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Developing 'next generation' globally responsible leadership: Generation Y perspectives on global responsibility, leadership, and integrity.

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Introduction

This paper focuses on the crucial role of 'Generation Y' leaders in building a responsible global society for the future. Generation Y is usually taken as referring to the generation born between the early 1980s and 2000. Although the notion of generation is a problematic construct, as we will discuss later, we believe that there is value in focusing on this broad cohort of young people for this study, and we have therefore adopted the mainstream descriptor of this group for ease. We recognise, however, that many of the behaviours and values captured by the US based literature to describe these young people may not apply to the same generation living in other parts of the globe, nor indeed to many young people in more marginalised communities in the west. This generation is important, however, as many young people in this age bracket are now arguably on the brink of taking up senior leadership roles in public institutions, corporations, government, and in society as a whole. Our paper argues that a better understanding of the experiences, attitudes, values and behaviours of this generation will enable employers, educators, and leadership developers to focus on how best to support them to develop their leadership skills, and to focus on developing the ethos, capability, resilience, values and behaviours that will enable them to actively promote and enact globally responsible leadership as they enter leadership roles. Many commentators have noted that the workforce is set to lose large numbers of Baby Boomers and Generation X employees as they take up retirement. People born within the Gen Y generation (1982-2000) will inevitably be the next generation to take responsibility for our planet, businesses and society.

Leadership itself may be seen as a discourse that has now achieved universal status, fuelled by the globalisation of capitalism, as brought about by technological and digital advances. In this chapter we therefore pay particular attention to how the dominant leadership discourses, as well as other contested discourses such as 'sustainable' 'responsible' and 'integrity' are currently constructed by Gen Y. Understanding these perceptions will, we argue, enable employers and educators to better understand how best to work with the next generation of senior leaders to promote responsible leadership.

We recognise that without a significant shift in business school curricula as well as leadership development agendas, it will not be possible to break with the individualistic short-term behaviours of today's organisations and businesses. This research, therefore, also raises some important questions about whether the current research into Gen Y, which is highly western centric and almost exclusively US based, is replicated when we

look at the wider global cohort, and what our own primary data reveals about a more globally dispersed cohort of Gen Y future leaders and the alternative insights that our own research participants reveal for the future of responsible leadership development.

In 2011 a global manufacturer's Corporate Academy invited 125 next generation leaders from across the globe to a World Students' Dialogue. The essay that they were asked to write for selection to the event was entitled 'What does globally responsible leadership and integrity mean to you?' This event was designed to inform the 50+20 project, a collaborative initiative that 'seeks to learn of new ways and opportunities for management education to transform and reinvent itself '(www. 50plus20.org).

Also, in 2012-13 the University of Gloucestershire incorporated a final year undergraduate module on Global Responsible Leadership. The students were also asked to write a similar essay although there was a more traditional academic approach in the request to draw on the GRL, business ethics and CSR literature. The most highly graded 22 essays were selected for analysis.

Our research set out to analyse the mindsets of the young people who wrote these essays. Our purpose was thereby to inform the theory and practice of globally responsible leadership development, and in turn to support GRLI's (Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative www.grli.org) agenda to reframe the purpose and practice of management education.

The research confirmed that the vast majority of current research into Generation Y (otherwise known as the Millennial Generation, Nexters, or Echo Boomers) has been conducted in the US with a little in Europe. In the US they are thought to represent 30% of their population (Baldano and Spangenburg, 2009). Gen Y has typically been characterized in such recent studies as self-centered and narcissistic. They are known by some as "Generation Me" (Twenge, 2010a, 2010b) and have been portrayed as having a 'myopic tendency toward self gratification' (Boyd, 2010). Others have found that they have a sense of entitlement and are used to getting their way (VanMeter et al., 2013). Part of the explanation for this appears to be that in the West at least, Gen Y appears to have been educated by their parents from very young to seek approval and affirmation. (Dries et al., 2008; Hewlett et al., 2009; Kowske et al., 2010). In addition, for many, it seems that involvement in family decisions was part of their upbringing, as their parents communicated with them much more than the previous generation of parents (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). In summary, Gen Y children in western countries have tended to experience a more democratic relationship with their parents than previous generations, and now appear to find authoritarian managers difficult to work with.

Furthermore, Gen Y also seems to have a high need for structure and reassurance, and the desire for a family feeling at work that may also be the result of their upbringing (Flander, 2008). Many have revealed that they

like to be led by a manager who will also play the role of confidant, friend, and coach (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Baldano and Spangenberg (2009) also noted that Gen Y appears to be more idealistic than Gen X, but a little more realistic than Baby Boomers.

A strong desire to achieve a much greater work–life balance than their parents has also been revealed in many studies. Although they are broadly engaged at work, these US centric studies found that this does not translate into a long-term commitment to their employer. Instead, Generation Y tends to assume responsibility for their own career management and employability. They value a high degree of freedom and autonomy in the way they carry out work as highlighted by the ILM / Ashridge survey (2013). The survey continues by suggesting that they want their managers to respect and value them, support with career progression, trust them to get on with things and communicate well with them. Izzo (2002) supports this finding by suggesting that they are entrepreneurial, independent, digitally savvy, rejecting micromanagement and valuing empowerment and excitement. A further study highlights that Gen Y are likely to be "skeptical, mistrustful and apathetic towards traditional hierarchies and authority" (Martin & Tulgan 2002). This could create problems for multinational, globally based large organisations as working for such corporations has limited appeal. Generation Y would seem to wish for a workplace that allows them to be imaginative, creative, and demonstrative, enabling them to be part of an ever changing scenario. Schlichtemeier-Nutzman (2002: p. 49) also commented that Gen Y is "considerably more optimistic and more interested in volunteerism than Generation X". In short, they appear to possess a more romanticised approach to work than previous generations which is demonstrated in their aspirations for a better society.

In terms of their relationships at work, Gen Y prefers working in teams, wanting work that really matters to them. The advice from Baldano and Spangenburg (2009) is that part of developing job satisfaction for Gen Y employees is to make the workplace fun, comfortable and safe. This unrealistic and romanticised notion of the workplace tends to pervade the expectations of this generation, whilst today's realities indicate a very different experience of work. This generation's early work experiences of an upswing in the economy now contrasts with the current recessional experiences of the workplace in many western countries.

Possibly as a result of being born in the digital age, Gen Y appears to be good at multi-tasking, being comfortable with contacting internet 'friends' across the globe, using Facebook and other social networking sites to find out about individuals from all types of cultures. This may create future leaders who can communicate well across differing cultures but who are perhaps less good than previous generations at face to face interaction and deciphering non-verbal cues.

A study of recent Gen Y undergraduates in their final year (some with work experiences) using Implicit leadership Theory (Lord et al., 1982) suggests that they already have "clearly defined expectations of traits,

qualities and behaviours needed by senior management" (Curtis et al., 2014) but lower expectations of those in supervisory or general line management. However, when these more vaguely expressed expectations were met these young people reported a more positive view towards the organisation that employed them. Equally a more negative perception of their line managers led to negative feelings about the organisation.

This echoes some of the characteristics identified in a study of both senior leaders and Gen Y employees conducted by Munro (2012). Here, Gen Y leaders expected to develop a much more values based approach to leadership than previous generations, to harmonize and make more transparent the connections between organisational values and organisational initiatives. Munro (2012) suggests that cultural as well as emotional intelligence is likely to be seen as a key competency for future Gen Y leaders. Her study of Gen Y employees found that they placed importance on mentoring, and in line with other research, a desire to "discard the …phrase 'think outside the box' and replace it with 'burn the box…and recycle the ashes'" (Munro, 2012, p. 5). Gen Y would seek to remove many company policies and procedures, especially those showing lack of trust. Gen Y tends to seek a more collaborative approach to workplace relationships. However, despite evidence of strong collectivist views, other research suggests that they can be narcissistic and self-focused. These tensions and values paradoxes mean that managing, educating, and developing this generation is a complex challenge.

Little has been written about the approach that Gen Y takes towards the planet, society, community, and responsibility. However, research (for example, Munro, 2012) has suggested that Generation Y employees do expect to move quickly into leadership positions, and are often society-minded, eco-aware, and socially conscious, displaying respect and tolerance for diversity, and a focus on human rights.

Despite the US-centric nature of the Gen Y literature, we did identify a number of fertile discussions that raised many important questions for our study. Our research examined the narratives of globally responsible leadership embedded in the two sets of essays outlined above, focussing on what underlying meaning and assumptions about the economic and social world, the planet, and the nature of responsibility and integrity are found within them, and how these young people might lead our society into the future. We sought to identify within the texts the underlying meanings and assumptions about the economic and social world, the planet, the nature of responsibility, and how this group of Generation Y young people perceive their future leadership roles in the workplace. Our data analysis found many puzzling and contradictory patterns, values, and beliefs exhibited by these future leaders from across the globe.

We acknowledge that both groups were to some extent self-selecting. The corporate conference applicant group was largely MBA students and graduates who had chosen to apply to join an event on globally responsible leadership, and the Gloucestershire cohort of undergraduates were studying business and

management and had chosen to study this particular module. Given the particular focus and nature of these young people, we wanted to understand what was driving them to want to focus on responsible leadership, and what these narratives were adding to our understanding of Generation Y as a whole, and their perspectives on globally responsible leadership and integrity in particular. As noted earlier, the notion of generation is generally a western centric construct and has been defined in a number of ways, clustering many diverse groups of people whose behaviours will vary widely according to culture, experience, education, background into a single 'generation'. Clearly such a clustering is highly problematic, but despite this we found much of value to our inquiry in this literature that helps us to understand the voices of the young people themselves.

Narrative themes and trends in our two groups

It was noteworthy that the biggest national group within the corporate event essays was from China. Also represented were India, SE Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Scandinavia. Only a few came from the US, where most previous research has been undertaken. We are not able to say the reason for the prevalence of Chinese applicants for the event, but are content that the voices represented are much broader than the group most commonly surveyed in the US centric literature. The Undergraduates were mostly from the UK with small numbers of Chinese, Malaysian, American, and European students. Many of these latter groups had studied at degree level in their own countries prior to coming to the UK to complete or broaden their studies.

A number of core themes were found within their narratives. They are discussed here in order of frequency.

Fighting injustice

Despite the portrayal of Gen Y in the published research discussed above as being self-centred, and known as Generation Me, the essays indicated a strong focus on human rights and fighting injustice in the workplace, and a sense of what is right. Significant global issues were identified frequently such as corruption, child labour, and inequalities

> "A responsible business must identify major problems in an organization, like corruption, inequalities between men and women, forced labour, racial discrimination, children labour and fight against for the image of its business".

These comments came from across the globe, and were not exclusive to one culture or nationality. These young writers also advocated tolerance of diversity, and trust building:

"Firstly, a good globally responsible leader should tolerate others' opinions and combine different forces. This will help people build mutual trust and confidence to break down barriers, which is helpful or even crucial for the establishment of a tolerable and pluralistic society".

For some of the authors, and in particular those from developing countries, we saw how first-hand experience of oppression and injustice had led to a strong desire to contribute to leading society toward achieving a better world.

"I had lived for thirteen years in an underdeveloped country, where injustices and societal flaws were covered up by the fraudulent action of a few very powerful men. These same powerful people were the ones who most likely hired the team of criminals who kidnapped my brothers and me, leaving us with agonizing and painful memories. After this harrowing experience, how could I not be enraged enough to understand that I had to do something to moderate the world in which I live".

Similar ideas were expressed by the undergraduate students and although their own experiences were less dramatic and raw, they had nonetheless shaped their values directly as illustrated below:

"I notice that I need to develop the ability to recognise when someone is treated unfairly and also of how to cope with conflict situations"

"Being an intern for a construction company…it was not uncommon for subcontractors to take quantity surveyors out for the day to cricket as a 'good will' gesture. They would be rewarded with lucrative contracts. It might be argued this is not direct bribery but…a sweetener. If I had understood the four moral codes at the time it may have caused me to look at this from a number of different perspectives"

"Cultural dilemmas… are becoming more and more common because of globalization. This makes it difficult for a leader to act responsibly in the eyes of all stakeholders"

Integrity, Trust, and the meaning of responsibility

The question posed to both groups asked the writers to consider the meaning of integrity for globally responsible leadership. Most held a broad view of what this means in practice, although recognising that organisational and national cultures may often play a part in the way that integrity is enacted:

For many, therefore, integrity has to be culturally embedded:

"When business integrity is present throughout the deepest layers of a company and not just at its surface, it becomes the heart and soul of the company's culture and can mean the difference between a company that succeeds and a company that falters"

Others equated the word integrity with ethical behavior and business ethics.

"What is business integrity? In my opinion, it is very similar to business ethics. Business ethics, in other word, business integrity, has a wide definition. Firstly it means fair play, no cheats, no briberies, and no monopolies"

"I regard integrity in a multinational company as sticking to laws and regulations, social morality and business ethics"

A third focus of integrity was on fair treatment of employees.

"Thirdly business integrity has something to do with employees"

Finally, some saw integrity as being about responsibility for society. Whereas the US centric research on Gen Y discussed above showed a tension between self-obsession and societal focus, this group was far more outwardly focused on taking responsibility for society. For many of them integrity and responsibility were interconnected.

"Integrity is not just to be responsible for the organization itself, but also responsible for the society. Individuals and organizations have the obligation to act to benefit society at large. A company must develop its own understanding of how its principles or behavior relate to external expectations or to external codes or guidelines in the society".

"An organisation's leadership is not only defined by how the organisation contributes some percentage of its after tax profits to social development but also needs to be responsible as to how profits are made in the first place"

"The blame (for unethical corporate behaviour) will be put on a leader if a case of misconduct falls on those at the helm, when it is obvious to those who understand how big organisations work that it takes more than one person to make decisions"

For one student, learning more about business ethics and integrity was saddening. Seen from a Chinese perspective it appears western centric and inequitable:

"In my viewpoint business ethics may be the special right of well-developed entities accompanied by well-developed legislations… For Chinese farmers pesticide abuse is a must because if they do not they would not be living…they will not survive…the fierce competition. Ethical western organisations seem to be double-dealers"

These comments concerning integrity and trust highlight a recognition of a tension between what is felt to be practical and reasonable in a local setting, especially where survival is at stake, and what might be ideal in terms of holding and enacting the values of a globally responsible perspective. They are also indicative of the difficulties of trying to be realistic on the one hand, but wanting a 'better' world on the other within what is seen as a highly competitive and complex commercial world, in which leaders are responsible for a range of stakeholders.

In terms of the word *'responsibility'* there were a range of views as to what this means, but many saw it as their duty and accountability to serve future generations;

"We, as global leaders, have the duty and responsibility to ensure that we preserve this earth for the benefit of future generations"

This surface view was held by many, although some were a little more sceptical and aware of the problems and tensions associated with this word.

The following extract demonstrates that the tensions and paradoxes of working towards responsible leadership can be experienced as highly problematic when moving from principles to practice and are then often seen as intractable:

"Then responsibility comes into play. *Being accountable for the harmful effects of their own or of others' actions*. Unfortunately it is not always the case. How many times have the different forms of the media informed us about environmental tragedies and other human errors such as loss of millions of gallons of oil in the open ocean, radiation leaks, "poisoned" food exported around the world without controls? Then after a short time ending up in oblivion from the media and a legal point of view…We suffer the consequences of a paradoxical model: we live in an era of greater well-being, that ensures unprecedented growth, but also in a period of more pollution and social injustice. This is due to fact that the sole purpose of the game is profit. Economic progress, however, is not reflected in the progress of all humanity, but it remains a privilege due to the few. Those who work for the common good with morality and political ethics will be "responsible". But who should "acquire" more responsibility? Leaders, who must have the ability to direct, guide and inspire. Leaders are the heads of state, the rulers, and above all the heads of corporations and industries around the world (often with more power

and less visibility than others). But leaders can also be the companies themselves for inspiring the necessary changes of tomorrow."

Technological Advancement: optimising resources, energy efficiency and protecting environment

In addition to a broad focus on society, many of the young people in our study, from the corporate applicant group in particular, felt that without a focus on technological advancement in order to optimise resources, generate energy and protect the environment there could not be responsible leadership. This view is also a more pragmatic one than their often more romanticised notions of responsibility.

Innovation, for example, was often mentioned as being important:

"A worthy 'globally responsible leadership' is obliged to continually push forward technological advance and conceptual innovation within its industry"

Collaboration and connectivity were also cited as key to such efforts being both local as well as joined up across the globe in order to make a real difference.

"They would devote themselves in helping local economic booming, to participate in globally joined efforts in goals like lowering down CO2 emission, eliminating poverty and so on."

The management of risk was seen by some as another significant factor in globally responsible leadership.

"The capability of risk control and subsequently crisis management also counts in determining whether a company lives up to 'globally responsible leadership' or not. Neither in manufacturing nor business running should this issue be of less importance. Actually risk control is attracting unprecedented attention since the world has seen a series of catastrophes e.g. the atomic disaster in Fukushima power plant and the oil spill in Deepwater Horizon offshore oil drilling rig"

And not surprisingly many focused their attention on optimising global resources:

"The globally responsible leadership will guide to optimize the allocation of resources in the global scope, and to reduce the improper utilization or the waste of natural resources. The most important task of this leadership is to unite the people to create a more secure, more comfortable and more sustainable world"

"We have to face the fact that we have an unequal distribution of resources of the planet especially the renewable ones, which leads to a lot of problems and challenges for all humans from the smallest one of us to the biggest"

The undergraduates rarely commented specifically on resources or technology as this was not the main demand of the assignment. One or two commented on sustainability and the environment in the context of corporate social responsibility being the responsibility of leaders, but there was clearly much less awareness of responsibility for planetary resources in the narratives of this group.

Global orientation

The participants in the corporate event had consciously chosen to join an international event with a diverse group of participants from many cultures and backgrounds. Consequently it was unsurprising that their global orientation appeared to be much more developed than many of their peer group. However, it was heartening that responsibility for them extends to the whole of our planet:

"More important for me is, that a global leader acts in the interest of the entire world, by making decisions which are fair for all involved parties"

"A responsible leader always acts in balance with the needs and demands of the surrounding area on a local as well as on a global ground"

"Such leadership functions as a bridge linking different cultures and faiths, which enables people all around the world to go across the chasm and then to promote economic and social progress characterized by sustainable development"

"When running a company it is not just about satisfying stakeholders but about caring about the world"

"It is a responsibility of corporate leaders to have intelligence in other cultures"

Community and Society focus

At the same time, this broad global orientation was frequently seen as needing to be balanced with a local community focus and the needs of all stakeholders as indicated in the quotations below.

"To assume responsibility for the local community and the global society as well, either out of their noble spirits or concerns for sustainable development".

"Think globally, act locally, measure the impacts and consequences of his actions... Play fairly with responsibility so the sustainable limits are not broken".

"In terms of my own decision making I must take a more considered view based on the impacts of decisions on all stakeholders."

"The success of the organisation should then have a positive impact on the community that the organisation operates in"

A number of the undergraduate students identified in their writing examples of role model leaders and companies who focused on more creative and societally friendly forms of business and capitalism i.e. more likely to include the needs of all stakeholders in their business activities. These included the John Lewis Partnership, Innocent, L'Oreal, Richard Branson from Virgin, and Bill Gates from Microsoft.

The Nature of Leadership

The term 'leadership' in the questions posed sparked little debate and few ideas when compared with the discussions and understanding of the complexities of integrity and responsibility. Whilst there was much focus on the vision of a globally responsible leader, there was little sign that the participants had considered how this type of leadership could be conceptualized nor enacted. In other words, their focus was more on global responsibility than on leadership itself. This concerned us as the question posed asked about globally responsible *leadership*, and not just about global responsibility.

Within the undergraduate assignments it was evident that their reading of the literature had led them to perceive that ethical leadership generally is linked to the fairness, honesty and effectiveness of leaders and employee well-being, ideas which they felt were key to their own future career and work. One or two of the more perceptive students did suggest that sustainable and successful globally responsible leadership must be present throughout the organisation to develop the sense of shared responsibility but this was not a commonplace idea, nor was it developed in the essays of those who mentioned it. We will return to this omission later, as we believe that it is a fundamental finding, and an important limitation in GenY's education and experience.

Vision, ambition, and future orientation

With their limited and relatively superficial conception of leadership drawn, we believe, from the voluminous and shallow leadership literature ranging from business books to accounts in the popular press, the most popular ideas given was that a globally responsible leader should have a clear vision. The participants were almost without exception referring here to the most senior organisational leaders in organisations, often still portrayed as heroic leaders residing at the top. This discourse appears to reflect the tenacity of traditional notions of all knowing leaders, who are able to predict and control, and ultimately save the organisation. This is a further example of the paradox that most of our writers repeatedly demonstrated very shallow perceptions

of leadership in their narratives compared with relatively well developed notions of responsibility and the global problems that require globally responsible leadership. Examples of this narrow, simplistic and underdeveloped view are below:

"The leader should have a long-term vision, recognizing that our current behavior has a lasting effect on the development of human society.

"Globally responsible leadership is to have a sustainable vision, balancing the financial interests with the responsibility and the environment".

'In my opinion, global responsible leadership means that key people from the field of politics, business and industry stand for a worldwide vision. This vision should include a sustainable handling with our natural resources as well as human resources'.

"Indeed I think that being able to embrace paradox, change and complexity are pathways for successful leadership"

"A global leader has many challenges and one of them is now to incorporate CSR (corporate social responsibility) into their business. This has led to the creation of globally responsible leaders….and so shaped the definition of a good 21st century leader".

Whilst we do not wish to detract from the importance of the sentiments outlined above regarding setting and enacting a responsible vision, there is little evidence in these statements of how this might be achieved within an organisational setting. The idea seems to be that the omniscient top leader sets a vision and the rest of the organisation will follow. The top leader will, like a knight in shining armour in a fairy tale, rescue society from the evils that would otherwise befall it.

Some of the more perceptive writers recognised that globally responsible leadership is a conundrum at many levels, and argued for greater clarity as to what GRL should mean, and be, in order to help these potential leaders understand what is expected of them, but it as rare to find questions from the writers that went any further than this:

"I take from this that responsible leadership is still yet to be globally defined and with different theorists and organisations viewing it differently, it is almost impossible to define it in one sentence".

Leader as inspirer, teacher, champion, steward and global citizen

Perhaps the most thoughtful comments on leadership were found in the more experienced corporate application group and were derived from old wisdoms such as the leader's role as teacher, a role that even Confucius identified for leadership or as a steward for society, a notion found within many ancient tribal customs and traditions.

"Inspiring others to have a high level of commitment and dedication to produce results collectively and make a difference which will impact   generations to come"

"A key element should also be his/her ability to teach by example, so that the vision can be authentic, credible and sustainable"

"It is a leadership that fulfills on its expectations and acts as a good steward for the planet and a contributing global citizen"

"Introduced by the context of global responsibility there is also the idea of statesmanship - that a corporate leader should lead by example"

"The role of leader is developed by removing obstacles, as well as developing leadership in others by building confidence".

In the undergraduate work, in particular, although this was evident across both groups. There was a much stronger leaning towards the transformational idea of leadership, the need for such leaders to have charisma without necessarily perceiving the limitations of these ideas.

In a similar vein, a paper presented in 2014 UFHRD conference by Tymon argued that despite the wealth of academic literature about the adoption of new forms of leadership in organisations the trait theory still remains alarmingly strong, and especially the old 'Great Man theory' with its gender stereotype. We found much evidence that these notions remain dominant amongst the young people in our study irrespective of their cultural backgrounds.

Commentary on the two sets of essays:

Our findings indicate a thoughtful approach and fairly developed understanding of many of the challenges that threaten our globe, and today's society. These differed somewhat depending on the society in which the individuals had grown up, but showed perceptiveness around the complexity of today's world, shortage of resources and the massive changes that were being brought about as a result of advances in digital technology.

Therefore an understanding of the responsibility, trust, and integrity that will be required to transform our globe was relatively well developed, especially in the slightly more mature corporate applicant group, some of whom were already in the workplace.

However, by contrast, we were struck by the limitations in conceptions of leadership, and how responsible leadership might be understood and enacted within and across organisations, communities and societies. Many of the narratives seem to suggest that this generation is limited to a desire for a "wish list" for how their leaders behave. Many appear to hold the romanticised ideology that responsible leadership is about caring (or even paternalism), the idea that you do everything you can, without limit, to do what's best for the people around you.

Some went a little further by recognising the stakeholder view of responsible leadership, i.e., the idea that to be both ethical and successful you need to recognise the value of stakeholder led business - the Freeman R. E. (1984) view of business not just shareholder led - the Friedman M. (2002). This perspective was also strongly influenced by the discourse of caring:

> "We mentioned a lot of external and internal stakeholders, which in turn means that it is simply impossible for an organisation to focus on only one group. This is a significant aspect and should definitely be borne in mind by me in the future"

For these participants a trustworthy and accountable corporation is about caring for all its stakeholders, as well as for the environment. Such an organisation needs to be people-oriented all the time. It cares for clients, and shows consideration for every customer in product design and service arrangement. It cherishes talents, and knows how to make maximum and best use of every its employee. Its leaders and managers are perceived to be ones that encourage collaboration, know what their employees are thinking, engage them in decisions, empower them and develop their strengths. To encourage the involvement of people, a qualified global responsible leader, it appears, should spare no efforts to raise the awareness that 'man and man', as well as 'man and nature' are an integral whole.

This romanticism, however, is inevitably always balanced with pragmatism, along with some recognition of the ethical conundrums associated with working in organisations, and organisations' ability to control or influence personal values:

> "Although one issue is that as I do not have strong leadership values of my own, working in a large organisation could quite easily shape my leadership style to that of the organisation, which may not be seen as being ethical or as ethical as I would like."

Similarly there was some recognition that the local community and the environment in which the business or organisation operates is of equal importance to the wider global picture. For example, some recognised that they were about to go into the workplace in the middle of a recession brought about in many respects by individualistic profit driven leaders, who were running organisations with a global reach but without the concern for local or global ethical decision making

Unsurprisingly it was clear that many of the undergraduates in the second group were unfamiliar with the concepts associated with globally responsible leadership, and for some it was the first time that they had considered the issues. Consequently their essays were self-evidently more dependent on the literature and drew less on their own experiences. This may also have contributed to the limitations associated with their conceptions of leadership. However, for many it was clear that the messages in the course had made a real impact. This was particularly seen in the final section of their work where they reflected on what they had learnt and how they might use that learning in their future roles. A number were from non-UK, generally Asiatic countries and there was a desire to take these ideas back into their own future careers too. In summary, the undergraduates did show signs of genuine awakening and engagement with the topic once readings and discussions are introduced. However, as discussed above, this was not matched by a realistic view of leadership.

A number reflected on the importance to their thinking of the idea of the stakeholder perspectives as being the key driver for organisations these days. This has resonance with the research on Gen Y's wish for a more collaborative approach to the workplace. This is an important insight for educators indicting that it is never too early to start the sensitisation process and to help young people to articulate their ideas in a more usable way, in order to take early responsibility for their own actions as soon as they join the workplace. However, there was limited evidence of awareness and understanding of how to enact leadership at all organisational levels and across society in order to make the changes they envision happen. The recognition by some that help is needed to establish the values they seek means that educators have a task or responsibility to provide as much of that help as they can through intellectual and emotional confidence building, but more than this by helping the next generation to understand how to build organisational leadership capacity and to ensure that this is focused on responsible action. It is clear from the narratives of both groups that this is missing from the education and experiences of the next generation in all corners of the globe, as it was a general deficit in the majority of the essays.

The life experiences of those who applied for the corporate event were clearly shaping their thinking and were much more passionate about their views and values. This was even more evident especially in those people from unstable countries (where human rights were considered a priority) and where energy and environmental

pollution was also seen as an issue. Those writing from developing countries or fast growing countries such as China frequently referred to the need to manage resources and technology as being a priority. This is heartening given the very real needs in these countries for awareness and action. However, even amongst the most passionate of the writers, there was little to be found in their narratives that indicated to us that they personally had a sense of how to take up their own leadership roles and make a real difference. In short, idealism and romanticism were not supported by a sound understanding of organisational culture, nor political structures, nor how to lead change. It appears that we are seeing in these essays (and in particular in their under-developed ideas about the leadership of others) a worrying blend of idealism, passivity, individualism, and social naiveté.

Many of them argue that for change to happen, vision and a global mindset are key. Both sets of writers saw leadership as being about setting vision. Possessing a 'global mindset' and cultural intelligence were also seen by both groups as critical. However, beyond these steps there was little to reassure us that these next generation leaders had the capacity to deal with organisational and societal resistance to change, nor how to connect with others to enact leadership. Human resources, technological advancement, societal and community initiatives, setting an example to others were all seen to be relatively important, but these ideas were not supported by a sense of personal responsibility for change, and more usually they were written as imperatives for top leaders, or existing organisations. In other words they were a 'wish list' as we suggested earlier.

Both groups displayed a very uni-dimensional and limited understanding of leadership, organisations and society. There was little understanding of leadership as a dispersed activity. Few of the writers from either group thought that globally responsible leadership applied to them or their own actions. There was in both groups a naivety too about the difficulties of being ethical, values driven and globally fair in our shareholder-focused capitalist structures, although this was even more marked in the undergraduate group.

Recommendations for business school educators and leadership developers

The narratives found in both sets of essays indicate a comprehensive grasp of many of the key aspects of global responsibility that we would seek to develop in the next generation of leaders. The issues were clearly better understood by the MBA students, having first hand work experience in most cases, but intellectually both groups had a wide interpretation of the issues facing our planet.

However, the essays of both groups tended to be predominantly *issue* based, instead of *leadership* based. Leadership was shown in both groups to be a very weak and superficially understood construct. Leadership in

most cases was written as referring to others (he, they, leaders should…) and not to themselves (I, we should...). This detachment was striking and indicates a severe deficit in the education of our young people in today's networked digital world. That there was little difference evident in the prevailing beliefs across the cultures represented in the two groups leads us to wonder whether globalisation and social networking is already homogenising the beliefs and values of the next generation. An obsolete and redundant westernized-biased view of leadership was dominant across both groups, a problem that had clearly not been addressed in any of their education systems.

We believe, therefore, that it will be imperative for educators focusing on building globally responsible leadership to further develop Gen Y's critical thinking beyond sterile notions of leadership, organisations and society. Awareness of distributed and complexity leadership will follow if we can teach our young people to think and question, and not to simply repeat dominant ideas, that many would argue have led to the economic and planetary crisis in which we now find ourselves. For change to happen, and Gen Y to lead a revolution in leadership action, the next generation must first question and if necessary reject old models of organisation, and develop a deeper and less romaticised understanding of organisational dynamics, power and engagement that will enable deeper change to take place across society. Social networks and other modes of instant communication have enabled western ideologies to take root and flourish across the globe. If we do not revisit our education models we must take responsibility for educating a new generation who will fall into the failed patterns of their predecessors

We believe that in order to develop a global leadership mindset that will extend the awareness of the next generation around issues facing the planet to a more informed understanding of how to enact responsible leadership, educators should consider adopting more creative experiential approaches for understanding the leadership of business, society, and disadvantaged communities, and in particular approaches that enable leadership development through deep immersion in real first hand experiences.

We believe that Generation X and the Baby Boomers have a role to play in teaching the next generation to recognise the mistakes they and their predecessors made in the past leadership of the planet and society. Learning from experience of the previous generations is rarely done well, but it is imperative that this learning is passed on to the next generation of leaders.

Old models of leadership such as hierarchical and charismatic models have been a deterrent to Gen Y taking up leadership roles. They have shown a marked reluctance to take up formal leadership positions. It is important therefore that Gen Y finds alternative and more effective modes of leadership that have more relevance for leading in today's complex and fast changing world. Educators have a duty to move away from teaching out of date and western stereotypical models of hierarchical leadership and to embrace the many

leadership wisdoms that can be found around the globe that reinforce role-modeling, stewardship, and the teaching responsibilities of leadership. A start has been made with the creation of the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative with its founding partners of the Global Compact and European Foundation for Management Development. Its demands are for changing mindsets in three areas, reconsidering the role of the 'firm' changing our views of leadership into one that focuses on values and responsibilities within organisations and an idea that they call corporate statesmanship which would broaden the debates and dialogues with the wider society. Through their dialogues to date the partners have developed some tools and communities in which to engage others in this discussion. Similarly the alternatives expressed in dialogues such as 'worldly leadership', 'distributed leadership', 'complexity leadership' and 'servant leadership', for example, should receive greater promotion and attention. We should be starting even earlier with such education, at pre-University levels as one undergraduate commented

"After University I intend to become a business teacher….as a result (of this module)… I would attempt to enhance and increase relationships that the school has with its stakeholders to generate sustainable and influential leadership"

The Gen Y narratives we have studied show a willingness to engage and to be challenged in understanding ethical approaches, business ethics and philosophical writers who focus on the issues of consideration for others. However, as we have discussed we must find a way to assist young people to better understand the structures of power and society that sustain the status quo. As one young writer commented "self –awareness and continued reflection will be vitally important for me in my future workplace…" This engagement needs to be built and the tools provided for Gen Y to develop their leadership capabilities. The development of greater and deeper awareness of these issues should help these potential senior leaders to have the tools and confidence to be less romantic, more practical, and more deeply and critically reflective, less dominated by mainstream discourses of business and society, and more able to think and act in alternative ways to bring about responsible shifts. In this way this generation might also provide for themselves and others the sense of safety, resilience and even fun that they seek in their organisations.

Whilst educators will need to reinforce the global mindset and develop cultural awareness early in curriculum, and across all aspects of it they must now go further. If we can tap into Gen Y's natural romanticism preferences for a family feeling at work, teamwork, autonomy and early leadership responsibility in our inducting processes we may start to reduce their belief that leadership is something others do and should do and facilitate their ownership of the responsible leadership agenda. Gen Y seeks human flourishing, but now they need a grounded and ambitious approach to leadership, based on deep awareness and critical thinking

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