



An integrated conceptual model of respect in leadership

Nicholas Clarke

School of Management, University of Southampton, Highfield, Southampton, SO17 3BF, United Kingdom

ARTICLE INFO

Available online 27 March 2011

Keywords:
Leadership
Respect
Relational

ABSTRACT

Respect is greatly talked about in leadership yet rarely are discussions encountered in the literature regarding what is meant by the concept. This paper analyzes the differing ways in which respect has been treated within key leadership perspectives, identifying three differing types of respect, *appraisal*, *recognition* and *identification* respect. The antecedents or conditions that give rise to these three types of respect within the leadership relationship are identified. Drawing upon developments in the group behavior literature, the outcomes of appraisal and recognition respect in leadership are suggested. With the further addition of situational and individual factors that potentially moderate the relationship between respect and its antecedents, an integrated conceptual model of respect in leadership is presented to underpin future research in the area.

© 2011 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Respect consistently figures in workplace surveys as one of the most prominent characteristics of what defines good leaders or effective leadership (Bernthal, Rioux, & Wellins, 1999; Bernthal & Wellins, 2005; Charlesworth, Cook, & Crozier, 2003; Sarros, Gray, & Densten, 2002). Respect issues also continue to figure prominently on the contemporary agendas of many organizations and governments, being found in areas ranging from promoting diversity (Emmott & Worman, 2008), reducing incidences of workplace bullying (Lutgen-Sandrik, Tracy, & Alberts, 2007), guaranteeing workers' rights (European Commission, 2006; Hodson, 2002), and supporting enhanced flexibility through work-life balance (Fleetwood, 2007). Yet the number of academic papers attempting to explore the concept from a leadership perspective has to date been fairly modest, despite respect seen as central to leaders exercising influence over followers (Barnard, 1938; Bass, 1981; Yukl, 2002). For the most part the topic of respect is often subsumed under the broader spectrum of leadership ethics (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Ciulla, 1998, 2005; Williamson, 2008), while the handful of papers specifically devoted to just respect in leadership have similarly drawn from a philosophical and ethics-based literature (Bowie, 2000; Dreher, 2002; Price, 2008). Delellis (2000) previously suggested that writers on leadership have tended to take the meaning of the term for granted, whereas in actuality defining respect is both uncertain and complex. This led him to present a more comprehensive analysis of the concept, combining both subjective experiences of what it means to be respected, alongside a range of target objects to which respect is often directed. In so doing he put forward the only multidimensional model of respect that has appeared in the leadership literature to date. However, in omitting to posit any testable propositions its application to inform future research in the area was somewhat limited. Since then, there have been significant advances made in our understanding of the role respect plays in group behavior which are of relevance to leadership (De Cremer, 2002; Sturmer, Simon, & Loewy, 2008). These advances combined with limitations associated with the leadership literature, suggest that a further attempt to develop an integrated conceptual model of respect in leadership seems timely. Through bringing together insights on the nature of respect from an ethics perspective, alongside these more recent research findings on the role respect plays in group behavior, a more comprehensive understanding of the role respect plays in leadership can be gained. The aim of this paper is therefore to posit an integrated, conceptual model of respect in leadership that identifies the antecedents and outcomes of respect

E-mail address: nrclarke@soton.ac.uk.

in leadership, which might better inform future research in the area. In order to support this aim, a series of testable propositions are put forward that capture these posited relationships, informed by a relational perspective of leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

From this point onwards the paper is structured as follows. Firstly, an analysis is presented that shows how the concept of respect has been viewed in different ways within the most influential leadership theories to date. This is then related to a wider understanding of the notion of respect drawn from the ethics literature. From this initial analysis, a multidimensional model of respect that captures the full dimensions of the concept is developed. Based on this model, a comprehensive definition of respect in leadership is then also put forward. Clusters of behaviors or conditions are identified within the model as antecedents associated with bringing about these differing dimensions of respect. Next, the conceptual model is extended to identify a number of situational and individual factors drawn from the literature, suggested as potential moderators of these antecedent–respect relationships. How respect potentially relates to two other key dimensions of leadership, namely trust and affect is then discussed. The paper concludes with a final discussion of potential avenues for future research adopting this Integrated Model of Respect in Leadership.

2. Respect as an implicit and explicit dimension in leadership perspectives

A number of authors have identified the lack of a coherent body of literature relating to the role of respect in interpersonal behavior, partly due to its elusive and contextual nature (Delellis, 2000; Frei & Shaver, 2002; Langdon, 2007). Recognizing this, and to ensure respect was fully grounded in leadership, it was decided to focus on how respect appears to have been treated within the most influential leadership perspectives (Northouse, 2004). Those leadership perspectives showing distinct differences in their treatment of respect were then included to inform the initial development of the conceptual model. As a result, only trait, behavioral, situational (leader–member exchange), and values-based (transformational and stakeholder/servant) leadership perspectives are included here.

2.1. *Respect as an implicit leadership dimension*

Within early trait theories of leadership, the notion of respect is treated only in implicit terms. By this it is meant, respect is seen as a distinct attribute associated with the leader in that they are able to ‘command’ or are ‘deserving’ of respect by virtue of the leadership characteristics they possess (Northouse, 2004; Wright, 1996). Here respect is based on the status of the leader. Importantly, the basis of this respect derives from the admiration or reverence followers extol for the outstanding qualities possessed by the leader. Respect then, is seen merely as an extension of leader characteristics, with the expectation that it is an inevitable consequence of possessing the constellation of traits the leader has. Through possessing leadership traits, respect from followers is viewed as automatically forthcoming. Respect in this instance then can also be seen to be primarily uni-directional, in that good leaders are by their nature *respected* for their worthy personal qualities. Similarly within behavioral theories of leadership (Fleishman, 1953), the notion of respect can be said to be dealt with in an implicit way. It is not identified concretely as a key dimension of leadership, but instead is seen as arising as a result of the specific behaviors or actions of the leader. Through listening to followers and showing concern for their needs, leaders are able to generate and maintain respect. Similarly demonstrating competence in achieving goals through task oriented behaviors, leaders are able to *earn* respect (Yukl, 1994). An important difference is noticeable within this perspective however, in that respect is also seen as an attribute that followers wish leaders also to show them. Rather than respect arising from reverence or admiration of leader traits, respect arises as a result of what the leader does, and is then reciprocated. Respect in relation to trait theories of leadership then, would appear to indicate that respect for leaders is primarily based on their abilities or accomplishments. By contrast, respect as implicitly conveyed in behavioral perspectives of leadership, is based on leader sensitivity and being attentive, supportive and responsive to followers’ needs, as well as deriving from their competence in task accomplishment (Barnard, 1938; Bass, 1981).

2.2. *Respect as an explicit leadership dimension*

It is not until the arrival of situational theories of leadership that respect is accorded a far more explicit role within a leadership context, and most specifically in leader–member exchange theory (Kim, Dansereau, Kim, & Kin, 2004; Uhl-Bien & Maslyn, 2003; Van Breukelen, Schyns, & Le Blanc, 2006). Here the shift from viewing leadership as a set of leader behaviors, to instead viewing leadership as a social relationship emphasizes the distinctive relational qualities that determine leadership. Most significantly, where in addition to trust and mutual obligation, respect plays a pivotal role:

“It is this mutual trust, respect and obligation toward each other which empowers and motivates both to expand beyond the formalized work contract and formalized work roles: to grow out of their prescribed jobs and develop a partnership based on mutual reciprocal influence” (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995, p232).

Originally based upon studies examining the relationship qualities of dyadic partners, the theory sought to explain how differences in respect (among other qualities) between leader and followers accounted for the presence of in-groups and out-groups within an organization. More recently it has developed further towards a more prescriptive approach to leadership that suggests how leaders might make ‘offers’ of high quality relationships and partnerships with all followers in order to gain major benefits. Indeed, a number of studies have found these major characteristics of leader–member exchange of which respect is central, to be associated with performance (Butler & Reese, 1991; Dunegan, Duchon, & Uhl-Bien, 1992), job satisfaction (Turban, Jones, & Rozelle, 1990) and organizational commitment (Nystrom, 1990). It becomes particularly important to note that given

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/887952>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/887952>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)