate certain situations on which participants will have to make certain decisions, to form groups. Through groups they need to make something together. To learn the basic characteristics of a leader... and to give some tips on how to manage certain situations. And of course, to teach them how to be organized how to make a schedule".* (Mary)

Participants understand the complexities and the difficulties of teaching leadership skills to children and adolescents; they have been adolescents themselves recently and potentially now that they are young adults experiencing leadership positions, they are more aware of how complicated "teaching" leadership can be. This acknowledgment can be identified in the previous excerpts where participants express their "reservations": "I believe some things can be taught" (Excerpt 28); "for a number of years…some things can be taught" (Excerpt 30). They all seem to agree however that the best way to teach leadership is by providing adolescents and children with opportunities of experiencing leadership at first hand.

Overview of the analysis

Through the interviews, participants shared experiences where they explained how they view themselves as leaders. In theme 1, the generated patterns were referring on general comprehensive understandings of leadership; from the critical realism perspective, this could be placed in the empirical domain (how they perceive leadership) with some limited access to the actual domain through the interpretation of implicit meanings and ideas generated in the analysis. The definition of theme 2 "how the participants view themselves as leaders" aims to identifying potential underlying mechanisms in the real domain, which is the deepest level of social reality for the critical realism framework, towards the identification of social structures that enable or constrain action for the participants. When sharing their perception on leadership (Theme 1), participants relied a lot on how potential leaders make other people feel; thus, when discussing leadership as an abstract notion, most of the participants positioned themselves as potential "followers" or "team members" and

implicitly reflected on how they want a leader to make them feel. When sharing their perceptions on how the view themselves as leaders (Theme 2), participants relied a lot on experiences where interacting with other people has made them feel competent and validated as leaders; in this case, they reflect on the issue being positioned as leaders; From a leadership development perspective, this could mean that young people rely in how other people make them feel both when positioned as followers and as leaders; external validation of their leadership role is a generative mechanism that enables or constrains their actions, regardless of whether they are a team member/follower or a leader. Regardless of that, however, they seem to give equal importance to psychological safety and sense of control (Theme 3, sub-theme 1) and are against behaviors and attitudes that are affiliated to authoritarian leadership models (Theme 3, sub-theme 2). This can be reinforced by the facilitators of leadership development they reflect upon (Theme 4, sub-theme 1): parents, teachers and childhood extracurricular activities, while they are in favor of organized leadership trainings where children and adolescents can experience leadership roles in settings of psychological safety and sense of control (Theme 4, sub-theme 2).

Discussion

This research aims to fill a gap in our understanding of what youth leadership looks like and what youth leaders themselves say about how to best help them to develop their leadership skills as young people. Self-awareness was pointed out as a very important factor to leadership. Only when leaders come to see themselves as incomplete—as having both strong point and weaknesses—will they be able to develop for their missing skills by trusting on others (Ancona et al., 2007), to move in the direction of accomplishing their goals (Goleman, 1999). One important theme that was highlighted in the research was the connection of leadership behavior with ethical practice and bringing a good change in the community. Their ethics was represented by their participation in volunteering work and aiming at the best of society in terms of justice. Authentic leadership via self-awareness, acting accordingly to your values and having trust-based relationships was highlighted (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; Kiersch & Peters, 2017).

In the same time, the latent patterns that helped identify potential hidden mechanisms of leadership development and understanding among young people indicate that the successful shift from the leader to the team member position is not achieved yet among most of the young adults that participated in this study. While thinking of leadership on an empirical level, the focus is mostly on how the leader makes the team feel. While thinking of the self as a leader, the focus is mostly on how they feel through the interactions with other people. This complex shift in positioning could be partially understood as a mechanism of moral reasoning. Utilizing Kohlberg's' Theory of Moral Development (Kohlberg, 1984), adults reach full moral development when they answer to an inner conscience, adhering to a small number of abstract principles that produce specific rules. In that sense, if a leader is defined as a person who inspires and motivates other people towards achieving their own goals, then, when reflecting on the self as a leader, an adult is expected to draw upon experiences where they inspired and motivated other people to achieve their goals. Additionally, although the theory of Kohlberg (1984) admits that approximately only 15% of adults reach that stage of moral development and there is very limited objective evidence on *how moral adults really are,* the majority of adult leadership models that are being currently endorsed and highly valued (transformational leadership; ethical leadership; authentic leadership; servant leadership) are based on the assumption that all people reach the "universal ethical principle" (Kohlberg, 1984) or at least on Kant's (1797) idea about "the natural predisposition of good". Meanwhile, research evidence indicates that toxic leadership and abusive supervisor ship prevails among different settings (Milosevic et al., 2020). Thus, when focusing on models of leadership development for adolescents and young people, there needs to be a focus on the ability to alternate positioning and develop continuity in the view of others as leaders and the view of the self as a leader.

Participants considered that leadership qualities can be taught and they considered that only through experiential activities people of all ages and children could understand the concept of leadership and the way leaders interact. Kouzes & Posner (1987) argue that all aspects of leadership can be learned and that leaders are made, not born. Our results resemble those of Kouzes & Posner (1987) who suggested that opportunities to lead can be categorized in three ways: trial and error, people, and education. Trial and

error means learning by doing. Being a head of a team in a programme is a condition in which adolescents can learn by doing.

Tutors, teachers, mentors, parents provide feedback and guidance in the learning process and become role models as well. The importance of mentorship as a means of communicating leadership lessons was emphasized in the study of Taylor et al. (2008). The interaction and covering of youth's need of relatedness hinges on the establishment of a strong trusting relationship between youth and mentor (Bean, Harlow, & Kendellen, 2017; Armour, Sandford, & Duncombe, 2013). Team leadership was reported as significant to them since they believe in the power of teams and having the team bonded and happy was the main goal. Wingenbach & Kahler (1997) suggest that secondary school students have the ability to develop leadership skills via decision making, getting along with others, learning the organization of self, self-awareness, and working with groups through taking part in many youth leadership organizations in school and/or community activities. As Dweck (2008) has indicated in her research people that have growth mindset are taking every experience as a tool for personal growth and work on their mistakes to make sure they have understood them.

Structured leadership education is perhaps the most important in helping those who have not perceived themselves as leaders or who have not been involved with community and school activities. As participants reported through experiential learning leadership skills can be learned and practiced and therefore being engaged to this cyclical process that leads to new skills (Kiersch, & Peters, 2017. The knowledge acquired should be applied in action where skills cover the action area of learning (McDonald-Mann, 1998). Support from parents, teachers and other adults plays a key role in developing leadership skills. Adolescents who feel these adults take an active interest in their progression rank themselves more highly in their leadership skills and their willingness to assume leadership roles (Hancock, Dyk, & Jones, 2012). Extra-curricular leadership programmes also show benefit, as they give adolescents the opportunity to practice and develop social learning and leadership skills (Hancock et al., 2012). The old model of leaders was connected with the will for authority and power. The new model of leaders is starting to gain ground where the focus is on ethics. Students who are given the opportunity to learn and practice leadership will

enter adulthood better prepared to solve problems and bring about change in every facet of their lives. Parental support was demonstrated by the young adults as a significance factor in their leadership development through the parents' faith in their children and their introduction to activities and networks (Reitan & Stenberg, 2019).

Implications for the future

The findings of the study have important implications for designing the curriculum of programmes to enhance leadership skills to adolescents. Our findings suggest the importance of specific qualities such as emotional intelligence and the need for incorporating these aspects into the curriculum of a leadership course. Specifically, future leaders will be helped in their leadership training if they are aware of the qualities that existing leaders consider as significant for their leadership role. Good leaders rely upon emotional regulation and interpersonal skills that can be learned and taught throughout life (Segal, 2002). Our findings highlight that young adults consider experiential learning and learning through activities and projects to be more important and effective from their point of view compared to tutorial courses. This can also be highlighted by the fact that when asked to reflect on their own potential as leaders, their answers included examples of situations where they had to utilize their skills to achieve an outcome – they did not rely upon scores, marks or external opinions of significant others or even their own self-perception. Although this is not objective evidence in favor of the experiential programmes, it could potentially be an indicator of how important it is for them to experience opportunities of leadership positions in order to obtain awareness of their leadership skills and be able to potentially transfer them across different situations and contexts. Within a leadership course projects, activities, role playing, arguing are situations of effective strategies.

Limitations

The study has several limitations one of which is that the sample was a convenience one and the results could not be generalized beyond the beliefs of the young adults that participated in the research. The research was based on the qualitative method and self-reported data in order to gather young adults' attitudes to leadership and it is unknown to what degree the beliefs of the participants apply to the general population. Therefore, an additional limitation of the study might be the 'interview

data limitation' where participant's different experiences or emotional state during the interview could have an impact on their views (Cohen et al., 2007).

Conclusion

Participants' answers provide rich data to understand the attitudes that young leaders have regarding leadership. Developing and becoming a leader is connected with experiences on the positive and negative aspect of participating in trainings that will enhance these skills. It is important to understand which aspects of the leadership can affect the adolescents in order to become leaders and therefore future research to address the contribution of schools in the development of leadership skills among students. A wide-ranging model for a formal leadership education curriculum appears to be an essential key element that is missing from education programmes. Such a model would add to the existing leadership knowledge and expand the leadership opportunities to all the participants. Taking into consideration the findings of this research mentoring figures, chances for leadership and participating in extracurricular activities can empower the leadership identity and skills of young adults.

Chapter 5

**Exploring the experiences of school children in a leadership training
programme: using a diary study approach**

Introduction

The aim of the current paper is to explore the experiences of adolescent students
attending a leadership training programme. During the last years developing leaders at
earlier ages has gained traction as is evidenced by the introduction of leadership
programmes for undergraduate university students (Oakland, Falkenberg & Oakland,
1996; Boatman, 1999; Brungardt, 1997; Astin & Astin, 2000; Cress, Astin,
Zimmerman-Oster & Burkhardt, 2001; Zimmerman-Oster, 2003; Kiersch & Peters,
2017). Leadership training for adolescents has gained increased acceptance as a
priority area for research and development (Barker, 1997; Roberts, Fawcett, & Searle,
2019).

This study is the first to take place in Greece regarding the experiences of adolescents
who participated in an 8-month leadership programme and the first that explores the
students' experiences with the use of weekly diaries. Adolescence is an important
time for leadership growth. Increasing leadership in adolescence can reinforce self-
esteem and be a catalyst for prospering adulthood (van Linden & Fertman, 1998).
Being involved in leadership roles in adolescence improves one's probability of
entering in college and has a positive impact on future income (Kuhn & Weinberger,
2005). Since leadership has been described as a set of skills and attitudes that can be
learned and practiced it is not surprising that adolescence is a critical time for
leadership development. However, many adolescents do not have the chance to act as
leaders, and adult leadership models are often inappropriate for adolescents that have
unique developmental needs (van Linden & Fertman, 1998). Hendricks et al. (2010),
applied a leadership programme in undergraduate university students that was based
on the work of Bennis (2003) which stands as an example of a leadership programme
and according to this approach leadership was regarded as involving self-awareness

and communicating it to others, building trust among others and taking effective action to realize one's personal leadership potential.

According to Gregory (2001), skill describes expertise developed in through training and experience. The frequent factor for the different types of skills is that the leader has to match the demands of a particular task to the appropriate skill necessary for the effective achievement of the task. Leadership skills are "the learned ability to bring about pre-determined results with maximum certainty often with minimum use of time…, energy or both" (Knapp, 2007, p.1). Leadership skills can be expressed as "direction, guidance, enlightenment, management and ability to provide impact" (Barbary, 1999). Leadership skills are defined as essential resources, support and direction to achieve effective performance together with human resource power at all levels (Babu, Rao, Ahmed & Gupta, 2008). Leadership begins with self-awareness and a person who is aware of his own positive and negative features, is expected to be a better leader of the group he is leading. Therefore, the research in the fields of self-awareness and leadership are growing and increasing rapidly (Kernis, 2003).

Wingenbach & Kahler (1997) suggest that secondary school students have the ability to develop leadership skills via decision making, getting along with others, learning the organization of self, self-awareness, and working with groups through taking part in many youth leadership organizations in school and community activities. Decision making, reasoning and critical thinking skills are central to a model for leadership development to adolescents (Ricketts & Rudd, 2002). Gardner (1987) pronounced that if he has to name one "all-purpose instrument of leadership" that it would be communication. One significant dimension of the youth leadership curriculum model is intrapersonal and interpersonal skills. Conflict resolution, stress management, team work and ethics combined with knowledge regarding diversity, personality types, communication styles, leadership styles and other human relation abilities all fall into this final dimension. The human relation dimension prepares students to look inward and to work with others in the most optimum ways possible (Ricketts & Rudd, 2002).

The global economic crisis that is ongoing since 2008 begs the question of whether we need leaders with entirely different values, and younger people represent a perfect starting point. The degree to which adult models of leadership are appropriate for

younger people is an open question. Do we embrace a top-down approach whereby we feedback the skills and lessons of successful leaders to a younger generation, an apprenticeship approach? Alternatively, do we support a bottom-up approach whereby we empower younger people to rethink leadership models and provide the opportunity for them to organically develop different models of leadership? (Karagianni & Montgomery, 2018).

The research questions

The purpose of the present research is to examine the experiences of the participants attending a leadership programme. More specifically, the research will answer two research questions that have been developed to illuminate: the skills they learned on the programme, memorable incidents on the programme, and the application of learned skills in their school and/or personal lives. The questions are as follows:

1. In what ways did the experiences of the programme influence the participants' understanding of themselves as engaging in leadership development?

2. In what ways did the experiences of the programme transfer to the school life and non-school life of the participants?

Method

Participants

The study sample consisted of 20 Greek adolescent students attending a leadership programme that was held in the University of Macedonia, Greece and was designed to enrich students' leadership skills. Purposive sampling was applied. The authors of the article were involved in the programme as tutors. The programme aimed to train students on leadership skills that include communication skills, problem solving, teamwork and self-awareness. The sample consisted of 11 girls and 9 boys aged from 12-16 years old and the mean age of the sample was 13.75 years. Everyone who participated in the programme was included in the research and the selection criteria for their participation in the programme were the age of the participant and their willingness in developing leadership skills. An interview was conducted with the

tutors of the programme and each pupil in order to clarify the participants' motivation to participate in the programme.

Description of the programme

The leadership training programme aimed to develop the students' ability to cooperate in a team, demonstrate effective communication skills, public speaking skills, critical thinking and self-awareness. The programme is addressed to adolescents at the age range of 12-16 years and the duration of the programme is nineteen weeks and each course lasts for 2.5 hours. The programme is bilingual in Greek and English. Students developed their leadership skills through role playing, presenting seminars to others, public speaking in events and management of groups. Students were encouraged to develop an approach that would inspire them and provided them motives to work with others, considering the needs and characteristics of the members of the group. The students participated in public action events (e.g., creating a new political party and communicating their vision to the media) twice during the course.

The programme is guided by principles from action research, meaning that the process of the programme is structured to allow the participants to drive the content and activities. In this way, the programme tries to avoid participants taking a passive student's role. There were multiple small group activities that assigned students to different groups and to share the benefits of the programme with the other members. Small group sessions that required reflection, sharing ideas, solving problems, and network in a collaborative, supportive environment and students engaged in self-reflection, self-discovery, and discussion through weekly challenges and reflective worksheets and activities. Throughout the sessions, students learned about leadership characteristics and qualities and knowledge of group dynamics and teamwork. They were encouraged to develop their personal leadership style and how they could distinguish themselves as a leader.

Procedure

All parents signed a consent letter where they were informed: about the duration of the study, the objectives of the research and the fact that children could withdraw any time they wanted. Participation in the study was voluntary and all the participants of

the programme participated in the study. Each person differed in the frequency and the extent that he/she wrote in the diary. The participants had a unique code that they created out of their birth date and the last three numbers of their telephone number in order for the anonymity to be preserved and they only specified their sex. At the end of each course the participants received the weekly diary on hard copy and returned it completed at the next course. If a student was absent, they did not receive a diary. For each week, the individuals were asked to fill in the diaries answering the following questions:

1) Thinking back on last week did anything happen in school or out of school where what you learned at the programme was useful?

2) What specifically was it that you learned in the programme and was it useful?

3) What skills did the programme help you develop and are you using these skills?

Finally, participants were asked whether they discussed the programme with other people. The students completed the diary at home and were advised to write it the day before the course so that they would include the experiences and incidents of the week that passed. They received a reminder message on their mobile phone one day before the course so that they would remember to fill in the diary in case they had forgotten to write it.

Using a Diary Methodology with School Children

Students' attitudes and experiences of their participation in a long-term leadership programme have not been thoroughly studied. Through the diary approach there is the opportunity of capturing the dynamic picture of how young people experience such programmes. Diary studies, which assess within subject experiences, offer the opportunity to collect rich data and allow us to study the frequency of certain episodes. The recommendations of Bolger, Davis & Rafaeli (2003) were taken into account when designing the diaries. As such, (1) diaries were designed to be portable and pocket size, (2) the diary format was pilot tested, (3) ongoing contact with participants was maintained and (4) the difficulty in filling out diaries was

communicated to participants and individuals were prompted to exclude their diary if they believed that they had not filled it in adequately.

Analysis strategy

All diaries were anonymized, transcribed and archived electronically in a database were both researchers could have access. Reflexive thematic analysis was applied as has been explained in detail in Chapter 3. Two researchers independently analyzed and coded the data and compared their results. The independently generated themes were reviewed by the two researchers and final agreement was reached.

Results

In total 217 diaries were returned and analyzed. None of the young people provided feedback for all 19 weeks. The average number of weeks that the participants filled their diaries was 11 weeks; 90% of the children answered all four questions and the mean number of sentences over the 19 weeks was six. Participants filled the date and time the filled the diary and they followed the same programme each week for the completion of the diary mostly in the evening hours. A total of 87 meaningful units – diary entries that consisted of excerpts that were analyzable - were analyzed. Participants reported that they had acquired competencies by their participation in the programme at both the intrapersonal and interpersonal levels.

Empirically observed skills – Content Focus

Theme 1: Interpersonal skills

Students reported acquiring interpersonal skills that helped them effectively interact with their peers in the programme and also applied them in their everyday life. Teamwork was highlighted by the participants. Sociability and communication were mentioned several times.

Teamwork

Teamwork was mentioned 47 times by the participants and students reported that they use cooperation a lot in their everyday lives and mostly at school. Being able to work effectively in different group combinations was mentioned by all the participants.

Excerpt 1: *"The greatest and most useful skill that the programme helped me develop I think is teamwork, because I see that groups exist everywhere: in school, work, family is a team, the peers. So, through teamwork you learn, you give, you receive and generally you live. It is a skill that I will use forever, and I will improve myself through that".*

Participants mentioned the team as an important factor in their development and the interaction they had with their peers in the programme

Excerpt 2: *"We were working with few students, and I felt I could speak that no one would judge me".*

Excerpt 3: "*Classmates helped the team cause the team is important and I felt secure enough to work and be myself".*

Excerpt 4: *"We could laugh and have fun at the same time of learn so valuable things".*

Excerpt 5: *"We had a clear role description; we knew what we had to do within the team project every time we worked together".*

Emotional regulation skills

Participants reported developing emotional skills that included the awareness and management of their emotions and their empathy towards others. According to the majority of the participants realizing and managing their emotions helped them in their everyday interaction with the others.

The majority of students highlighted the importance of their emotional awareness since they were able to understand them and distinguish them. Before the programme they mentioned that they felt difficulty in recognizing their emotions. Emotional awareness was mentioned 12 times.

Excerpt 6: *"I learned to recognize my feelings and understand what I am actually feeling being able to name it".*

Students mentioned emotion management 13 times and connected it mostly with the management of their fear, anger and stress.

Excerpt 7: *"I learned how to manage my feelings and manage situations"*.

Being able to understand the emotions of others and through this being able to accept them and see their viewpoints was highly mentioned by the majority of students. In 19 times occasions they reported empathy.

Excerpt 8: *"The most useful skill that I developed in the programme was the ability to understand others how they feel, it started with my classmates in the programme and then I could apply it to my family, friends and the rest"*.

Communication

Communicating in a constructive way was mentioned 22 times and participants felt more honest when they expressed themselves more openly. Students stressed the importance of expressing their voice and having a saying in the courses.

Excerpt 9: *"I learned the proper way to communicate and felt good about it because I could express my weak points"*.

Theme 2: Cognitive Skills

Cognitive skills involve decision making, problem solving, critical thinking and persuasion. Participants highlighted the importance of acquiring the process of taking a decision, solve a problem and use their critical thinking.

Participants reported acquiring decision making process both as individuals as well as parts of a team. Decision making was mentioned 23 times by the participants and often was linked with the time management since in most activities they had to make decisions in a specific amount of time.

Excerpt 10: *"I learned how to use my time in a creative way and make decisions with the team"*.

Students reported developing the process that leads to the solution of the problems.11 times problem solving was reported in the diaries.

Excerpt 11: *"I learned how to solve a problem and not only the easy way but the steps I have to make and the road I have to follow in order to reach the solution. In the*

school's board I took the leader's role and along with the team we found the solution".

Being able to think above the surface and have a criticality was highlighted by the participants and mentioned 19 times.

Excerpt 12*: "The most useful skill that I developed in the programme is to see beyond the obvious and having a critical approach on things which I improve every day"*.

Theme 3: Self-Development

All students reported that they learned many aspects of themselves that they did not they had e.g. their sociability and that helped them since they better knew their strengths and weaknesses and they linked this skill with their leader identity. As one student said 'Knowing who I am I can find my leadership style better'. Within their awareness skills they included self-criticism, self confidence and public speaking.

In 9 times students reported acquiring the ability to criticize themselves in a constructive way and look into their actions.

Excerpt 13: "*I learned how to criticize not only myself but also the others so that they won't be offended but also appreciate it"*.

Developing their confidence in themselves and in their strengths was mentioned 25 times by the participants. According to them their participation in the programme helped them believe in their powers and that helped them stand in front.

Excerpt 14: "*I learned to believe in me and have the confidence to stand in front"*.

Learning to speak in public was mentioned 22 times and was mentioned by all the participants. They reported that the projects helped them overcome their fear of exposure and at the end of the programme they enjoyed speaking in public.

Excerpt 15: "*I was taught how to speak in public"*.

Theme 4: "Learning" leadership skills

Participants reported enhancing skills and knowledge due to their participation in the programme regarding leadership and some factors that acted as facilitators to this process. The factors could be categorized into three categories: exposure to leadership behaviors, safe environment and relational aspects.

Through their interaction with their peers they could see and learn from them different approaches and styles that their classmates had and be inspired.

Excerpt 16: *"I could observe the others and learn; I could see the others and learn from them".*

Excerpt 17: *"We could see from many different aspects".*

Participants reported that the new information they gained every week helped them in their own process of identifying their leadership identity and they often considered them as 'life lessons' that encouraged them to find new ways to look to established things.

Excerpt 18: *"I was exposed in front of the audience but the subjects I had to present were new and interesting to me".*

Excerpt 19: *"I learned that except of being influenced we can influence others. That changed my point of view, I felt I could have a say".*

The importance of facilitators

Participants highlighted the need of facilitators in order for the students to explore their potentials. Safety from their tutors and classmates enhanced their sense of comfort and they could actively listen to their classmates and speak their view. Tutors were reported by the participants as a safety net that they could rely on and felt they could trust them and act without fear or stress.

Excerpt 20: *"Tutors were there for us, and believed in us and that helped me believe in me".*

They mentioned they could reflect after course and discussed with their family, and compared it with school where they did not discuss it with their family. Participants reported that movement in the class acted as a facilitator for them since they felt free.

Excerpt 21: *"We could move in the class and that helped me feel free to express, to explore".*

Reflexive Thematic Analysis of Critical Memorable incidents – Latent Focus

Participants reported a variety of incidents that they exhibited and applied the skills they were taught during the programme. The incidents described in the diaries indicate that participants utilized the experiences from the course in their everyday life and mostly within the school context and within their interpersonal relationships and interactions with others. Teamwork was mentioned in 26 occasions, public speaking in 25, critical thinking in 22, communication in 17, decision making in 15. The settings where incidents took place were; the school, home and outdoor activities (Table 3, see excerpts). In total 62 incidents of leadership behavior were described by the students. The incidents focused on the interaction with others and the reflection the participants had on them.

The critical/memorable incidents consisted of situations where the participants perceived they managed to transfer skills they developed in the leadership development programme in real life situations in school-life and non-school-life (e.g., relationships with friends and extracurricular projects). In that sense, diaries serve a reflective function in the learning process, influencing the experienced outcomes of the programme for the participants and potentially the transferability of the learnt skills.

Figure 1. Graphical depiction of the Analysis.
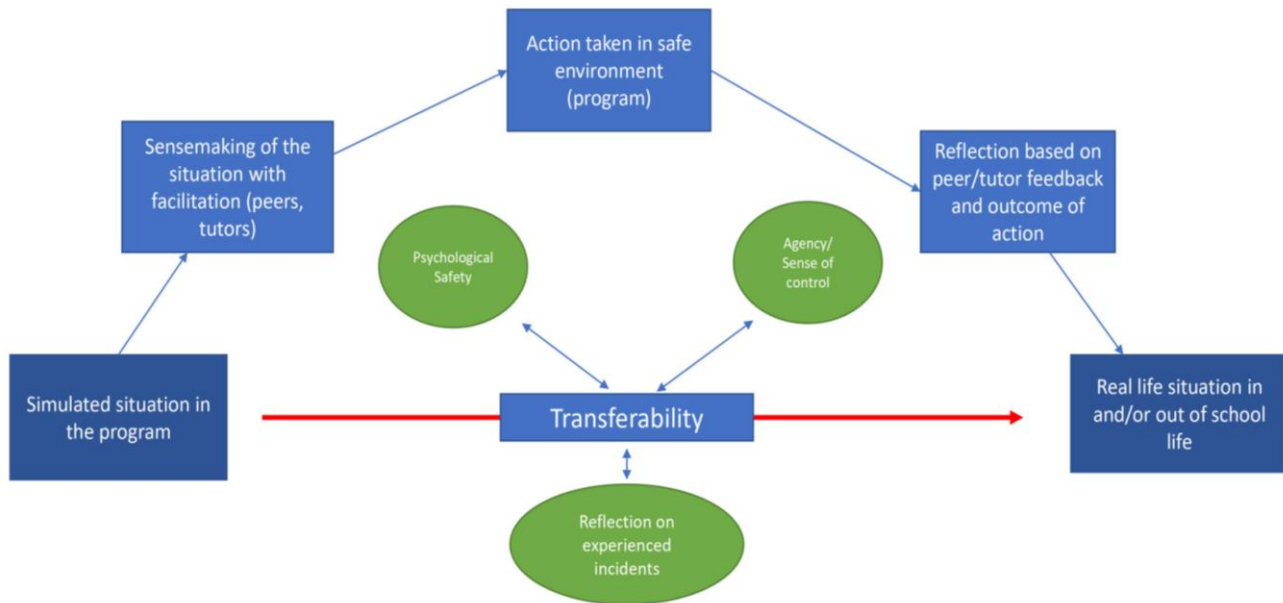
The overall analysis can be best understood by considering Figures 1 and 2 in parallel, which depicts a pathway depiction of how transferability works as experienced by the participants (see Figure 1) and presents the layers of reality as suggested by the critical realist approach (see Figure 2). Taking this into account, the analysis of the incidents generated patterns that are related to the skills that the participants observed themselves (see Table 3, empirical domain). These were generated on the level of semantic focus and are related to the empirical domain of observable experiences; thus, those themes are reflecting what the participants themselves perceived they have learnt in the programme and managed to transfer to real-life situations. On a latent-focus level, the analysis generated two main themes that are related to the hidden mechanisms (see Table 3, mechanisms – real domain) that have generated the actual events – the examples of "transferability" of the learnt skills. Following this analysis, psychological safety, sense of control and agency are the three mechanisms that have generated the actual events. In that sense, when the participants feel psychologically unsafe, the sense of control is unstable and thus agency is inhibited. These three mechanisms belong in the real domain (see Figure 2) and have causal forces to generate or stop actual events. Thus, when psychological safety is high, the participants are more likely to engage in actual situations that occur in a safe

environment, with peer and tutor facilitation (see Figure 1). This will increase the perceived sense of control over the situation and will allow the participants to act on the situation. This mechanism of agency will generate the event in the actual domain and will lead to the experience; the students will reflect upon the skills they feel they have used based on their experience, as well as peer and tutor feedback (see Figure 1, Reflection based on…action). As the participants feel more psychologically safe, the sense of control increases, leading to agency, in real life situations this time, thus they attempt to transfer skills from the programme to real life situations. Diaries help the participants reflect on the experience. The red arrow (Figure 1, Transferability) is a representation of transferability over time, repetitive exposure and reflection; this does not indicate a linear causal relationship between simulated situation and real-life situation; it is a model of contingency causality.

Figure 2. Critical realist depiction of the proposed model.
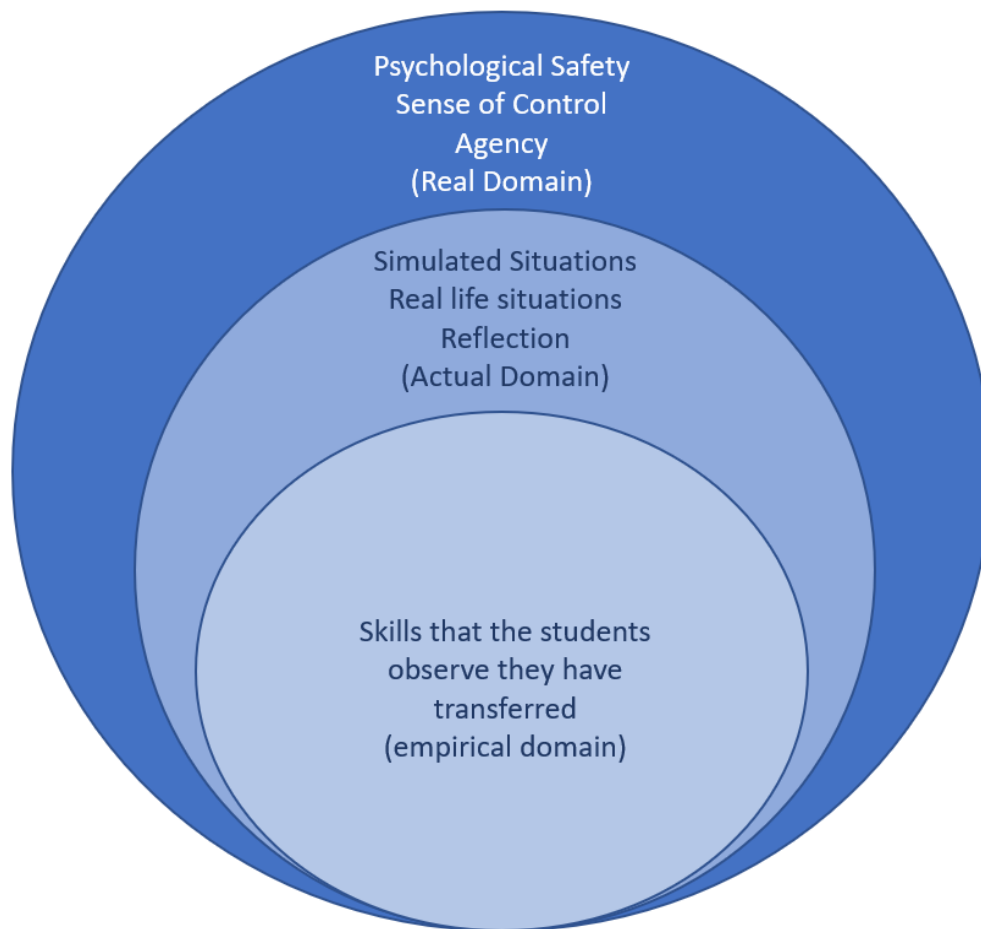
Table 3. Examples of Critical/Memorable Incidents.

Skills – Empirical Domain	Mechanisms – Real Domain	Excerpt
- Managing emotions - Communication skills	- Agency/Sense of Control - Psychological Safety	*"I had a fight with a friend of mine and I think that the programme was helpful to me in staying calm and managing my feelings and be able to explain how I feel without being nervous"*
- Taking initiatives - Assertiveness	- Agency/Sense of Control - Psychological Safety	*"Last week we had a team project at school, and we only had an hour to prepare it. Unfortunately, the team where I was did not do much about the project (...). At some point when I saw that we did not have much time I took the situation in my hands, stood in front, and explained them that if they continued that way, we would not finish the project. They listened to me and managed to persuade them that we needed to find the way to work and start the project. The programme helped me to be able to persuade others and "assert myself" to the rest of the team in order to work together and achieve our goal. In another case if I had not participated in the programme, I might not have been able to persuade them"*
- Problem-solving	- Agency/Sense of control	*"My gym teacher asked me to find out the real reasons for which*

- Adaptability		*some of my classmates declared being injured and therefore could not participate in the school championship. I did not know personally these kids so I thought that it would be better to find the reasons why they did not want to take part by using an indirect method. So, I found some common persons who were friends with these kids and I learnt the info that I needed. I made use of another technique than the one I used to perform, since every situation is different and we need to adjust and use the best method for every case"*
- Problem solving - Organizational Skills - Public Speaking	- Agency/Sense of Control - Psychological Safety	*"In our school, we had to make a project, but we had not completed it 8 hours before the presentation. In this situation, I provided many solutions since I spoke with the professor to give us more time. So, I managed to have an extension and I organized my classmates to prepare the presentation. Then we had to present it in front of an audience. Presenting in an audience before I did the programme would have made me feel shy but because we had experience in the programme of public speaking activities, I was able to concentrate on my goal*

		and not be nervous"
- Mediation	- Agency/sense of control	*"During a game who were playing with my friends the two teams had a quarrel and I decided to become the mediator and help the two teams make up"*
- Argumentation - Persuasion	- Agency/Sense of control	*"The previous Saturday we had to hand in a project for the formula 1 in school. The tension within the group was increased. Specifically, as the head of the team I felt the responsibility for the irresponsibility of some members of and in order to explain them how to improve I used the sandwich technique for the feedback that I learnt in the programme"*
- Problem solving - Responsibility	- Agency/Sense of Control - Psychological Safety	*"I made quite an effort in order not to fight with some of my classmates and I tried to calmly discuss with them. Before the programme, possibly, I would have avoided discussing with them and I would not have tried to solve the problem"*
- Argumentation - Problem solving	- Agency/Sense of Control - Psychological Safety	*"In my school there is a kid that is special (intellectual disability) and we had a meeting with the teachers and the members of the students' club so that we can discuss this issue since there have been some complains about this*

		kid. Many of my classmates were influenced by the teachers' views whereas they did not quite agree. Many discriminations had been made about this kid. The courses within the programme helped me handle this situation and express my opinion with arguments and help in the solution of this problem"
- Communication - Managing emotions - Self-awareness	- Agency/Sense of Control - Psychological Safety	*"One of the previous days I had to speak to one of my best friends and tell her how I feel regarding an issue that was bothering me for a while. I think that the programme helped me understand initially what was troubling me and therefore find the courage to speak about my emotions. Our tutors often ask us to express our opinion and our emotions regarding many situations. I tried to do the same to the situation that I had to deal"*

Overview of students' reflections on their participation on the leadership development programme

Understanding themselves and coming to terms with their strengths and weaknesses helped participants better understand others and put themselves in someone else's shoes. The interaction that participants had in the programme with each other acted as a milestone to their empowerment of their self-awareness. This insight into others helped participants comprehend how others see things and behave. Accepting the different perspective facilitated adolescents to be open to new and different

perspectives. One significant element of the participant's reflection on the programme was that they shared their experiences from the programme with their family members. In 124 answers they reported sharing their experiences from the programme with their family members (mostly their parents) and they did this as a way to elaborate upon their experiences they had on the course.

Being accepted by their classmates and being listened too by the participants helped them integrate this behavior with their classmates. They stated incidents of disagreement where they took time and space to listen to the different opinions and provide the other person with the opportunity to be expressed. That led them to react after having listened to all sides and not instantly. This appreciation to the value of hearing different points-of-view contributed to their acknowledgement of the different styles of leadership that do exist.

The structure of the programme promoted interaction within the team that helped the participants believe in themselves and take up action. All the participants mentioned that they discussed with their family what they did at the programme and transferred their experience to them. A majority reported that they learned to listen to others and transferred to their everyday life these skills in their interaction mostly with the friends, classmates and family members. The participants mentioned frequently the differences prior to and after the programme. Nine out of the 20 participants mentioned feeling introverted before the programme and were avoiding expressing themselves in public. They described themselves as timid, introvert, with less self-confidence, didn't believe in themselves who would not have solved problems, would not have supported their choice, would not have taken the initiative and would have avoided acting. Students reported that they managed to overcome their feelings of insecurity and students' reflections match development theory especially Erikson's stages of psychosocial development. The fourth stage challenges adolescents to overcome feelings of self-doubt and plays an essential role in developing a sense of personal identity which will continue to influence behavior and development (Cole, 2001, Erikson, 1968).

Discussion

The present study used diaries to examine students' experiences of a six month leadership training programme. In the present research, participants reported developing both intrapersonal and interpersonal skills (Annesi, 2020). In terms of the intrapersonal skills they reported self awareness and self development. Sense of control and psychological safety were identified as key aspects of leadership development mediating skills development and transferability. In terms of interpersonal skills, students reported that they valued the skills related to teamwork, the ability to communicate effectively along with learning how to interact with other people and be more social. Groups have a significant role in providing scenarios in which young people can put into practice and develop their own style of leadership, the ability to show the way and lead a group of people, and the needed experience to use these skills in real-world situations (Yeh et al., 2015).

Participants reported using and adapting leadership skills in a variety of situations outside of the course and reported 62 incidents that they recollected at their daily life utilizing the skills they learned at the programme. Students' answers revealed that they considered learning how to be leaders, learned how to learn and being an active member of a team. Successful incorporation into a team is a significant adaptive skill and the emotions we have are linked with the emotional disposition of other members in the group (Seligman, 2011). The ability to manage conflicts, accept others' opinions and communicate effectively are valuable leadership skills (Hay & Hodgkinson, 2006), which were reflected in the findings of the research. The present study indicates the utility of weekly diaries through the reflection of the participants' experiences and subjective attitudes and the recognized benefits of the programme can be comprehended in a less automatic and artificial way (Shek, 2010). In adolescence, children explore their independence and develop a sense of self. In terms of psychological safety, those who receive proper encouragement and reinforcement through personal exploration will emerge from this stage with a strong sense of self and feelings of independence and control. Those who remain unsure of their beliefs and desires will feel insecure and confused about themselves and the future. During adolescence, leadership ceases to be a plain notion of 'who gets to go first' and turns

into a more complex procedure requiring the ability to be self-aware and conscious of the needs of self and others (Jones, 2009).

Aspects of leadership can be learned and taught through tailored programmes since the capacity to develop leadership skills is open to everyone (Bennis, 1994; Metzger, 2007; van Linden & Fertman, 1998). In particular, participants reflected upon the significance of the teamwork and the interaction with others as an important factor in the development of their leadership skills and as a road that led them to deeper self-knowledge. As indicated in Figure 1, adolescents develop leadership via simulated situations that prompt reflection in a safe environment. Bennis, (1994) suggests that through our relationships with others we learn about ourselves, which was a theme reported frequently by participants. Based on the weekly diaries, participants reported transferability of the skills they learned in the programme. Students gained confidence as indicated by their reports of increased confidence in public speaking, in taking initiatives and greater self-awareness. Similar results had the study of Chan (2003) who evaluated the effectiveness of a leadership programme in high school students, who by the end of the programme had gained confidence as leaders, especially in the areas of communication and public speaking, in regulating emotions and social problem solving. Hendricks et al (2010) found that participants increased their ability to influence, persuade, motivate others and to effectively communicate. Additionally, team building was enhanced; participants worked collaboratively and developed better problem-solving skills. Similarly, Cohen et al. (2011) also recorded that participants reported an increase in confidence and improvement of communicational skills.

Limitations

The study has several limitations. The sample was a purposive sample and the results cannot be generalized to wider population of adolescents. The study did not involve a follow-up, meaning that the long-term perceived benefits are unknown. Future research might also include a larger sample and included participants from various economic statuses since the participants came from high socioeconomic families' statuses. The researcher's involvement as a tutor in the programme might have influenced the young pupils and the potential for social desirability might have affected the participants (see more discussion of this issue in Chapter 3 Reflexivity).

A longitudinal study could answer more questions especially regarding what happens to the participants as they progress to university and/or their selected careers.

Conclusion

The diaries provided rich data in terms of helping us understand the experiences that students encounter during a leadership training programme. The results indicate that participants gained confidence as leaders in the areas of teamwork, communication and public speaking, and were better able to manage and regulate their emotions. This research was carried out in Greece, and therefore the research has some interesting implications for the secondary education system, and the way that education is organized within a Greek context. The Greek school curriculum is formal and centralized, whereby schools adjust to the national curriculum and follow the same guidelines and handbooks under the authority of the Ministry of Education. There is strong attachment to the "academically orientated curriculum", whereby education is "centralized" and does not appear to have any flexibility making it difficult for the teachers and schools to incorporate in their courses activities that will enhance leadership skills such as communication, team work and decision making. Incorporating leadership training for adolescent students into the curriculum is a path that has the potential to increase self-regulation of behavior, feelings of competency and increased ability to relate to others. The aforementioned have been linked to enhanced performance, persistence, creativity and improved well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Chapter 6

Discussion

"The ability to learm is the most important quality a leader can have."

Sheryl Sandberg

The overall aim of this PhD thesis was to investigate how leadership can be studied among adolescents and how they conceptualize and experience leadership development. The PhD addresses a significant gap in the literature; the fact that leadership is a well-studied phenomenon in adults but not in adolescents. This PhD identified core elements of leadership development in adolescents using a qualitative approach and adds to the literature on youth leadership by examining the phenomenon using a variety of methods, review, interviews, diaries, and reflexivity. More specifically the thesis has explored the meaning of leadership and examined the perspective of adolescents with regard to the concept and experience of leadership.

The first objective was to identify the literature concerning young adults as leaders and examine the evidence base for the benefits associated with leadership programmes with adolescents and young adults. Specifically, the content and process issues concerning leadership development programmes for young adults were examined. Chapter 2 was a systematic review of the leadership programmes that aimed to enhance the leadership skills of adolescents and young adults. Overall, the studies were characterized by two macro objectives; to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme and to enhance participants' leadership skills. The review revealed a number of fundamental methodological issues common to many of the studies that need to be acknowledged. It appeared that young people experienced the programmes positively and that improvements were noted on a range of psychological outcomes such as self-esteem and their general awareness about possibilities to experience leadership roles.

However, the studies had significant limitations regarding selection effects and programme content and were difficult to discern the degree to which teachers were

either directly or indirectly influencing selection, and the degree to which selected schools were representative of the wider population. Furthermore, the content of the programmes was weakly tied to the reported outcomes and lacked any rigorous theoretical foundations guiding their design. Overall, the review presents more questions than answers. More detailed information on the epistemological roots of the programmes would allow us to ascertain whether they were adults programmes designed for young people, or bespoke programmes that were evolved specifically to address the perspective of a young adult. The results of the review suggested that the phenomenon, although widely studied, had not been explored in depth.

Both Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 (systematic review) highlighted the need for more in depth research in the area of leadership among adolescents. As already noted, there is a significant gap with regard to the conceptual and theoretical understanding of how adolescents and young adults experience leadership. Therefore, a qualitative approach was considered the most appropriate way to investigate the phenomenon of adolescent leadership. Chapter 3 presents a comprehensive description of the ontological and epistemological background regarding the qualitative research methods that were employed.

In Chapter 4 the views and experiences of young adults' participants were explored regarding their leadership behaviors. A convenience snowball sampling was used to recruit participants to share their perceptions, experiences, and attitudes towards leadership and semi-structured interviews were used. Young adults who occupied a leadership role and were engaged in youth leadership organizations participated. Participants' answers provided rich data to understand the attitudes that young leaders have regarding leadership. Developing and becoming a leader was connected with their conceptualizations of how they made sense of leadership and how feelings of psychological safety were important to their development as a leader.

Chapter 5 explored the experiences of school pupils in a leadership training programme. Twenty students completed diaries over a sixth month period. Reflexive Thematic analysis was used to delineate the experiences into categories and explored their viewpoints associated with those experiences. Key themes that emerged through their texts included: agency and transferability of skills, understanding themselves,

coming to terms with their strengths and weaknesses as a way to understand others, and put themselves in someone else's shoes. The interactions that participants reported in the programme with each other acted as a milestone to their empowerment of their self-awareness. The critical incidents indicated how a safe environment allowed them to explore their leadership potential and transfer skills beyond the programme. Participants reported that they gained confidence as leaders in the areas of teamwork, communication and public speaking, and were better able to manage and regulate their emotions.

The Scientific Contribution of the PhD

The present PhD thesis contributed to the existing knowledge through the use of its exhaustive methodology as well as the findings with regard to leadership development among adolescents. As for the use of methodology, a triangulation of methods (i.e., systematic review, interviews, diaries and reflexivity) was applied to explore the research questions, taking into consideration the results of each study to the design of the others. Overall, this study suggests that adolescent and young adult leadership are different from adult leadership and therefore we need models that clearly represent the experiences of younger people.

In adolescents there is a different approach to learning. Adolescents are in this developmental sensitive period in their lives where cognitive, social and emotional changes occur. The safety of their learning environment and the trusting relationships with their tutors are important to them (Bean et al., 2017). Even though, research with adults, shows that psychological safety is important, peer acceptance differentiates from that. A person's emotional condition affects the physiological procedures of learning where more in depth and permanent learning happens when all areas of the brain are used; including the emotional center (Kish-Gephart et al., 2009). Though in adults psychological safety leads to increased learning, particularly in groups with hierarchical membership (Stoddard & O'Dell, 2016), adolescents' attitudes, values, and behaviors are influenced by their peers and by peer leaders, and can have a very powerful impact on both positive and negative behaviors (Larson & Walker, 2005).

Sensemaking provides a useful way to understand how young adolescents actively conceptualize their ideas about leadership (Weick et al., 2005), as evidenced by the

data in Chapter 5. Sensemaking, with its focus on how meaning influences action, also provides a way to understand the evolution of adolescents thinking about themselves as leaders. Sensemaking is not about truth and getting it right, but about the way people develop their own narratives. Firstly, it is about continued redrafting of an emerging story so that it becomes more comprehensive, incorporates more of the observed data, and is more resilient in the face of criticism (Weick et al., 2005). Secondly, the language of sensemaking captures the realities of agency, flow, equivocality, transience, accomplishment, unfolding, and emergence, realities that are often obscured by the language of variables, nouns, quantities, and structures (Weick et al., 2005). The efforts of the adolescents (Chapter 5) and young adults (Chapter 4) to make sense of leadership chimes with the contradictions they experience in trying to figure out leadership as an action out of the context, in that their experiences in the Greek school system rarely provides them with opportunities to work in teams, and do not rarely view themselves as leaders in the peer context. The results of this thesis highlight a more authentic and servant form of leadership. Students are forced to a more authentic impulse and the encouragement through their tutors and peers facilitates them. The significance of tutors' being honest as adolescents helps them develop trust and feel they could share their thoughts without judgement (Bean et al., 2017).

The Contribution of the PhD to the Study of Leadership

The findings of this thesis suggest that there is a gap between how adults and adolescents conceptualize leadership. In the following text the elements identified by the study participants in Chapters 4 and 5 are reviewed and discussed in detail.

Ethical and social contribution to the community and the need for a change in today's society were highlighted as important aspects of leaders by participants. Having an ultimate worthy goal for society and at the same time emphasizing the interpersonal context of leadership through the group dynamic and the emphasis on the relationships they form with the others as a means to understand themselves better were common themes.

Participants highlighted the importance of active and experiential learning. A safe environment was reported as a significant facilitator in the participants' leadership

development as they were feeling accepted by their tutors and peers, which helped them believe in their self and develop their skills. In many cases participants mentioned that they felt like leaders but they would learn now and act later suggesting that in adulthood there appears differentiation in the leadership they apply now as adolescents and young adults. "Knowledge is a necessary first step, but by itself it is not sufficient for changing leadership behavior. The new knowledge must be put into action. Skills encompass the action domain of learning" (McDonald-Mann, 1998, p. 107).

We need a bespoke model of leadership for younger people. However, we can still appreciate the way that more traditional approaches are reflected in the behavior of younger people. The findings of this thesis suggest that various leadership theories are expressed in participants' leadership behavior. The transformational leadership approach appears to be opposed to the old model of formal, one-person leadership. On the contrary it focuses on the relational, collective and purposeful (Ingleton, 2013; Middleton, 2013) where leaders do not highlight authority and control, but acknowledge the significance of followers. The model focuses on principles of teamwork, collaboration and communication. Many students highlighted authentic views of leadership. Authentic leadership is a type of leadership in which a leader communicates with its members with authenticity (Song, 2015). An authentic leader can recognize both his strengths and weaknesses. Authentic leaders are defined as those who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others as being aware of their own and others values/moral perspectives, knowledge, and strengths; aware of the context in which they operate; and who are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and of high moral character (Avolio et al., 2004).

The Contribution of the PhD to the study of Adolescents

The present thesis contributed to the advancement of knowledge regarding leadership experiences by adolescents and the factors that contribute to leadership behavior. The current literature is missing a well-established theory of youth leadership development from young people's own experiences and views about leadership.

The study highlighted the importance of adolescence as a developmental stage for the development of leadership behavior. Adolescents who had taken part in a wide range

of activities stated having more leadership opportunities and an active role in decision making procedures (van Linden & Fertman, 1998). Learning to lead is a significant developmental task for the adolescent's passage to adult life. A safe environment with empathy and acceptance on behalf of the tutors who empower the students' self confidence has a significant positive effect on their leadership identity. Rogers has studied the role of empathy within the leader role and the ability to have empathy can be taught with practice (Aspy, 1972; Aspy & Roebuck, 1975; Rogers, 1980). Establishing trusting relationships with their tutors and peers was highlighted in this thesis where participants basic needs of safety were covered they could explore their potentials and act authentically (Hodge, Danish., & Martin, 2013). Where the willingness to collaborate is low so is trust and persons will opt to work from a self interest perspective rather than work for the interests of the whole group (Jones & Creedy, 2008).

Adolescents via their participation in extracurricular activities frequently develop their skills (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000). Positive experiences that took place during extracurricular activities predicted a more positive self-respect and self-concept (Bloomfield & Barber, 2011). This participation has been linked with higher academic engagement and achievement (Fredricks & Eccles, 2006) and these connections have been found to be more intense when participants are involved in a range of activities and have the chances to take leadership roles (Eccles & Templeton, 2002).

According to Veronesi & Gunderman (2012), extracurricular activities can foster the development of leadership abilities and can move students from passive to active roles. Evidence also suggests that extracurricular student organisations serve as catalysts for the development of student leadership skills by helping students work more closely and more effectively with one another, though such activities are not mandatory and by definition students participate from their own desire to contribute. Adolescents should be encouraged to become involved in extracurricular activities and explore their potential as leaders.

Leadership development in adolescents

Applying adult theories of leadership to studies on young people has highlighted a number of differences between adult and youth leadership. Frequently, youth

leadership programmes are formed on theories of adult leadership which results in programmes that do not satisfactorily address the ways that youth characterize, value and perform leadership.

MacNeil (2006), considered the differences between adult and youth leadership literature to regulate the applicability of adult leadership theories to youth leadership development. There was a key difference in target between adult and youth leadership literature particularly that the literature addressing youth leadership development most regularly concentrates on leadership ability while adult leadership literature concentrates on both ability and authority. Adults should make room for youth to practice authority and take part meaningfully as leaders in their schools and communities. Specifically, van Linden and Fertman (1998) suggest that as facilitators of leadership development, adults should work with adolescents to help them understand themselves, communicate more effectively, improve interpersonal skills, manage their time and work with groups.

To better understand youth leadership development, it is necessary to increase the current body of knowledge to include children and youths' conceptions of leadership. Approaching student voice to answer these questions will facilitate instructors to set best practices in programming and contribute not only to the body of knowledge on youth leadership but also to adult leadership.

The thesis highlighted that youth perceptions of their leadership skills are influenced by significant adults and peers. Tutors need to find ways, such as youth-adult partnerships, to involve parents and other adults in extracurricular activities. Support from parents, teachers and other adults has a significant role in developing leadership skills. Adolescents who sense that important adults have an active interest in their development rate themselves more highly in their leadership skills and their willingness to undertake leadership roles (Hancock, Dyk, & Jones, 2012). The importance of role models as well as the importance of peer support was underscored in the present study. Structured leadership education is perhaps the most important in helping those who have not perceived themselves as leaders or who have not been involved with community and school activities.

Implications for future research

The thesis leads to important questions that future studies should address. Further research could expand our approach to study the experiences of primary school students and explore the issues in these younger children, which could shed light as to how younger children conceptualize leadership. Our studies suggested that the positive impact of leadership training plays an important role in the development of leadership skills and identity. Involving parents and teachers in research would provide researchers with an enhanced idea of adult levels of support. Future studies should collect data from other diverse student populations (e.g. gang members).

It is important that future studies should explore how school boards can design leadership programmes that will be incorporated to the school curriculum. At the moment there is no single model or theory of leadership that reflects students' perspectives. The need for leadership programmes to exist is highlighted in this thesis and further research on the structure of leadership programmes in different group ages is suggested.

Moreover, it is important that leadership educators can facilitate leadership skill development by providing youth with opportunities to practice their leadership skills in a safe environment with adults that support them. Providing them with the opportunity to express themselves and have a voice in decision making processes is one way that leadership educators can facilitate the development of adolescent leadership skills. Adults who interact with adolescents should continue to support and encourage them to become engaged in school and community contexts and remain active throughout their adolescent years and in to adulthood. Based upon these conclusions, further research is warranted to examine the continuing influence of adult support on adolescents' perceptions of their leadership skills. Leadership is becoming a significant part of high school pupils' developmental experiences (Murphy, 2011).

Implications of the PhD for Greece

 The results of the present thesis highlight the importance and the need to address issues of leadership behavior and development within the Greek school context. The

role of schools is crucial to forming and developing the quality of leadership that is found in society (Marcketti et al., 2011), therefore it is vital that schools understand clearly why they want students to engage in leadership activities (Thomson, 2012). Students indicated in the thesis that leadership opportunities are not provided within their school environment and suggested that the curriculum is so demanding that it does not allow for extra courses on leadership. The findings of this thesis can help schools and teachers to establish policies for leadership development, in concern with the call for the improvement of leadership development programmes in high schools (Whitehead, 2009).

Participants in the studies highlighted the importance of changing the Greek educational system through incorporating leadership activities within its curriculum. The majority of the students considered that in Greece the term leadership is misunderstood and connected exclusively with politicians. Participants (in Chapters 4 and 5) reported how their experiences results in them viewing their school through a different lens suggesting that the school context would benefit from incorporating a framework to allow students to be more often exposed to leadership development opportunities (Roberts et al., 2019). The need to change this view and embrace leadership within the school context is considered appropriate. Developing leadership has been a focus within schools (Rehm, 2014), and the findings of this thesis could help schools when forming their curriculum to include leadership opportunities.

In Greece the educational system is centralized and the curriculum is strictly under the guidance of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. Enhancing school leadership is a crucial need and therefore exploring the curriculum to incorporate leadership opportunities within the school context. Teachers can incorporate within their classes leadership activities (described in Appendix II) and facilitate students to develop their own leadership identity in accordance with their developmental stage. The development of leaders is fundamental to the establishment of norms, values and fairness within a society. According to Jobson (2011) and Mohamed & Wheeler (2001), it is mainly during the adolescence where leadership development has the space to build a society that is more engaged. Within adolescence, the development of identity, peer acceptance and the need to fit in somewhere reaches its peak (Denmark, 1999; Martinek, Schilling & Hellison, 2006;

Trudeau, Lillehoj, Spoth & Redmond, 2003). Therefore it is a significant time for interventions offering social support and the opportunity for self-development (Hoyt & Kennedy, 2008; Teasley, Tyson & House, 2007). According to Erikson (1968) the task for the adolescent is to develop confidence that a dependable past can be constructed into a positive future. Faith in others and the need to find someone to have faith in is another task of identity that is a derivative of trust.

Teaching leadership in schools could have multiplier benefits for students in terms of their career development. The modern demands of team work and communication are calling for the need to enhance the leadership skills. Mitra (2006) suggests that students who attend school where they are empowered by school administrators to share their voices are more likely to develop as leaders. Likewise, we would expect that mentoring relationships with teachers and faculty advisors should enhance future leadership development (Ensher & Murphy, 2005). Children given the opportunity to practice their leadership skills at various points in their development undoubtedly become better at those skills than children who have little or no practice. Students in their upcoming careers will come along the changeable work conditions and school community should support them in their leadership skills development and in comprehending the necessity for these skills (Rosch & Caza, 2012). Research has found that the more students are involved in student organisations and leadership programmes, for example, the more likely they are to develop the leadership skills needed later in their working lives (Patterson, 2012). Today's demands call for the need for soft skills. Teamwork has the ability to enable the members of the team to have a higher level of emotional security, self-confidence and the ability to plan and decide with others positively. The advantage of teamwork is significant productivity growth in the spheres that require creative solving of different tasks, a high degree of adaptability and operational management (Vašková, 2007). Countries have the willingness to create leaders who are not only aware of national problems but also are ready to address them and are interested in making the world a better place for the generations to come (Lee & Olszewski – Kubilius, 2011).

Students should be given the space and safety to discover their personal leadership styles, hidden potential, and how they can distinguish themselves as a leader. Teamwork sessions that require reflection, sharing, and application could be offered

to students. Additionally, adolescents attending leadership development programme can become mentors of younger children, and be encouraged to share the benefits of the programme with younger members. Adolescent leaders can be enables to engage younger students in self-reflection, self-discovery, and discussion through monthly challenges and reflective worksheets and activities. Through these sessions students not only learn about leadership characteristics and qualities but acquire leadership skills and knowledge of group dynamics and teamwork.

Leadership development efforts in extracurricular activities should encourage youth-adult partnerships across multiple contexts to facilitate leadership skill development among adolescents. Leadership educators should also incorporate youth-driven activities within student organizations and community projects, offering students an active role in developing their own leadership capacity.

The present PhD provided the opportunity to express students' voices on what facilitates their leadership behavior which can help guide schools and boards on their decisions regarding the kinds of leadership opportunities they should provide for students. Finally, students could use the findings of this thesis in order to explore their own leadership behaviors and increase their voices within educational community. A students' committee could be formed by students who could act as mentors for their peers and could play an active role on students' awareness on their leadership development.

Practical Implications: Developing Future Leadership Programmes for Adolescents

The findings in this thesis indicate the positive impact of leadership opportunities and training, from adolescence; have a critical role in the development of skills and leadership behavior. Overall, the thesis confirmed that leadership training programmes can have a very powerful impact on student learning and leadership development.

Henein and Morisette (2007) highlight their priorities for the field of education, which include the creation of core leadership educational materials provided to students at all levels in all areas, adjusting it to age level. A predominant principle for those

included in positive youth development is that youth are or should be agents of their own development and thus in control of the benefits of these opportunities (Larson & Wood, 2006). Therefore, as youth are enabled to participate in programmes with more levels of voice, empowerment, and contribution, youth are more expected to become engaged in the programme. Hansen and Larson (2007) found that youth benefit developmentally from these types of programmes when they are engaged and have a leadership role.

The findings of the thesis suggest that experiential activities offered the most effective learning method for the leadership qualities that could be taught. Furthermore, the importance of peer learning as a means of applying leadership was emphasized. The natural human desire to help others is based on the belief that when a person gives and becomes valuable to others, feelings of self-worth are increased and a more positive self-concept is built (Laune, 2005). The powerful feeling of being engaged in 'something beyond oneself' can be transferred to ones' peers. When youths' contributions to helping others are acknowledged youths feel proud and feel as if their life has a purpose (Brendtro, Brokenleg & vanVocker, 2005).

Van Linden and Fertman (1998) have noted that leadership development for adolescents must include the observation of others actual life experiences and general education. Adolescence is a period of rapid growth in self-identity, processes intended to facilitate leadership development must include the consideration of idealism, negotiation of independence and broader formation of identity including gender, class and race.

Participants highlighted the importance of team work in the leadership development. Groups have a significant role in giving scenarios where young adults could carry out and enhance their own leadership style, the capacity to guide and lead a group of people, and the required knowledge to utilize these skills in real-world conditions (Yeh et al., 2015).

Limitations

Alongside with the strengths of this thesis there are also important limitations to acknowledge. Firstly, all data are based in participants' self reports not allowing for

objective measurement of the examined variables. Secondly, the one study was conducted in one single leadership programme, making the generalisability and transferability of data difficult. Furthermore, when analyzing qualitative data the influence of the researcher in something to consider given that the process of interpretation can be subjective.

The scope of this thesis is the investigation of the experiences of adolescent leadership using a qualitative approach. However, it is important to recognize that other research approaches to youth leadership exist in the literature, and therefore there are variables which were not covered in the present thesis. For example, personality research across the lifespan indicates that leadership is associated with heritable personality traits such as extraversion, sociability, and gregariousness (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Bouchard & Loehlin, 2001; Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002). Additionally, at the very beginning of life conceptualizations of leadership begin to form (Lord, Gatti, & Chui, 2016; Shondrick, Dinh, & Lord, 2010), which means that children probably build implicit theories of leadership that contain expectations about leadership traits and attributes (Offermann & Coats, 2018). Equally, in the area of attachment theory there is evidence that secure attachment in infancy is associated with leadership ratings 15 years later (Englund, Levy, Hyson, & Sroufe, 2000). One possible explanation is that individuals with secure attachment at early ages have more ego resources or social capital for seeking out leadership roles (Joplin, Nelson, & Quick, 1999; Murphy & Johnson, 2011). Examining the developmental journey of adolescent leaders was beyond the scope of the present thesis, but such factors may contribute to how the participants in the present research understood leadership development.

Future research on youth leadership should utilize Bronfenbrenner's (1994) Ecological Systems Theory, which highlights the role that environmental forces play in initially shaping one's identity and modifying it throughout life through constant interactions with environmental factors. We need a lifespan approach to leadership development. Individuals at each developmental stage have opportunities to work on their leader development, and acknowledging the long developmental trajectory that underlies effective leadership can only enhance our knowledge of more effective ways to develop leaders for the challenges of the future (Liu et al., 2021).

Conclusion

Leadership continues to be a complex topic (Rickards, 2011; Gandolfi, & Stone, 2016; Vogel et al, 2020). Understanding leadership development in children and youth is an important step in the process of improving and developing effective leadership education. This thesis aims to fill a gap in our understanding of what youth leadership looks like and what youth leaders themselves say about how to best help them to develop their skills. Adolescence is a time of great curiosity for adolescents regarding their identity and how they will adjust to the world.

The thesis highlighted the importance of adolescence as a developmental stage for the development of leadership behavior, and the texts of the participants revealed the importance of active and experiential learning. A safe environment was reported as a significant facilitator in the participants' leadership development as they were feeling accepted by their tutors and peers, which helped them believe in their self and develop their skills. Adolescents are in this developmental sensitive period in their lives where cognitive, social and emotional changes occur. The safety of their learning environment and the trusting relationships with their tutors are important to them (Bean et al., 2017). Additionally, the thesis highlighted that youth perceptions of their leadership skills are also influenced by significant adults and peers. Thus, tutors need to find ways, such as youth-adult partnerships, to involve parents and other adults in extracurricular activities. Support from parents, teachers and other adults has a significant role in developing leadership skills.

The results of the present thesis highlight the importance and the need to address issues of leadership behavior and development within the Greek school context. The role of schools is crucial to forming and developing the quality of leadership that is found in society and the role of schools in engaging students to leadership activities. This study can help to inform youth policy at the school community and ministry levels. In terms of policy, there has been a growing interest in children's social-emotional development and how their sense of agency can be improved. This thesis will enable the voice of youth to be heard; giving them the opportunity to suggest policy recommendations regarding the kinds of leadership programme they feel work

better. Their contributions can help signpost the kinds of programmes in which youth most want to participate.

This thesis provides avenues for future research in the development of leadership education among adolescents. The results will be addressed openly to schoolteachers and administrators, in addition to parents that engage youth in group activities, informing them about the kinds of leadership opportunities and education that have most helped adolescents to develop as leaders. Lastly, this research can positively impact society by improving the quality of education for the next generation of leaders. Adolescents who are given the opportunity to learn and practice leadership will go into adult life better prepared to solve problems and bring a change in their lives and society.

As van Linden & Fertman (1998) have put it "Helping youths develop their leadership potential help us all".

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Appendices

Appendix I

Interview Questions

1. How do you define leadership?

2. Can we teach leadership skills to people?

3. How do you think we can teach leadership skills?

4. Can you give me the example of a leader?

5. Do you consider yourself to be a leader?

6. Can you give an example of an event where you demonstrated good leadership?

7. Can you give an example of an event where you demonstrated incorrect leadership?

8. What are the qualities a leader should have?

9. What do you think that helped you be a leader?

10. Have you ever participated in a leadership programme?

11. What activities do you consider a leadership programme has/should have?

12. Which one characteristic do you consider that every leader should have?

13. What do you consider is the biggest challenge that leaders face today?

14. What is one mistake you view leaders making most often?

15. What are you doing to ensure you continue to grow and develop as a leader?

16. What do you like to ask other leaders when you get the chance?

17. What do you think was your best achievement so far?

18. Who have been the best leaders that you have worked for? What made them good leaders?

19. In your opinion, can we communicate values through leadership? If yes, what values?

20. What do you think prevents people from becoming good leaders?

Appendix I (in Greek)

1. Πώς ορίζετε την ηγεσία;

2. Θεωρείτε ότι μπορούμε να διδάξουμε ηγετικές ικανότητες στους ανθρώπους;

3. Πώς πιστεύετε ότι μπορούμε να διδάξουμε αυτές τις ικανότητες στους ανθρώπους;

4. Μπορείτε να δώσετε το παράδειγμα ενός ηγέτη;

5. Θεωρείτε τον εαυτό σας ηγέτη;

6. Μπορείτε να δώσετε το παράδειγμα από ένα γεγονός όπου εφαρμόσατε αποτελεσματική ηγεσία;

7. Μπορείτε να δώσετε το παράδειγμα από ένα γεγονός όπου εφαρμόσατε αναποτελεσματική ηγεσία;

8. Ποιες ιδιότητες θεωρείτε ότι πρέπει να έχει ένας ηγέτης;

9. Τι θεωρείτε ότι σας βοήθησε να γίνετε ηγέτης;

10. Έχετε συμμετάσχει σε κάποιο πρόγραμμα ηγεσίας;

11. Τι δραστηριότητες θεωρείτε ότι ένα πρόγραμμα ηγεσίας θα έπρεπε να έχει;

12. Ποιο ένα χαρακτηριστικό θεωρείτε ότι κάθε ηγέτης πρέπει να έχει;

13. Ποια θεωρείτε ότι είναι μεγαλύτερη πρόκληση που αντιμετωπίζουν σήμερα οι ηγέτες;

14. Ποιο είναι ένα λάθος που βλέπετε να κάνουν οι ηγέτες πιο συχνά;

15. Τι κάνετε για να βεβαιωθείτε ότι συνεχίζετε να εξελίσσεστε και να αναπτύσσεστε ως ηγέτης;

16. Τί σας αρέσει να ρωτάτε τους άλλους που θεωρείτε εσείς ηγέτες όταν έχετε την ευκαιρία;

17. Ποιο θεωρείτε ότι ήταν το μεγαλύτερο σας κατόρθωμα ως τώρα;

18. Ποιοί ήταν οι καλύτεροι ηγέτες για τους οποίους έχετε δουλέψει;

19. Κατά τη γνώμη σας μπορούμε να περάσουμε αξίες μέσω της ηγεσίας;

20. Τι θεωρείτε ότι εμποδίζει τους ανθρώπους από το να γίνουν καλοί ηγέτες;

Appendix II

Dear student

The diary you hold in your hands has as a goal the recording and your reflection on what is applicable in your daily life, from what you have learned from the programme "Diploma in Leadership Skills: Children of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow".

The objective of this research is to explore the experiences of students participating in the programme "Diploma in Leadership Skills: Children of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow"

The research is anonymous, so you do not need to mention names (your own or other people you mention in your description, but you can use aliases). Also, the survey is voluntary, so you can stop filling any time you wish and keep your diary.

Thank you for participating in this research

Appendix II continued

Demographics:

Code*:
Date of Birth:
Sex:
Class:

* The diary is anonymous and we do not want you to fill in your name only a code that is unique to you. The code should consist of: the <u>initials of your name-day of birth (two digit number) - the last three numbers of your phone</u>, eg AB-14-123.

Appendix II continued

<div align="center">WEEK</div>

Date:

Time:

1. Thinking back on the week that has just passed, describe something that happened in school or out-of-school where you found something you learned on the programme useful. Try to be as detailed as possible and tell us what skills you used.

2. What did you learn specifically in the programme that you found useful?

3. What skills do you think the programme helped you develop? Do you use any of these skills?

4. Did you discuss what you do in the programme with someone? If yes, with whom?

5. Do you feel that you have learned things about yourself and / or others as a result of your participation in the programme?

6. Were you able to identify skills and abilities and especially personal characteristics that you had not previously realized?

7. Thinking about the same incident you described in the first question, can you tell us what you think you would have done in the same case before joining the programme?

Appendix II

Ice breaking

In the first course participants met each other for the first time. The initial goal was to establish a good climate in the group. Students presented themselves through an 'I am/I have' activity on which they had to write 5 sentences beginning with I am or I have and complete them.

Teamwork

An example of a teamwork activity was to work in 2 groups of 4 students and work on their own business. They already had a budget and they needed to work together to create a general plan. Students had to decide on the purpose of the company, its services, the responsibilities of the employees, the company culture, the values of the company and the contribution that wants to have in the society (MacGregor, 2007).

Decision making

An activity regarding decision making which also incorporated teamwork and coming to terms with social issues was The Million-Dollar Award (MacGregor, 2008). Participants should decide who is going to receive a million-dollar grant. Firstly, each student individually reads a list of ten people with a short description e. g. 'Angela is a 24-year-old single mother who lives in a large city. She wants to use the grant money to go back to school and start an organization that can help other mothers like her. Some of the money would go to starting a childcare center so single moms could finish their schooling and get job training' (p.165). The student ranks the possible recipients and then within the group they share their rankings and the entire group must decide on the one recipient of the award. The overall goal is to learn how to arrive at a group decision using consensus rule.

Self-reflection

Participants had to reflect on their own quotes and decide upon the ones that they felt more representative for them in fields of self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-empowerment. They had to report on their own sheet examples of incidents they had either exhibited these skills or incidents.

Acknowledgments

Learning is a key element to personal development alongside with having people around you to share your knowledge and your thoughts. In this journey I am grateful to have had people who helped me develop personally, professionally and academically.

This journey would not have become without the guidance of my supervisor Professor Anthony Montgomery who believed in me and was my mentor throughout these years. He was always there for me and his contribution is beyond words. I can only recall to his support with 'Oh captain, my captain'.

My deepest appreciation would be for Gale Macleod, who devoted all this time to read my work. She was commenting and reinforcing me through all this way. I would like to thank the members of the committee who are people that I respect and I am very honoured that they evaluate my work.

My deepest and dearest thank you would go to all the participants who took part in the studies and through their rich data I have the opportunity to contribute my work to the community.

No words can express my gratitude to my colleague and dearest friend Olga who stood by me. She is the person who pushed me to my best. Any researcher would be blessed to have a friend like her. My thankful goes to my friends Antonia, Maria, Nina, Kyriakos, Nikos, Stella, Katerina, Karolina and Thanasis. You are the source of continuous laughter, development and trust. Karolina has stood by me through my journey and has been a companion to share my thoughts.

Last but not least my dearest thanks would be to my parents that I am blessed to have and my sister who is my safety corner. She is the one who has helped me become who I am today. I am grateful to my cousin Debbie who taught me to love reading and my brother in law Achilleas who along with my sister have brought my nephews into my life. Spyrus and Periklis, your love is my power.

Along with all the people that have been by my side this thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandma who taught me to look ahead and learn. And I promise to do so.

List of Publications

I.   **Karagianni, D**., & Montgomery, A. (2018). Developing leadership skills among adolescents and young adults: a review of leadership programmes. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, *23*(1), 86-98.

II.   Montgomery, A., **Karagianni, D**., & Androutsou, D. (2016). Reimagining School: Is It Possible?. In *Reimagining the Purpose of Schools and Educational Organisations* (pp. 3-12). Springer, Cham.

Conferences

I.   **Καραγιάννη Δ**. (Σεπτέμβριος, 2019). Ηγεσία σε Εφήβους, Διεπιστημονικό Συνέδριο, Unlocking your mind, Μεσογειακό Κολλέγιο, Θεσσαλονίκη, Ελλάδα.

II.   **Karagianni, D**., & Montgomery, A. (April, 2016). Developing Leadership Skills Among Young Adults: A Systematic Review. 12th EAOHP Conference on Occupational Health Psychology in Times of Change: Society and the Workplace. Athens, Greece.

Σύντομο βιογραφικό

Η κα. Καραγιάννη Δέσποινα αποφοίτησε από το Τμήμα Ψυχολογίας του Αριστοτελείου Πανεπιστημίου Θεσσαλονίκης το 2008. Συνέχισε τις μεταπτυχιακές της σπουδές στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Εδιμβούργου στην Ενταξιακή και Ειδική Αγωγή με την ολοκλήρωση της μεταπτυχιακής της εργασίας με τίτλο 'What are Scottish students' attitudes to cyberbullying?: A case-study analysis of an urban school'. Από το 2009 εργάζεται ως ψυχολόγος και έχει δουλέψει σε δομές με πρόσφυγες, σε φυλακές, σε κέντρα δια βίου μάθησης, σε σχολές γονέων και σε κέντρα δημιουργικής απασχόλησης με ΑμεΑ. Έχει διδάξει σε ιδιωτικό κολλέγιο μαθήματα σε προπτυχιακό και μεταπτυχιακό επίπεδο στα τμήματα εκπαίδευσης και ψυχολογίας. Τα τελευταία χρόνια εργάζεται ως αναπληρώτρια ψυχολόγος στο Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων στην πρωτοβάθμια και δευτεροβάθμια εκπαίδευση. Τον Ιανουάριο του 2014 ξεκίνησε τις διδακτορικές της σπουδές με επόπτη καθηγητή τον καθηγητή Anthony Montgomery και παράλληλα εργάζεται στην Εταιρεία Αξιοποίησης και Διαχείρισης της Περιουσίας του Πανεπιστημίου Μακεδονίας. Είναι υπεύθυνη προγράμματος σπουδών στο πρόγραμμα Diploma in Leadership Skills: 'Παιδιά του Σήμερα, Ηγέτες του Αύριο'. Έχει δημοσιεύσει άρθρα σε έγκριτα επιστημονικά περιοδικά και έχει συμμετάσχει σε επιστημονικά συνέδρια με προφορικές και αναρτημένες ανακοινώσεις.