



CHALMERS

Leadership Within Humanitarian Logistics

A study on different leadership styles and their challenges on a operational level

Bachelor thesis for International Logistics Program

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CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
Gothenburg, Sweden, 2023

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PREFACE

This interest of ours dates back to fall 2020 when we first had a guest lecturer who introduced the concept of humanitarian logistics. A curiosity grew in both of us, knowing this area of expertise is very peculiar and is rather something one has to experience, in order to truly understand it. As that would not be the case for us for at least a couple of years ahead, we were equally convinced that writing a thesis within the field would be a great first step in the right direction.

In writing this thesis we would like to express our gratitude and acknowledgement towards the individuals who have supported and guided us throughout this journey.

Firstly, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our mentor Fredrik Forsman, for his invaluable guidance, expertise and unique insight. His comprehensive knowledge has been of extreme use when shaping and refining our research and his dedication towards our academic development has been a delight to take part of.

We would also like to express our appreciation for the participating practitioners who have unique and hands-on experiences within humanitarian logistics. Thank you for sharing your experiences, it has been incredibly insightful both personally and from an academic perspective.

Furthermore, we would like to acknowledge the Chalmers School of Technology where we are pursuing our studies in International logistics with a comprehensive scope of 180 HP. The program has equipped us with valuable tools to properly conduct this thesis and we are thankful to be able to apply our academic knowledge within a field we want to propose meaningful solutions towards. The thesis, with a scope of 15 HP, has been a demanding yet memorable project.

We hope our study will bring useful insights to the reader and welcome a new area of interest to our fellow logisticians.

Kimia & Maria

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SAMMANDRAG

Denna rapport syftar till att analysera ledarskap inom humanitär logistik. Forskningsfrågan undersöker den mest förekommande ledarstilen bland utövare samt de utmaningar som följer med praktiken, tillsammans med potentiella lösningar. Genom att använda en kvalitativ fallstudie med semistrukturerade intervjuer samlades data in. Därefter transkriberades och kodades materialet tematiskt med hjälp av programmet Nvivo för att uppnå ett opartiskt resultat. Ytterligare sekundärdata från tidigare studier, litteratur och erkända ledarskapsmodeller användes. Studien identifierade sex huvudteman: Ledarskapsutmaningar, Ledaregenskaper, Kulturell mångfald och kommunikation, Teamdynamik, Utvärdering och förbättring samt Mental hälsa och välbefinnande. Dessa teman ger insikt i de specifika utmaningar som ledare inom det humanitära området står inför. Resultaten analyserades i relation till varandra och den teoretiska ramen, med fokus på de mest stödjande aspekterna. Resultaten bidrar till en djupare förståelse för effektivt ledarskap inom humanitär logistik och erbjuder värdefulla insikter för utövare och organisationer inom detta område.

Nyckelord: Leadership, humanitarian logistics, humanitarian crisis

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ABSTRACT

This report aims to analyze leadership within the context of humanitarian logistics. The research question investigates the leadership style that is prevalent among practitioners, the challenges that come with the practice as well as potential solutions. A qualitative case study is conducted by the use of semi structured interviews. The data collected from the interviews were thereafter transcribed and thematically coded using the program Nvivo to gain an unbiased result. Secondary data from previous studies, literature and recognised leadership models are also utilized. The study identifies six major themes: Leadership challenges, Leadership qualities, Cultural diversity and communication, Team dynamics, Evaluation and improvement, and Mental health and wellbeing. The themes provide insight to the particular challenges that leaders within the humanitarian field are faced with. The results are analyzed in relation to each other and the theoretical framework, focusing on the most supported aspects. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of effective leadership in humanitarian logistics and offer valuable insights for practitioners and organizations in this field.

Keywords: Leadership, humanitarian logistics, humanitarian crisis

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ACRONYMS AND TERMINOLOGY

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| IMDG | Integrated Model of Group development |
| LPC | Least Preferred Co-worker |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |

1. INTRODUCTION

There has been a marked increase in the numbers of natural disasters in recent decades, and the proportion of the population affected. The disasters occur most often in the parts of the world where necessary equipment and resources are scarce and the population lives under harsh conditions. Based on this development, it is considered to be an advantage that the amount of humanitarian aid relief workers have increased (Wladis & von Schreer, 2011).

Working with humanitarian aid in international settings often places great demands on people as the requirement for help can be overwhelming and the situation is often associated with demanding tasks and stress. In such situations, the leadership of the working group is put at the forefront and is likely to be of great importance for the whole team and its performance.

Leadership is an essential aspect of running a lucrative organization and is even more relevant within the realm of humanitarian logistics, where 60 - 80% of the humanitarian project funding is spent on logistics specifically (Action Contre la Faim, 2017). The idea of effective leadership becomes essential in the case of ensuring that relief reaches those in need in an effective and timely manner. Humanitarian logistics can be characterized as an area within logistics that deals with the logistical aspects of a disaster management system. This can include several different functions such as procuring, warehousing, as well as transportation of water, food, medicine. It also includes other aid supplies such as necessary equipment and machinery, human resources, and those affected before and after a disaster has struck (Nikbakhsh & Farahani, 2011).

The term humanitarian logistics often involves aspects such as coordinating resources and commodities in response to a situation of crisis. It can be divided into three separate categories, the flow of materials, money, and information (Ilhan.A, 2012). A reliable leader within this realm must possess an array of skills such as the ability to work with several stakeholders, make difficult decisions under pressure and encourage as well as inspire their team to achieve a common goal.

In the following study the role of leadership within humanitarian logistics will be examined as well as the challenges and opportunities that a leader in this situation is faced with, and what qualities and competencies that would be necessary to increase the success rate.

1.1 Background

The concept of crisis management has become more of a pressing term from a managerial and organizational standpoint, resulting in the fact that “it is no longer enough for managers to consider ‘if’ a system will fail but rather ‘when’ that failure will occur” (Smith, 1990, p. 264). Although organizational research within crisis management is highly sought after, the research is still limited and fragmented as of today. An example would be how contingency theories are complex and oftentimes difficult to test (Yukl, 2013 as cited in Bass & Bass, 2009). It is therefore important to analyze an array of different aspects of functional management and

leadership within a logistical crisis to gain a general consensus of how it operates. Some of the aspects that will be regarded in the following analysis are leadership theories within group processes, contingency as well as adaptive theories since they all are prevalent in crisis management and leadership.

There have been indicators that the management of international humanitarian disasters often are defective (Berthlin, 2006). For instance, it is shown in a study that studied the management of the tsunami disaster in 2004 by Swedish authorities. The problems arose both horizontally in cooperation with other authorities and actors, vertically within the own organization when, i.e. the mandates and understanding between several hierarchical levels were deficient, internally within the own group and externally towards other groups (Vrbanjic, et, al. 2006).

The leadership styles that have been theorized to be the best and most effective are many. Thus, the one that stands out the most is the transactional leadership style, where a traditional leader is portrayed as giving concrete and clear instructions to its subordinates when in crisis situations filled with confusion (Yukl, 2013). However, James MacGregor Burns (1978) a political scientist, describes transformative leadership as its total opposite and refers to it as being bound to a higher purpose. A transformational leader wants to increase its subordinates' awareness of the value of the outcome, but also the organizations' overall interest. It aims to provide the subordinates with motivation to make an effort and develop in their everyday work (Alvesson et al. 2017). Thus, there is an ambiguity in the research about the most appropriate leadership style when in crisis management being in organizations everyday work, dealing with disaster reliefs. Moreover, it is important to put the emphasis on how leadership often is very situation based and not an "one size fits all".

Leadership, the humanitarian field, and logistics are three subject areas that have been studied separately frequently, yet they have not been combined before. The following study therefore provides unique insight within the field.

1.2 Aim of the study

The aim of this report is to analyze leadership that occurs within humanitarian logistics on an operational level, and what makes effective leadership to what it is within this field. The aim is also to look into previous contexts where the leadership has been challenging, and the improvements necessary for future implementation. This leads to the following questions.

1.3 Research questions

1. Which leadership style is the most prevalent among practitioners within humanitarian logistics?
2. What are the challenges practitioners perceive with regards to leadership in humanitarian logistics? How can they be improved?

1.4 Delimitations

The topic of leadership in crisis management is a broad spectrum to study, when specifying it within humanitarian logistics it focuses on a more precise area within the crisis management. Leadership can be studied through several aspects whether it is a group level, dyad level or on an organizational level. We decided to not put focus on the individual aspects, as that was not found aligned within the purpose of the study. Moreover, leadership on an organizational level will also not be touched upon to a broader extent, as that would require several aspects, such as the leader's subordinates' and their superiors' perspectives being considered as well. Such research with several dimensions would be too extensive.

2. THEORY

In this chapter, several leadership styles and approaches are presented and what influences the choice of them in crisis situations. An in-depth analysis will be made within the chosen leadership styles and approaches, complimentary leadership qualities, contextualization and environmental factors will be included that can be assumed to influence the outcome when choosing a leadership model.

2.1 Leadership styles

James MacGregor Burns (1978) initially introduced the transforming leadership as a concept in his research on political leaders. Burns described it as a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation". The concept was later developed furthermore by Bernard M. Bass (1985), and a change in terminology was made to transformational leadership. His addition to the original concept was how to make it easier in describing how transformational leadership can be measured, as well as how it impacts follower motivation and performance. Bass describes the leadership style by making a clear distinction from the transactional leadership, which is when employees work in exchange for reward, while the transformational leader rather appeals to the employees' self-esteem in order to increase their motivation for work.

The full range of leadership model, which is a concept developed by Bernard Bass and Bruce Avolio (1994) is based on three general leadership styles; the transformational, the transactional and the "Laissez-Faire", which is considered as an ineffective leadership style within the spectrum of the transactional leadership style. When the model was developed, different behaviors and characteristics were attributed to each and every leadership style.

The authors will base the theoretical framework on the full range of leadership further on. Considering that the crisis in humanitarian logistics is a global issue, viewing leadership styles from a standardized and a well-founded model is not enough. Therefore, in addition to the full range of leadership model, a few extra leadership approaches will be included in order to get a fuller and more nuanced view.

Furthermore, the view of leadership and what is considered to be appropriate and effective leadership is often affected by cultural conditions (Larsson et. al. 2003), as well as environmental circumstances, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

2.1.1 Transformational leadership

Based on Bass and Avolio's theories, Larsson et. al. (2003) identifies three characteristic behaviors of transformational leadership: these are idealized influence, personal concern and inspiration and motivation.

Idealized influence, in other words leading by example, means that the leadership both rests on and expresses the foundation of values with high humanistic values as well as high standards of ethics, morality and loyalty (Larsson et. al. 2003). Learning by example also includes that the leader is a good role model where actions are consistent with what is thought, said and done. Further, it can also mean that a leader admits its mistakes as a leader. Idealized influence is also when a leader possesses the courage to take responsibility, even in times of hardships and pressed situations. It can be about responsibility for the tasks, the employees or the organization.

A leader with personal concern means that the leader provides support, both emotional and in a form of a more practical nature, i.e. help, training or guidance. Personal concern also includes being able to confront subordinate employees in a good and constructive way when they have made a poor performance (Larsson et. al. 2003).

The third aspect that Larsson et al. (2003) choses to highlight is inspiration and motivation. This behavior is best described as encouraging the subordinates' participation and engagement by, for instance, delegating tasks and responsibilities. Another aspect of inspiration and motivation is that it prompts creativity in employees by encouraging new ideas or by challenging existing structures.

2.1.2 Transactional leadership

The transactional leadership style is based on clear expectations, rewards and punishments based on performance. According to Burns (1978), transactional leadership is a form of exchange where the leaders reward followers for good performance and punish them if the performance isn't up to standard. A brief oversight of transactional leadership would entail setting specific goals and expectations as a leader and acting according to the followers performance to motivate them to reach their goals (Sarros & Santora, 2001)

Transactional leadership has multiple in depth studies when specifically applied to organizational behavior. It's been discovered that transactional leadership can be beneficial when wanting to promote compliance in short term goals (Bass & Riggio, 2006). It is a

leadership style that thrives in a structured and procedural environment since the primary concern is productivity and task completion (Bass & Avolio, 1994). This type of leadership usually does not create much trust between the leader and followers since the leader operates out of their own needs and agenda. Bass and Riggio (2006) defines the philosophy with "play by my rules and you will get what you want."

2.1.3 Laissez-faire

Laissez-faire derives from French and translates to "let go", which is how this leadership style is constructed. Larsson et al. (2003) describes it as a "let-go" type of leadership style. Where there is a lack of leadership in terms of situations where it would be essential, leaders tend to have ignorant behavior and avoid responsibility. Bass and Bass (2009) describes Laissez-faire as leaders who delegate more responsibility to their subordinates than any other leadership style, who do not care nor advise with decision making and to set up clear goals. Additionally they act indifferent to what is happening and avoid intervening when situations are needy of a superior standpoint.

2.1.4 Comments and criticism on the mentioned leadership styles

Although transactional leadership can promote efficiency in short term or structured circumstances, it is not a well suited style of leadership in an environment that requires flexibility, innovation and sustainability (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Since transactional leadership is performance based it can kill innovation and creativity on the process whilst can be detrimental in certain cases (Pieterse, et, al., 2010). Another downside with transactional leadership is that it isn't the best motivator of intrinsic motivation since it relies on external rewards and punishments (Bass & Riggio, 2006). As for transformational leadership it focuses on working towards long-term goals in which motivation and drive come from the individuals themselves (Larsson, 2003).

While transformational leadership possesses many advantages, there still are many criticisms of it. According to Nye (2008), "*Transformational leaders can inspire and unite followers, but effectiveness and ethics can suffer*". Essentially the morality of transformational leaders can become their bottleneck, as they have the ability to abuse their power (Hall et. al., 2002). Another disadvantage worth mentioning, is how a transformational leader emphasizes what a follower can do for their country (Bass, 1999). In other words, transformational leadership is mainly structured around how followers can contribute to an organization and not vice versa, leaving the flow of influence one-sided - from the leader to the follower. Thus, no room is left for further personal development as it is initially portrayed in transformational leadership.

Although the above mentioned leadership styles can be seen as theoretical ideal types, they should not be seen as mutually exclusive but rather that they complement each other. In other words, it is possible for a leader to possess characteristics from several leadership styles. However, combining transformational leadership with laissez-faire could be counterproductive as their different traits directly oppose each other, for instance being a role model while being

ignorant. The characteristics that can conceivably overlap in the transactional- and transformational leadership are mainly the ones that are described as positive traits in the transactional leadership style, while the negative traits of the same style can be combined with laissez-faire (Larsson, 2010).

Despite transactional leadership limitations, it still remains an important leadership style, especially in corporate organizations. It is a great tool to promote compliance and achieve short term goals which can be relevant in some cases. It is therefore important as a leader to choose leadership styles based on the context and goal of the organization (Sarros & Santora, 2001).

2.2 Contextualized leadership

The idea of leadership being universal for all situations was abandoned by most researchers around the 1960s. The concept that leadership was purely situational had become at this time overemphasized and the leaders personal traits became underemphasized (Bass & Bass, 2009, p.103). A few examples of researchers are Carter (1953) according to Bass and Bass (2009), Gibb (1954), and Shartle (1956) that all concluded that stable relationships between traits and leadership are only in relation to the specific situation at hand, completely disregarding the idea that leaders could be born with favorable qualities. Having said that, some researchers before the 1970 and many after, shifted their beliefs regarding leaders and what qualities that are favorable. Van Fleet and Yukl (1986) is an example of scholars at this time holding on to the idea that certain personal characteristics can improve the likelihood of a leader's success according to Bass (2009). Establishing the connection between personal traits and leadership being viable in a wide array of situations.

2.2.1 Situational based leadership

Hersey and Blanchard (1977) developed the situational based leadership model to emphasize the important role a given situation plays when determining an effective and appropriate leadership style. It is not only the personal characteristics of a leader that are decisive, as subordinate's personal characteristics also play a significant role when responding to a leadership style, but that there are more factors to it. Subordinate maturity is one example, where the independence level of team members depends on their amount of experience, in order to assess whether they are able to fulfill a task independently and take full responsibility for it.

Other factors are relational behavior which is the interpersonal relationship between a leader and subordinate, and subordinate maturity, which measures the level of maturity of the employees and the level of directive- and supportive behavior a leader has to provide (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). This is shown in a model of situational leadership which is divided into four sections. The lowest section being Directing which includes high directive and low supportive behavior, it is thereafter followed by Coaching which is high directive and high supportive behavior. Supporting is the third level, which is low directive and high supportive behavior, finally the one with highest maturity is Delegating, having low directive and low

supportive behavior. That way, by estimating where team members are on the scale, one can measure their level of motivation in the given situation.

2.2.2 Contingency theory

Fiedler's article (1967), as cited in Nebeker (1975), puts an emphasis on two main aspects in its contingency models of leadership; the leader's personality as well as the situational power and control they possess. The leader's personality can be divided into two different aspects of motivation, one is task-oriented and one is relationship-oriented. With task oriented motivation is where the focus is on achieving goals, meeting deadlines and task efficiency. Relationship oriented motivation puts emphasis on interpersonal relationships as well as a positive work environment. The contingency model uses the metric Least preferred co-worker (LPC) to measure which of these motivations the leader possesses the most.

Fiedler's concept (Fiedler, 1967) of situational favorability revolves around the consideration of three dimensions, the first is leader-member relationship. When this dimension is high the leader is generally accepted and respected by followers. The second is the degree of task structure, if this scores high the task is well-structured. Lastly the third dimension is the leader's position power, when scored high the leader holds significant authority and formal power. The higher these three dimensions score, the more situationally favorable it becomes for the leader in question.

To properly apply Fiedler's contingency theory, the leadership style should be identified with the LPC score and the situational favorability should be assessed with consideration to the three dimensions (Fiedler, 1967). This to thereafter be able to determine which leadership style is best suitable with the specific situation and context. The contingency theory recognises that there is no one-size-fits-all approach in management, as different situations require adaptable and situational solutions.

2.3 Interpersonal communication

Interpersonal communication, meaning the exchange of information, thoughts, and feelings between individuals, are all important aspects in regard to leadership and team building (Terra, 2023). It involves active listening, clear expression, understanding nonverbal cues, and empathy. Effectively managing interpersonal communication is a building stone for understanding, resolving conflicts, and building meaningful connections.

2.3.1 preferred leadership qualities

A meta analytic review (Slemp, G.R. et al., 2018) with 72 studies, 83 samples and nearly 33,000 participants suggest that leaders who provide autonomy support to their subordinates could foster an autonomous and self determined motivation. The results suggest that autonomy support could serve an important role in the development of management and leadership training as well as being correlated to the self determination theory. The concept Leader

Autonomy Support (LAS) refers to certain behaviors leaders can engage in to promote autonomous motivation such as taking interest in the subordinates perspective, being open for input and encouraging self initiation while also avoiding external rewards and sanction.

Northouse (2016) argues that there are several leader characteristics and traits that have been essentially related to effective leadership; integrity, intelligence, sociability, determination and self-confidence. These five characteristics and traits have, according to the author, been frequently reported in previous research as possible central pillars to the leadership process. In order to have a trustworthy leader he/she must obtain a high sense of integrity. A leader with good social skills has no problem with forming relationships and maintaining them.

High intelligence can e.g. result in better ability in problem solving, compared to non-leaders. As for determination, leaders are persistent and take initiative, which can be helpful in situations where giving directions to followers is demanded. Lastly, self-confidence can improve a leader's certainty in skills and competencies, and thus influence followers.

Per-Anders Berthlin, one of the co-authors of the book *“Ledning av räddningsinsatser i det komplexa samhället”* (2006), emphasizes aspects that are considered to be of great importance for leadership in humanitarian efforts. His first point that he makes is that a direct and clear command with distinct orders are vital in international operations, as both the environment and the surroundings are foreign. The second being, that the group has a common value is also of great importance, where the leader is the maintainer of the value base and being a role model is assumed to be significant. The reasoning behind the importance of the value base is for the code of conduct to be followed, partly because it increases the possibilities for groups to work as well-functioning teams. As a leader, to possess the ability to justify the group's task and role in disaster management is important, as otherwise the situation easily can become unmanageable. Another aspect that is considered of significant value for leaders, is to constantly think about the safety of the personnel, as an operation often takes place in foreign environments with unclear and unknown security threats. As a leader, it is also considered vital to be prepared for the unprepared in international disaster management.

2.3.2 Integrated model of group development

Integrated Model of Group Development (IMDG), is a development model founded by Susan Wheelan. It consists of four distinct stages, along with a final phase (Jacobsson & Åkerlund, 2019) . Unlike the four stages that are in order, the final phase can occur anytime, following any of the stages. The four stages depict the team's progression within a contextual framework, from a state of uncertainty and concern to one of security and trust. The four stages are belonging and security, opposition and conflict, trust and structure and work and productivity.

Belonging and security is the first stage (Jacobsson & Åkerlund, 2019). During this initial stage, the team establishes the foundation of the group and its context. The primary objective at this point is to identify commonalities among team members finding factors that unite them. Since the early stages of the team establishment lack clarity in regards to tasks, roles, and

values, the leader's role becomes the first noticeable one. At this stage the leader assumes a high level of responsibility in relation to the rest of the team, therefore communication follows a centralized approach, coming mostly from the leader directly to the rest of the team. Other roles that emerge during this stage are for the most part based on superficial factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity. This stage is characterized by a strong emphasis on fitting in with the group and avoiding dissenting opinions, as too many dissenting opinions can pose a threat to the group's viability.

The second stage, opposition and conflict, questions arise and the team works to clarify and determine goals, roles, and values (Jacobsson & Åkerlund, 2019). It is common that some opposition to the leader emerges, leading to the division of the team. The team at this stage gets divided into two subgroups, one oppositional and the other dependent on the leader. The leader's reaction to the opposition will be important since firm and authoritarian reactions can lead to further opposition. The team's goals at this stage become more clear and communication also more open. This stage is seen as a testing ground for different roles. The conflicts that occur are primarily practical issues and core values, especially with the emergence of subgroups. As the team grows more comfortable with each other, pressure to conform diminishes. If the team resolves conflicts during this stage, the team builds a stronger group cohesion.

The third stage is trust and structure (Jacobsson & Åkerlund, 2019). This stage marks the transition from conflicts in the second stage to peace. It is during this phase trust among group members increases as the team's differences already have been identified and addressed. The team will at this stage develop a more realistic understanding of the leader, and communication will become increasingly flexible. The more clear and established goals will cause the group to exhibit greater commitment and improved cohesion throughout the team. Shared values are also cultivated, leading to increased conformity and the conformity will at this stage no longer be driven by fear of threat but instead a collective drive to achieve the established goals. Although conflicts may still arise during this stage, the reasons behind them are now shifted since there are clarified values and culture, the conflicts are rather work processes and methods related.

The fourth and highest phase is work and productivity, it is at this stage the team's primary focus shifts to the task at hand (Jacobsson & Åkerlund, 2019). This is the stage where the leadership responsibilities are distributed and the leader becomes a consultant for decision-making rather than a directive figure. The communication at this stage becomes more task-oriented and feedback flows smoothly. There is increased participation from team members, decision-making becomes productive and it is no longer driven by a personal agenda. At this stage high levels of coherence and conformity are observed. The comfort also contributes to greater tolerance for deviations, as innovative ideas often stem from unconventional thinking. Although operations run smoothly during this stage, conflicts do occasionally arise, however, they usually resolve easily and are often task related. Although this is the final formal stage, it requires continuous energy and effort to upkeep dynamic. It is possible for teams to move back and forth between stages as well, an example of a situation that may occur is during future

projects. Lastly, there is an end phase, which occurs naturally upon the completion of a project or if the workload becomes too demanding.

2.3.3. Feedback

Feedback is a crucial part of interpersonal communication from a perspective of leadership. Hattie and Timperley (2007, p.102) defined feedback as the following; “feedback is information provided by an agent (e.g., teacher, peer, book, parent, experience) regarding aspects of one’s performance or understanding.” The concept serves the purpose of reducing the gap between the desired goal and the current performance.

According to Hattie and Timperley’s model on feedback in teacher and student settings, there are three main questions that should be addressed in good feedback (2007). "Where am I going?" (feed up), "How am I going?" (feed back), and "Where to next?" (feed forward). Thereafter the model also proposes four major levels of feedback and that its effectiveness depends on which level it is directed. The four levels are task level, process level, self-regulation level, and personal level. The first level, which is a task, involves feedback related to the task or product itself, assessing how correct or incorrect it may be and might include directions towards what is deemed to be the right path. The second level, which is process, is centered around feedback aimed at the process used to complete the task or create the product. Feedback in this level could entail improving performance by focusing on another process or methodology. The third level of feedback, self-regulation, helps individuals develop skills in monitoring their own learning processes, setting goals, managing their efforts, and regulating their emotions. The fourth and last level of feedback is the personal level which is specifically directed towards the "self" rather than task performance. This feedback could include praising the subject student as a great learner or acknowledge their intelligence, with no direct reference to the specific task at hand.

Hattie and Timperley (2007) claims that aligning the feedback with the appropriate appointed level will guide the educators towards effective improvement and how the understanding of the different levels will give educators the tools to provide more targeted and impactful guidance.

The Johari window model, which was developed by psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham (Eklund and Jörgen, 2013), enhances self-awareness and personal development within a group. It consists of four aspects, Open/self-area or arena, Blind self or blind spot, Hidden area or façade and Unknown area. Open/self-area or arena is the area known to oneself and others, this includes attitudes, behavior, emotions, skills, and viewpoints. Effective communication and relationship dynamics thrive in this open space. The Blind self or blind spot is known to others but unknown to oneself, this area represents information about oneself that others perceive differently than expected. Seeking feedback is key to reducing the blind spot and improving communication. Hidden area or façade is the area known to oneself but kept hidden from others, this includes personal information, emotions, past experiences, fears, or secrets. Reducing the hidden area involves disclosing relevant information, fostering trust, and deeper connections within the group. The last area is the Unknown area, it is unknown to both oneself and others, this includes undiscovered qualities, capabilities, talents, or aspects of oneself. Open communication and observation of others can reduce the unknown area, leading to self-discovery and improved communication. By utilizing the Johari window model, individuals can improve self-awareness, trust, communication, and personal growth within a group setting

2.4 Environmental aspects

Since humanitarian logistics often are in situations of crisis and conducted in multinational teams, it is important to take the environment into consideration when analyzing the leadership. The external pressure and differences create a specific subset of challenges when having a leadership role specifically within humanitarian logistics.

2.4.1 Stress

Stress is an environmental disturbance that may cause disturbances in leadership. Sjöberg et al. (2006) describes in his study how human performance, including the ability to make wise decisions, is at its best under moderate levels of stress. When in highly stressful situations, deterioration becomes inevitable for managers. It can for example affect their ability to keep an overview, underestimate or overestimate threats, or they give too complex or unclear orders to their subordinates. Common shortcomings in decision-making under high stress are often excessive caution, overconfidence or an excessive striving towards consensus among others. He also insinuates that loss of control in situations where people are threatened, and where one should be able to influence the course of events with one's expertise, generates the strongest stress. His study also puts an emphasis on the importance of building up structures in everyday life through routines and templates so that it becomes well integrated among the personnel for when it truly matters. Preparation for future rescue efforts through training and exercises will provide an increased security and likelihood of a common mindset. In addition, previous experience of complex accidents facilitates both situational understanding and decision-making.

According to Sorokins (1943) as cited in Bass and Bass (2009), the examinations of reported groups and communities' reaction to crisis situations such as food shortages, war and revolution, could cause certain consequences. Some of the discovered outcomes were heightened and intensified emotions, distorted cognitive processes and decrease in rationality when making decisions. When motivation is high, obstacles severe or the situation at hand is a threat to one's safety, malfunctions in the coping process are bound to happen (Bass & Bass, 2009, p. 813).

It is also common for leaders to cope with job stress through different channels such as physical exercise, socializing with friends and participating in recreational activities. Some leaders also self medicate to soothe the feelings of stress with substances such as tobacco, alcohol, sedatives and other drugs (Latack, 1986).

2.4.2 Cultural differences

In Chemers (1994) examination of the effects of cultural differences on leadership, he proposed an integrated contingency theory of cross-cultural leadership with three main elements. 1. Projections of a leaderly image, 2. Motivating relationships and 3. coordinating efforts. The leaderly image is thought to lead the followers towards a more accepting mindset to the leader.

The relation motivation is thought to gain relations with the followers by understanding them and providing them with opportunities to meet their needs. The coordination effort is to coordinate the capacity for the followers to meet their needs.

Additionally, it is said that the leadership only will be successful in the context of it fitting the universal or culture specific values one is in. Therefore, to be a successful leader, the leaders must adapt their style of leadership to match the culture's dominant themes.

Cultural differences may be deeper rooted than expected as well. For instance, Shackleton and Ali (1990), discovered that Pakistanis born in Britain still may showcase more Pakistani reactions than British when faced with power distance and uncertainty avoidance.

2.5 Leaders needs

What a leader is in need of during a project is key to optimize success. A study conducted with 3082 middle managers from 12 different countries found that the managers in general had a clear set of preferences when they were asked to rank their life goals (Bass, et al, 1979 as cited in Bass & Bass 2009). The results concluded that the most important goal was self realizations, also known as self actualization as well as independence, also known as autonomy. Other goals which were ranked, but at a lower level, were concepts regarding security. The study also concluded that managers that work more fast paced often emphasized the need for assertiveness and accomplishment while the slower paced managers would lean to goals more related to comfort.

In addition, Hall and Donnell (1979) studied a similar topic comparing managers that work with slow, medium and fast tracked projects. They compared 190 slow-track, 442 average-track and 32 fast-track managers. While the slow-track managers mainly emphasized the need for safety and security, the fast-track managers put most emphasis on the need for self actualization , esteem and motivations of their subordinates with a lot less emphasis on safety and security.

The findings of Porter and Lawler (1968) seem to run parallel to both of these studies according to Bass (2009), concluding that the difference in successful managerial performance were for the most part related to the need for self actualisation and autonomy rather than security belonging and esteem. Although self-actualisation and autonomy are rated the most important, it is also the least satisfied managerial need (Porter, 1961).

2.5.1 self-actualisation

Maslow (1954) coined the term self-actualisation as the top of the pyramid of hierarchical needs. Self actualization can be described as the desire to become what one is capable of becoming, coming at a higher level than the need for achievement. Leaders tend to self actualize more than non leaders, making themselves capable of performing up to their capacities and developing accordingly (Bass & Bass, 2009, p. 183). According to Burns (1978), self-

actualizers could potentially be transformational leaders because of the shared traits of flexibility and the capability to grow.

What is considered self actualisation can vary depending on the situation, politicians may see it as attainment of power, entrepreneurs as attainment of wealth and technologist as an attainment of knowledge (Bass & Bass, 2009, p.183).

2.5.2 Autonomy

Autonomy can be defined as the degree of freedom when carrying out assignments, how much autonomy and freedom one has when to choose how to operate in work settings. There are also objective characteristics of certain situations that could constrain autonomy, as well as it being a subjective experience (Bass & Bass, 2009, p.299).

3. METHODS

In this section, the selected research design is presented, i.e. how the studied cases were selected and what the consequences are. In addition to this, it is also described how the material is collected and how it is analyzed.

3.1 Data collection

The report is a qualitative case study with multiple units of analysis (Yin, 2007). The empirical data is obtained from semi-structured interviews with subject matter experts who deal with leadership in crisis management within humanitarian logistics. Questions regarding challenges, strategies and mental health were discussed, see detailed description in appendix 1. This means that the case study is specifically set to a given context which is leadership within humanitarian logistics, and our analysis units consist of actors active in different types of organizations within this specific field.

The choice of using interviews as a method is based on the fact that it gives the best dividend for when the aim is to explore subtle and complex phenomena (Denscombe, 2018) such as the interviewee's experiences, the complexity of questions asked as well as the privileged information received for the given research topic. The interviews are thereafter transcribed as well as coded thematically using the coding program Nvivo 12, version 1.7.1 (Alfasoft 2023) in order to argue for an unbiased result.

The secondary data that is used, is based on previous studies, recognized leadership models as well as literature regarding leadership approaches.

The purpose of the study is appreciative in the sense that several different research methods are possible. As the aim is to investigate what type of challenges practitioners face and to find improvements to those, a qualitative study is beneficial as it gives scope to search for more in-depth explanations. A quantitative study had primarily given an idea of, i.e. the existence of different leadership challenges or which challenges the most people have endured. Finding explanations and justifications would then have been more difficult.

3.1.1 Sampling

The interviews are conducted on a sample population of six individuals who all have a professional background and experience with various humanitarian logistics organizations, including the Swedish Sea Rescue Society, Doctors Without Borders, military personnel involved in humanitarian relief efforts and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that provide humanitarian aid.

Three of the six sampled participants have a Swedish background. The participants varied in age spanning from early thirties to late sixties as well as having different levels of experience going from approximately five years to thirty. The samples consisted of two females and four males in total.

Given the scarcity of individuals with specialized knowledge and experience in the field of humanitarian logistics, purposive and snowball sampling methods were employed to ensure the selection of participants met the inclusion criteria and possessed pertinent expertise and experiences.

3.1.2 Ethics

Since the qualitative study has been conducted through interviews, it is important to design and execute it with strong emphasis on ethical considerations. To be able to accurately protect the rights and privacy of the participants, informed consent is obtained through standardized written consent forms issued by Chalmers University of Technology. The participants are fully informed of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time, as well as there being no negative consequences attached to their decision to participate or decline.

The research data is thereafter securely managed, with authorized personnel being the only ones with access. Confidentiality was also maintained through the use of de-identification of transcripts. The study's ethical adherence allowed the sensitive topic to be researched while maintaining the safety and welfare of participants.

3.2 Data collection procedures

The data collection procedures involved conducting semi-structured interviews with participants using a recorded video call through the online video conference application called Zoom (Zoom Video Communications, n.d.). Informed consent forms are provided to the participants prior to the interviews, and they are assured that their responses will be kept confidential. The interviews are conducted at a time and place convenient for the participants, and are carried out in a conversational style to allow them to share their thoughts and experiences in their own words. The interviews are recorded and transcribed verbatim, with resulting data stored securely in a password-protected program. To capture non-verbal cues and ensure important information is not missed, notes are taken during the interviews as well as cameras being on during the interview time.

One of the participants couldn't participate in the interview, therefore the same prewritten questions are responded to through an email instead.

3.3 Thematic coding

Thematic coding is based on indexing text and dividing it within different themes. The method is based on identifying similar themes within the transcribed interviews to find similarities grounding the objective matter. Repeated and relevant topics get turned into codes, facilitating a method for gaining objectivity. The transcribed interview first gets browsed where major themes get identified, the interview is then once again reviewed in a more detailed manner with more specified themes. Thereafter a framework for thematic ideas within relevant topics will be created.

However, as the interviews are recorded the search for themes begins while transcribing them, as key phrases are identified when proofreading the material. As Sandelowski (1995) stated *“because they make some as yet inchoate sense”*.

By combining the ideas of repetitions (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975) with indigenous typologies founded in grounded theories (Strauss, 1987), the transcripts are coded with NVivo where reoccurring phrases are set as themes and descriptive phrases are set to subcodes within the different themes. Thereafter, a compilation is made for each theme with associated subcodes in the shape of hierarchical clusters (with an accompanying table for one of the themes).

The analysis of data requires an abductive approach to ensure comprehensive and accurate findings. To facilitate this, frameworks for thematic ideas are created beforehand as several researchers have provided helpful guidelines. Lofland (2006) suggests the use of six topics to guide the development of codes: acts, activities, meanings, participation, relationships, and settings. While Strauss (1987) recommends considering conditions, interactions, strategies and tactics, and consequences. By applying the identification of missing data (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975 p.82), one is also alerted by the topics not mentioned when discussing a specific question in the transcripts. For instance, assume that qualities in leadership not mentioned (positive or negative) are not relevant, or challenges which are not discussed are not relatable, in order to reach an answer.

By utilizing these frameworks ensures a comprehensive analysis and the extraction of meaningful insights from the data.

4. RESULTS

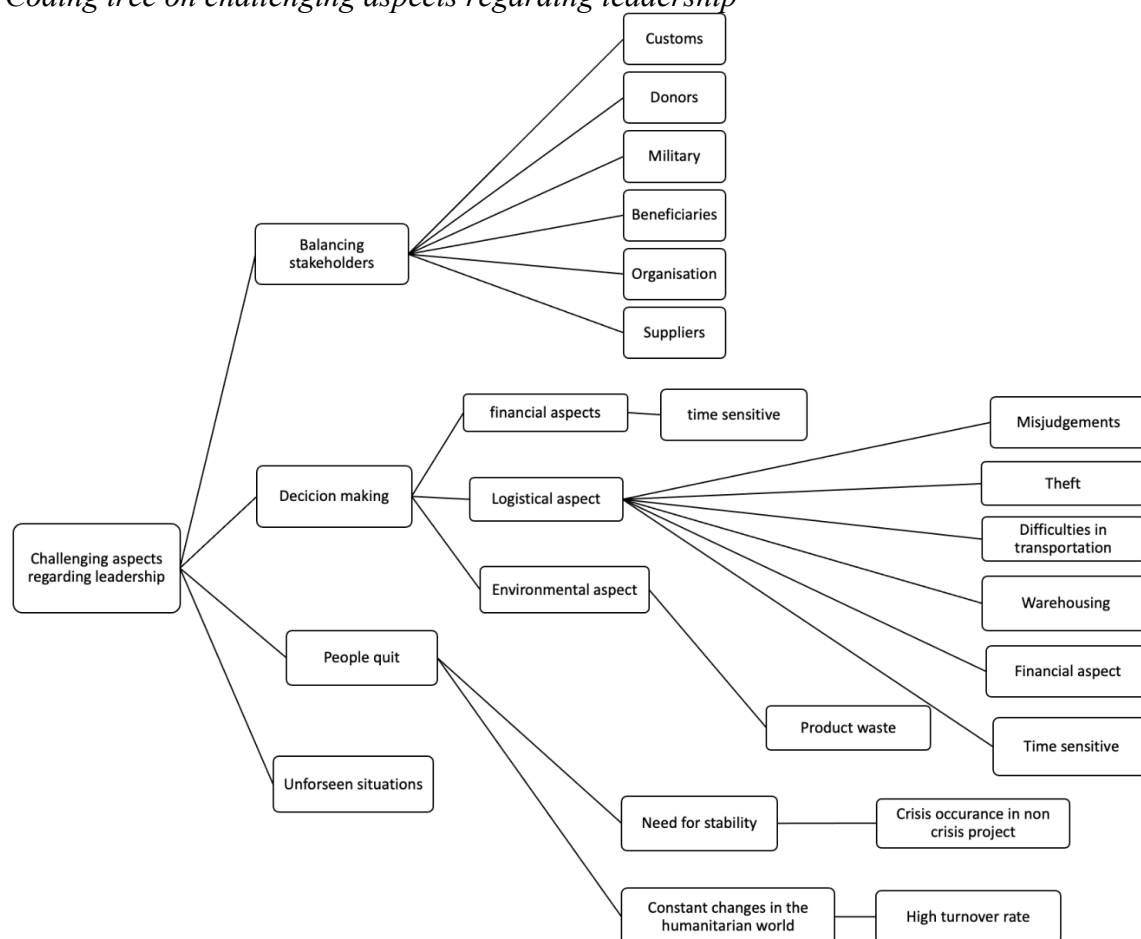
The results are presented through recounting the essential parts of the interviews and are supported by relevant quotes by the interviewees in order to clarify the reasoning. Six major themes were identified, Leadership challenges, Leadership qualities, Cultural diversity and communication, Team dynamics, Evaluation and improvement, and Mental health and wellbeing. The following results are based on the correspondents' answers to the interview questions. Important quotes are showcased to back the claims in the results. To uphold an ethical standard, efforts to anonymize and neutralize quotes were made. Some aspects of the quotes are cut and are shown through (...), Some intensifying words have been replaced with neutralised words as well and are showcased through brackets as the following [].

4.1 Leadership challenges in humanitarian logistics

When assessing the interviews a common theme with all practitioners were different challenging aspects of what leadership within humanitarian logistics entails. As per figure 1, a hierarchical diagram has summarized important codes that were indexed under the major theme.

Figure 1

Coding tree on challenging aspects regarding leadership



A challenge that occurred amongst all the interviews was decision making. The ability to make decisions in uncertain environments when one is not fully aware of the risks, while it being time-sensitive, forces one to make decisions based on what is good enough “for now”. There was a consensus that the most essential part of decision making is to be reactive and actually make them. If the situation changes course one has to be able to react to that as well and remake the decision, and still be confident that the previous decision was based on what was the best for the moment.

Two of the interviewees mentioned that one of the biggest challenges in humanitarian logistics was the planning and procurement of aid supplies and materials needed, as it is impossible to know the exact amount needed. This leaves them with the consequences of huge amounts of material waste and is something one has to expect, since it is far worse to not be able to respond in terms of a humanitarian setting, and for it being a time sensitive matter, you either have the capacity to help or not. Another challenge mentioned in the same context, was the challenge of warehouse management. As some materials and aid supplies must be stored in lower temperatures, refrigerators and the need of electricity is essential, which is not always an obvious asset in humanitarian settings. Furthermore, as a leader one is also responsible for the products that are being stored, leaving security to be a challenging aspect as well in these settings, since theft may occur.

Another aspect mentioned was how leaders need to be prepared for unforeseen situations and be able to replan their initial plans when necessary. One factor can be, for instance, to not be strict with time schedules to a point where your staff feels pressured for not finishing a task on time. Another factor can be how a specific crisis usually has predicted consequences, e.g. a cholera outbreak after a cyclone, but in this occasion it didn't, and therefore a whole planning becomes useless and one has to replan the situation.

“...we had the information, it was a cyclone. And after the cyclone, usually there's cholera. Well before I worked in X, there was an experience in Y with this hurricane and they sent the materials over and they didn't send enough materials for cholera. And there was this huge cholera outbreak and they had no materials to respond. And it was horrible.”

One of the questions asked in the interview was if there is an importance with balancing stakeholders, where most came to a consensus that it was an important aspect of the profession and that it can be a challenge to balance each and every stakeholders needs. Every part plays a significant role for the whole organization to function. For instance, there are donors, suppliers and customs who all are a part of the chain for aid to be delivered to the beneficiaries, meaning leaders have to equally consider every part when planning for an operation as complications with one of the actors could lead to further issues with the others.

“A supplier always wants to get the best pay and the customers want to have things really fast. So of course I can deliver things very fast and very expensive. (...) but you're also having the people that are the donors that are giving the money. And that's one of the reasons I'm saying, you know, you have to move to a more regulated management

quite quickly, because otherwise it's okay to just have the money flowing for a couple of days. But you can't keep control of things. So you have to start to control things. Otherwise you will get totally fucked by suppliers."

Since humanitarian logistics is known to be a volatile industry, it is common for practitioners to change positions, location and job all together. Consequently, the team will need to adapt and strategize a suitable plan for the circumstance which can be challenging and frustrating at times.

"(...) It's a very high turnover. This is a constant thing on someone coming and leaving and that's extremely difficult to manage, I think."

The high turnover and volatility of the occupation also results in many deciding to change their field of work since the continual change can be too much at times.

"There's constantly someone new, constantly onboarding, constantly having people to try to understand what is supposed to be done here. And at the same time you have the national staff team that more often stays longer but gets quite tired of this high turnover of international staff and is maybe one of the reasons that they also find a different place to work."

Another reason behind practitioners quitting their jobs from the struggle of reassessing with the constant changes, could also be because of the psychological need of stability.

"There has to be a huge psychological safety within a [team] within a station, within an organization or district or something, or on a [project] itself. It's easier said than done."

4.2 Leadership qualities during crises

The second identified theme is leadership qualities during crises with subcodes showing them in different lights as seen in figure 2. There were many qualities mentioned by the interviewees, both good, bad and some inbetweeners where the deciding factor rests on the situation. The most frequently mentioned positive trait was the ability to make decisions during stress, which all interviewees agreed on. Other qualities are the importance of being adaptive and humble as well as being empathetic, as it nurtures the team and can relieve the pressure which can be experienced in crisis situations. This also derives from being a leader who allows themselves to listen to their subordinates and include them in the decision making, which is emphasized as something essential amongst the interviewees as everyone becomes affected by those decisions. A detailed list on all the mentioned positive and negative leadership qualities can be seen on table 1.

Figure 2

Coding tree on leadership qualities during crisis

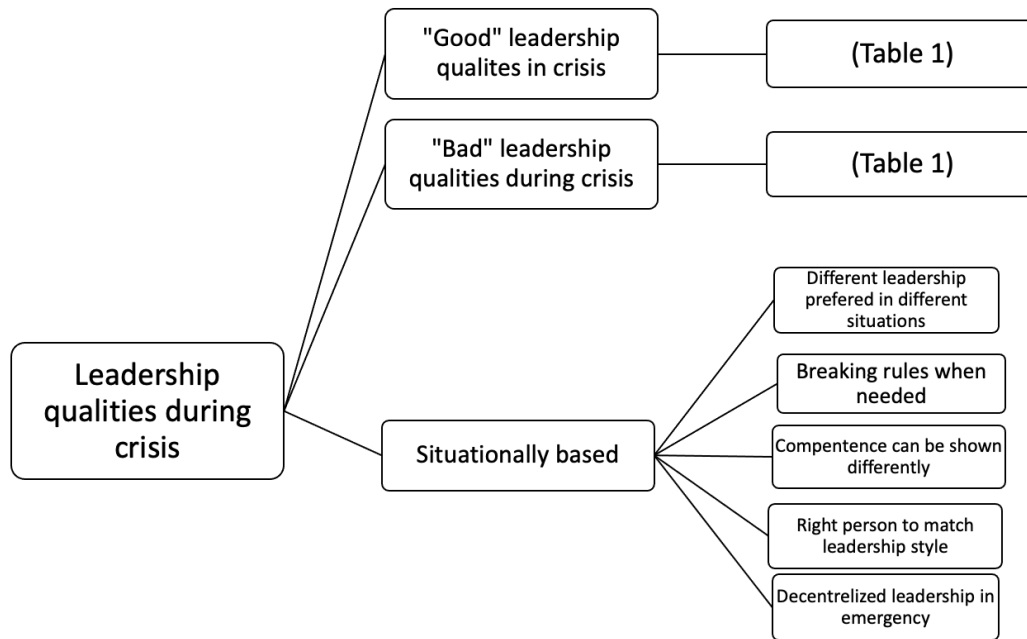


Table 1

Good and bad leadership qualities perceived during a crisis.

| Leadership qualities during crisis | |
|--|---|
| “Good” leadership qualities in humanitarian crisis | “Bad” leadership qualities in humanitarian crisis |
| Ability to make decisions quick | Absent |
| Able to prioritize right | Authoritarian |
| Being reactive | Bad communication |
| Close support | Bad planning skills |
| Common sense | Being calculating |
| Courageous | Disingenuous |
| Diplomatic | Fear of conflict |
| Good communication | Ignorance |
| Helicopter view | Lack in flexibility |
| High competency | No cooperation |
| Honest | Selfishness |
| Knowing your team | Tunnel vision |
| Open minded | Micromanager |
| Role model | |
| Self awareness | |
| Strong willed | |

| Leadership qualities during crisis | |
|--|---|
| “Good” leadership qualities in humanitarian crisis | “Bad” leadership qualities in humanitarian crisis |
| Ability to make decisions quick | Absent |
| Sympathetic | |
| Think outside the box | |
| Thoughtfulness | |
| Trustworthy | |
| Humility in leadership | |
| Empathetic | |
| Adaptive | |
| Knowing their limit | |
| Motivator | |
| Respect teams competency | |

The most frequently mentioned trait that is perceived negatively was micromanaging, followed up with an authoritarian leadership approach. It seems to be a recurring pattern that the interviewees believe that a firm and authoritarian leadership style is not generally a fit for humanitarian crisis projects. It also seems agreed up on that there is huge value in validating each team member's competency.

“military structures. You know, I understand them. And I and I in some cases can appreciate them with higher hierarchical demands on each different roles and ranks and so forth. And it probably does have a place for those types of commands and do this. Don't question that. When it comes to your own life being in danger or maybe the lives of others when it comes to humanitarian catastrophe and emergency situations. I don't know if that's needed as much.”

There seems to be an overall consensus that there is value in seeing one's team as individuals and having trust in their competency. It could be spotted in multiple interviews the value of seeing one's subordinates as people.

“ ... if you manage to do this, I'll pay you for lunch on Saturday. To have that system in place, it removes a little bit of humanity in leadership.”

Humanitarian settings are bound to be quite decentralized and time sensitive, and sometimes it is not always optimal to wait for an acceptance from one's superior or even the country you are operating in. This causes leaders on the field to occasionally break rules to be able to move forward for the sake of the operation. To be able to do that and to be confident in your decisions and that it was the right way to go, requires a high level of competence and knowledge from previous experiences. This is why it is placed under situationally based, as breaking rules is not

something to be optimistic about in general, but that sometimes the situation one is facing requires you to do such a thing and be accepting of the following consequences.

“I need to send five airplanes and I can take that decision on my own and I do it and I get it done. That could never, ever happen in a regular setting because then it needs to be validated by five people because it goes above this, ... of course in a regular setting you have to follow the import rules and you know everything. But in a crisis situation, you just take the decision that feels right and you just manage the consequences afterwards.”

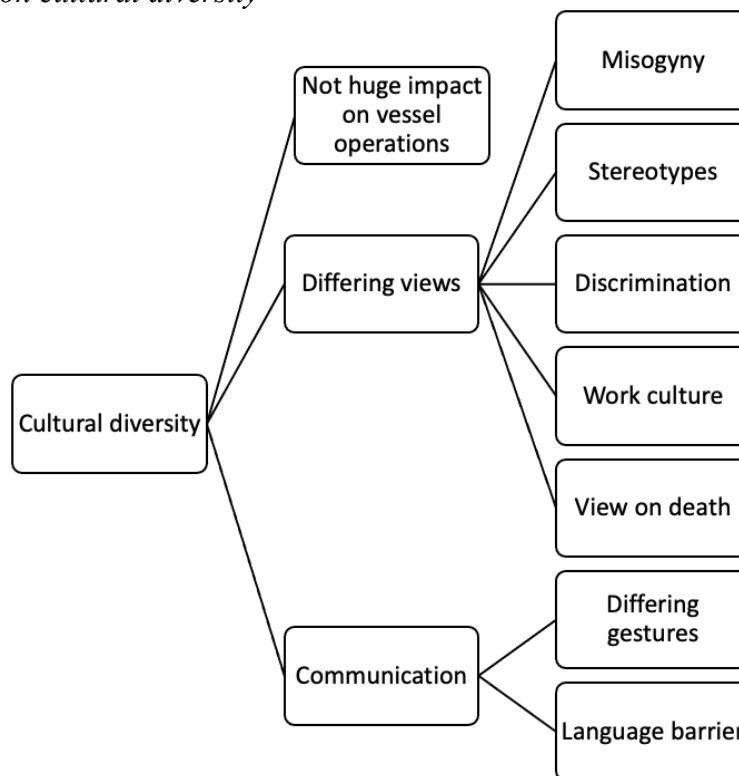
It is also mentioned how leadership indeed is not a “one size fits all” as different crisis situations require different leadership styles as well as different personality traits. To be kind is a trait that usually is valued in good leadership, but would probably not be chosen to lead in an emergency crisis where e.g. there is an earthquake happening as it can be connected with fear of conflict. Instead, that given situation would require someone who is strong willed and courageous.

4.3 Cultural diversity and communication

The third identified theme is cultural diversity and communication. Cultural diversity and difference in communication that derived from it, was perceived in quite different ways amongst the interviewees. The ones who worked with sea rescue onboard boats had different experiences than those who worked on emergency operations in other countries. The subcodes of the theme are the unique view in regards to vessel operations, differing views between cultures as well as different communication, see figure 3.

Figure 3

Coding tree on cultural diversity



When working in emergency operations among the local people and with the local staff, it is important to consider the different modes of communication that occur. As a leader one has to be aware of what is accepted in terms of way of speaking, and is mentioned by the interviewees that it is something one has to put more time and effort into to fully understand it. Some cultures are more direct, others more indirect in their way of communicating. There can also be cultures that are hierarchical, but also communicate differently towards the other gender.

“There are cultures that undermine women a lot, and that will impact the way not only in terms of leadership you receive information, but sometimes in terms of when you're the leader, in terms of how your own team talks to you, you know, and you're just like, I could fire you and you're talking to me this way.”

There is also a cultural difference perceived in people's work ethic. Some are more direct and follow a strict time schedule, others depend on their mood and do not necessarily follow a timeplan but rather get the work done at their own pace. This means that leaders have to adapt their way of communicating with the mass in a more inclusive way so that they consider both the cultural but also the social aspects in these settings. Inclusive communication is also mentioned as a motivator for the team to work together as an entity, by using “shall we...” instead of giving direct orders to each team member when doing a task.

“But we have to adapt our mindset, you know, to leadership and the cultural aspects. And I will not just say cultural aspects, I will say cultural and social aspects.”

Communication can be an issue when there are different cultures involved. Language barriers can be an issue when working internationally however, differences in communication run deeper than language. Different countries have differing approaches to the way they communicate which could sometimes lead to misunderstandings and innocently provoked altercations. One interviewee described how something as simple as a thumbs up can be interpreted very differently in other cultures. It is therefore important to maintain an understanding of cultural differences when working on projects for a more smooth sailing experience.

“And I give them the big thumbs up,(...) which in Persian culture, that's not too cool. But the thing is, I actually realize that while I'm doing it, you know, because it's like it's almost like a reflex for us, you know, the Western culture thumbs up. I realized that while I'm doing it like, Oh, these people are from Iran and so forth. So I bend down and I start shaking their hands like making physical contact with them. So I tried to change the situation. (...) I realized that while I was doing it, so being culturally sensitive to the people, rescue is definitely part of it.”

Although cultural diversity can have an impact on an humanitarian operation, internally or externally, certain aspects regarding vessel operations are not as affected. Since vessel operations are standardized to a certain degree, it would demand huge cultural clashes to impact specifically vessel run operations.

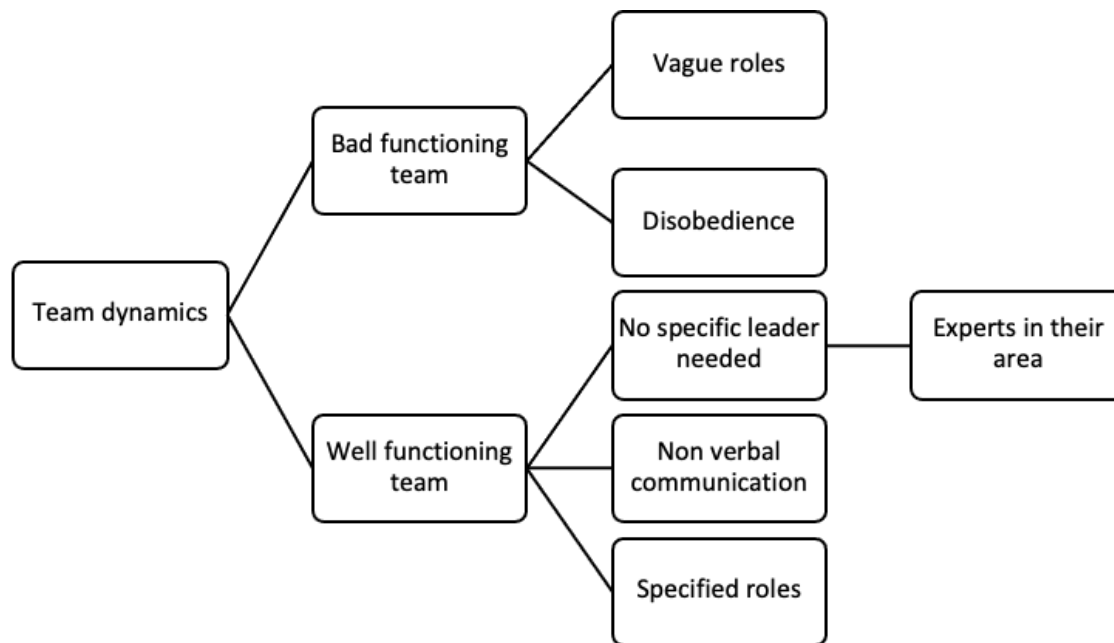
“If you go out to any sort of large rescue situation for a cruise ship, you're going to have so many different languages, Chinese, American, what have you. So knowing who the casualties are makes a big difference. But on board a rescue ship, not so much unless it's super culturally diverse, not the same as merchant mariners.”

4.4 Team dynamics

The fourth major theme identified is team dynamics. Under this major themes are subcodes dividing well functioning team dynamics will have bad functioning team dynamics as well as deeper motivations to them, see figure 4. When leading a team, one has to be flexible in one's leadership and not have a fixed mindset. It is important that the team members feel included in the decision making as a motivator, as everyone faces a risk toward their own lives when putting themselves out there in the field. The interviewees also mention the importance of discussing other topics that are not work related in their free time as a way of disconnecting and to bond with each other. As a leader, it is essential to have mutual respect towards the team members and a certain level of transparency that is healthy.

Figure 4

Coding tree on Team dynamics



It is mentioned by several interviewees the importance of team members being self sufficient in situations of crisis since orders are not always given out loud but that there is a non-verbal communication. Multiple practitioners mentioned how the ideal team dynamics is when every member has a defined role, being experts in their area.

“I like my teams lean and agile enough for everyone to have a specific role and need(...).”

Another interviewee answered the following when asked how a bad functioning team dynamic occurs. Although there is a common theme that clear roles are important in humanitarian projects, the idea of a clear leader is not as much. Almost every interviewee mentioned that it is important for a leader to be recognized for the reasoning that there is a clear idea of what the chain of command is as well as there being someone designated to help when a member of the team needs help. However, it is also equally mentioned that the most functional team dynamics are when the team works together with a less hierarchical status and that the practitioners in the team act as the expert within their area and assigned role.

“When you go into a situation when it's really unclear who's really running the show, even if everyone has certain individual leadership roles, they are not predefined roles coming up in an emergency situation.”

Another interviewee said the following after describing a well functioning team dynamic;

“So that was one example of good teamwork, for sure. And leadership, I guess you would say, but a shared leadership. Yeah, if that makes any sense. Shared decision making, shared situational awareness.”

Furthermore, when asking the interviewees about obedience amongst the team members and how well they respond to orders, the responses were quite different. For some, older, more experienced team members didn't respond to orders as well as younger less experienced ones, as they would be more set in their mindset because of their long experience and know their team members well enough to have their respect. For others, it was the opposite or did not experience any disobedience at all. So it is not always a matter of age but the type of personality when dealing with this type of inconvenience.

“Older ones tend to not challenge directly, and instead go behind or already have earned the respect of other team members and they can be more difficult to manage because they will know what they can "get away" with doing in the set time you are there, and will a lot of times say one thing and do another.”

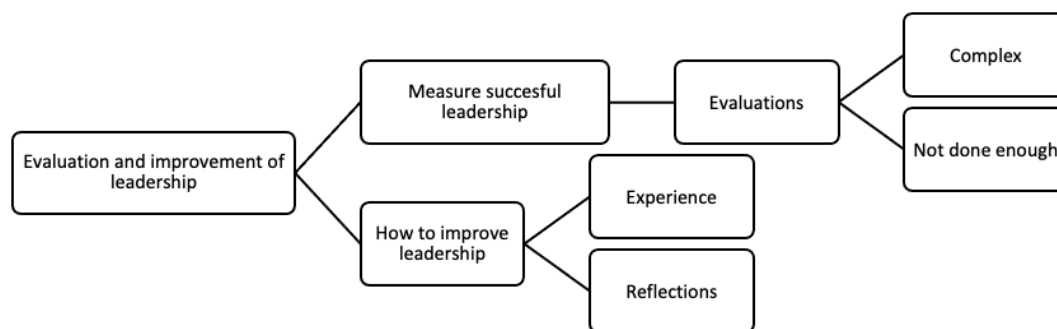
The numbers of team members could fluctuate between 3 to 20 people depending on the type of operation, when onboard a sea rescue vessel they would be less than sending a whole team to a country where a disaster has struck.

4.5 Evaluation and improvement of leadership

The fifth identified theme is evaluation and improvement of leadership. The subcodes under this major theme divide the concept of measuring successful leadership and how to improve the leadership, with further subcodes, see figure 5.

Figure 5

Coding tree on evaluation and improvement of leadership



When asked how successful leadership is measured, all interviewees mentioned evaluations as a way of mapping out how well the project had gone.

Some of the interviewees mentioned there being a lack of “360-evaluation” in humanitarian logistics, which refers to the need of subordinates having the opportunity to evaluate their leader as much as the leader’s superiors evaluate them. This is considered important because a leaders’ superior does not always know what has been done and is happening on the field. The only ones are the subordinates that are there with you.

“Like you have the 360 evaluation and reflection, and the more you take that seriously and take time to do it, the better. I just think that it's rarely utilized to the extent that it should be used.”

“My team needs to be able to say what they thought anonymously, what they thought about working for me. That was my shock when I came in and that's why I was like, we need to get this done.”

Although evaluations seem to be the general way to measure successful leadership, it can be tricky to properly measure. The success of a mission isn't solely dependent on internal factors, external factors can create huge disturbances in the project and a successful team and leader might not always get the missions accomplished.

“Okay, but the bridge broke. You know, it's not my fault that the bridge broke, so it's not going to be in my evaluation. So it's, I think it's harder because there's more more things that can happen.”

Another aspect that was discussed was how to improve one's leadership. The two main ways of doing so was identifying improvement points through reflections as well as improving through the general experience from the project itself. Journaling was mentioned as a way of self-reflection, as it helps you go back to your previous experiences and see what was done good or bad, and where changes could be implicated.

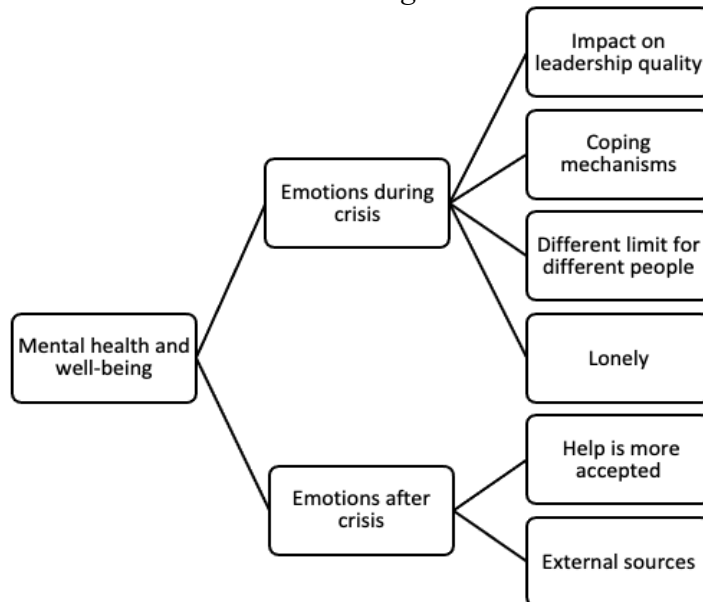
“After each crisis you deal with, you really have to take one or two weeks. Just to reflect on what happened, what you did, what you would do better for next time. This is a part of writing. I used to really, you know, take one hour per day to reanalyze my situation, you know, and to want some lessons learned from the situation.”

4.6 Mental health and well-being

The last identified theme is mental health and well-being, holding subcodes dividing emotions during and after a crisis, see figure 6.

Figure 6

Coding tree on mental health and well-being



When discussing mental health aspects amongst leaders, different coping mechanisms were mentioned by the interviewees. Some felt completely shut down during a crisis as there was no time to think about one's own emotions, others found smoking as their way of relieving stress. As emergency projects could take as long as up to three months, much of the stress experienced often gets repressed for a good period of time.

"I think maybe that we have it within us to like, postpone the shit. We do what's needed here and now I think that is built in most people (...) And maybe if you can bear it off for a while, but then eventually it will hit you."

One thing everyone could agree on was that it was very lonely. As a leader, one can not engage with other team members as one wishes, as one needs to uphold a certain level of leader-follower relationship. It is also important to let the team members have the space to cope with their emotions with each other.

"(...) the team needs to be able to get together and to talk shit about me. There is a level of health in that, you know, and I need to give them that space."

"I guess it's hard. Leaders don't always have people to turn to. You know, it's lonely. At the top is the classic thing. And I'm not saying there's a top or bottom to that. I'm just saying that like there's a balance of say, saving face and not appearing weak, but also showing that it's okay to be vulnerable."

It is to be mentioned that people have different limits as well as different levels of trauma, which means that the level of support could vary from one practitioner to another.

The emotional toll of working in the humanitarian field can be heavy, where multiple practitioners mention witnessing people in distress as a common occurrence, even death in some cases. The emotional toll of witnessing the effects of the disasters, as well as the stress of trying to fix, sometimes impossible tasks, can be overwhelming and can at times impact the quality of leadership.

“It will affect everything we spoke about. It will affect your ability to comprehend the situation, to make decisions, and to be nice to your team. Seen many times when people are too stressed and too tired that then suddenly they get more angry with their team. Then suddenly, you know, a lot of bad things happen.”

Some leaders mention using different coping mechanisms to handle the stress. Physical work out was one of the coping mechanisms mentioned. Others mentioned more unconventional coping mechanisms such as smoking cigarettes

“As soon as I'm on a plane going to the field, I'm just like, I need a cigarette right now. And then as soon as I'm on the plane coming back home, I'm just like, Oh, I hate cigarettes and it is disgusting. That's something to do with my stress management.”

5. DISCUSSION

By conducting interviews with practitioners within the field of humanitarian logistics, many interesting outcomes were presented when discussing the challenges that come when working in the humanitarian field. With the help of thematic coding, six major themes were identified, Leadership challenges, Leadership qualities, Cultural diversity and communication, Team dynamics, Evaluation and improvement as well as mental health and wellbeing. Although the six themes could all be applied to leadership in a regular context, the interviewees provided both general as well as specific challenges if their leadership experiences which we think in some aspects specifically applies to the humanitarian field.

In this part of the study, the presented result from the previous chapter will be developed, compared and analyzed both in relation to each other and in comparison to the theoretical framework. However, only the parts that have appeared to be the clearest are presented. Other aspects, although interesting, that have received little support in theory and empirical evidence are therefore not touched upon to any greater extent.

5.1 Similarities in leadership styles

Although there was little to no mention of specific leadership styles amongst the interviewees we can still find similarities across their ways of working and how they perceive good or bad leadership. When specified roles were mentioned as a factor for well functioning teams we

found distinct features from the transformational leadership style where a leader encourages its subordinates' participation and engagement by delegating tasks and responsibilities. Another finding was how it was important to act as a role model for one's subordinates and to show personal concern towards them by showing emotional support, which was discussed in conjunction with good leadership qualities. Furthermore, when the interviewees mentioned the need of 360-evaluation as a form of improvement within the organization we regard as a will to get awareness of their contribution as a leader from the subordinates' point of view. This as well shows similarities to the transformational leadership style where they act as a role model who can admit its mistakes and a will to improve their leadership.

On the other hand, traits shown in the transactional leadership style were not as popular, as both micromanaging and lack of humility in leadership were shown as negative leadership traits. Though, it can be beneficial for promoting compliance in short term goals, which in crisis situations would be suitable as emergency situations does not last for more than a three-month span. However, it can have detrimental effects between a leader and a follower if the leader operates out of their own needs and agenda. As previously mentioned in the theoretical framework in transactional leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006) "play by my rules and you will get what you want" is quite similar to the quote mentioned in the results "(...) if you manage to do this, I'll pay you for lunch on Saturday (...)". The fact that the transactional leadership style suits corporate organizations better where there is a distinct hierarchical ladder, is not the case within the humanitarian field as they lean more towards a decentralized organizational structure.

Leadership traits derived from Laissez-faire were only shown among the bad qualities in a leader, which we could have assumed since crisis situations are already fragile. Having a leader that is absent and ignorant would only worsen the work environment for the subordinates and not provide them with the support they need.

However, it shows the most similarities to the situational based leadership style for several obvious reasons. It emphasizes the importance of context when determining the most appropriate and effective leadership style which in humanitarian settings is considered crucial. Hence adaptiveness being mentioned as a good leadership quality. It also focuses on the personal characteristics of the subordinates and not only the leader's, as it points out the importance of them for when the team members respond to their leader's leadership style. In addition, the terms mentioned in the subordinate maturity- model are also traits shown among good leadership qualities which the interviewees discussed, this shows that this leadership style is already adapted, but it also leaves room for further adaptation in order to battle challenges among cultural differences for a more unitary team dynamics, communication and work process.

5.2 Leadership qualities and needs

In addition to the positive leadership qualities mentioned above, Northouse (2016) argued that there were five distinct qualities which determined the effectiveness of one's leadership; integrity, intelligence, sociability, determination and self-confidence. Which could also be found among the interviewees where they emphasized the importance of a trustworthy leader, who shows close support towards the team members and not only can make quick decisions, but also includes the whole team on them. This requires the intelligence which is mentioned on both ends but also the self-confidence that whatever decision is taken for now is the best. An interesting factor we would say, would be sociability, as it focuses on the importance of creating relationships with one's team members. This is a factor we would combine with the importance of understanding the different cultural distinctions occurring which could ease the creation of those relationships which Chemers (1994) also agreed on would be a recipe for successful leadership.

It is a great positivity that organizations within the humanitarian field are as decentralized as they can be, as it shows that one's need to break barriers and push boundaries in order to reach the goals that are set, are somewhat encouraged. Bass, et al (1979) mentioned that leaders who worked on fast paced projects pointed out the importance of autonomy which we found was quite accurate amongst leaders in emergency settings, where the interviewees were able to break rules if that was what would take for the project to move forward. These needs and qualities could as well be embedded in situational leadership and Northouse (2016) five essential leadership qualities for a successful leadership, which all demonstrates a clear connection with each other.

Further, as micromanaging and authoritarian leadership traits were mentioned as bad qualities in leaders, which partly derives from transactional leadership style, was quite expected as the majority of the discussion have circulated around autonomy, delegating tasks and building relationships with the team members. These traits are counterproductive and would not suit well together in the same context and, especially not in a humanitarian setting.

5.3 Context matters

A recurring topic mentioned throughout the interviews was the importance of context and how it can change what approach a leader should take in order to create a biggest impact. Contexts such as the level of emergency within the project seemed to be one of the more mentioned, where a seemingly nice leader may not be as suitable in an active crisis since there has to be decisions made quickly and assertively. The interviewed leaders put value on the idea of analyzing the situation at hand and adapting to its specific needs. Some even recognised that some leaders are not suitable in certain contexts, that a good leader in one context could be terrible for another. Many of the interviewers described analyzing and adapting to the situation they are in, this methodology could run parallel with Fiedler's (1967) contingency theory, where

the leaders motivation and situational favorability are assessed, in their case informally, to properly adapt their leadership style.

The second context that seemed especially particular with leaders working with humanitarian logistics is the differing culture and its own set of challenges. Different cultural roots can impact the teams work together since there are different views regarding work ethic, gender status as well as general gestures. Both the interviewees and Chemers (1994) seem to agree upon the fact that it is vital to successful leadership to adapt to the culture that is dominating in the situation.

5.4 Leadership challenges

Stress, which is an environmental disturbance mentioned by Sjöberg et al., (2006) could very well be integrated in the challenges leaders face within humanitarian logistics. From balancing the different stakeholders, to the planning and procurement of supply and material, but also with the decision making comes a lot of stress. Some of the interviewees mentioned that they use different coping mechanisms to handle the stress, such as physical exercise or taking part in recreational items such as cigarettes. That goes well together with Latack (1986) suggesting coping mechanisms as a way for leaders to handle stress.

Feedback, defined as a concept that serves the purpose of reducing the gap between the desired goal and the current performance by Hattie and Timperley, is a recurring challenge mentioned between interviewees. The main identified challenge with feedback is on an organizational level, with the lack of evaluations made at the end of missions. Since feedback is a tool to identify weaknesses within one's blind spot as in accordance with Johari's Window, it is of value to the practitioners. Although there is a general consensus throughout the interviews that feedback is an important tool for improvement, it is also considered underutilized.

5.5 The value of teams

One aspect of leadership which was not factored in to a huge extent at the beginning stages of the research, was the inherent value of the team itself. We had the initial expectation for the leaders to mostly self assess their attitude, techniques and approach when in these leadership roles. Although those aspects were mentioned as well, there was a pattern found between the interviewees where they all mentioned the value of teams. Many even dismissed the idea of a generally recognised leader to be a positive trait, where the idea of a team with qualified members working in symbiosis was valued more. The idea of having a team with a leader that doesn't necessarily have a huge directive say as a positive aspect could be supported with the Integrated model of group development (Jacobsson & Åkerlund, 2019), where the first and least established level usually consists of a leader with a lot of influence. The later stages of the IMDG model paints the leader as a consultant rather than a direct figure, as well as leadership responsibility being delegated. This could also be a reason that the interviewees put emphasis on recognizing the team's capabilities and not appreciating micromanagers. One could also argue that a team with delegated responsibilities is more resistant since there are more

competent people involved in the decision making. If the leader can't attend, the team will still be able to work functionally since they have clear roles, another valued factor according to the interviewees. Delegating responsibility could also be a way of pushing for intrinsic motivations, since the team gets to take a bigger part of the mission and therefore be able to make it easier to internalize the goal as one's own. Internalizing the goal mirrors one of Per Anders two focal points that he brings up to a successful team strategy, sharing a common value with one's team. Sharing common values is easier to do when everyone is actively involved.

5.6 Expectations

The expectations when conducting the research at first was to find specified leadership challenge approaches within humanitarian logistics. Although findings were concluded based on those parameters, most of the challenges seem to be universal within leadership, and if specified, rather specified to the humanitarian relief profession as a whole. A small aspect of the leadership challenges seem to be directly correlated with the logistical field, mainly involving the aspect of balancing stakeholders and dealing with disturbances in the planning and procurement process.

5.7 Method discussion

Although there are precautions taken in the method to conduct a study in an academic and unbiased manner there are some flaws and limitations that should be considered despite the efforts to minimize them.

Since the area of leadership within humanitarian logistics is niched, the representativeness and pool of practitioners become relatively small. Since there are only six individuals, it may cause disturbances to what can be considered as generalized experiences, in contrast to a study conducted with a bigger sample size. Although a bigger sample size would result in a more accurate result in regards to generalizability, we still assumed six professionals to be a viable number to conduct this study since the information gathered had many similarities, and a certain level of saturation had been achieved. The representativeness in the small sample size can also have made an impact on the research since four out of six interview subjects shared some type of tie to Sweden. Although not all tied subjects had deep relations to Sweden, as Shackleton and Ali (1990) stated, cultural roots can run deeper than expected, and should therefore be taken into consideration when interpreting our findings. All six interviewees do however share the geographical origin of the western world, which in itself has its own cultural roots and personal biases.

One of the interview subjects could not take part in the zoom interview and instead answered the questions through email. The irregularity in the data collection procedure could impact the results, since it isn't as standardized as well as there being missed social cues in the emailed document. Since the structure of the interview was semi-structured, the opportunity to ask follow up questions in the same manner was not presented, which could have an impact on the

findings. To minimize the effects of this potential flaw, we make sure to maintain an open flow of communication with the interview subject if additional questions need answers.

Since the primary data collection method was based on self reported information provided by interviewed participants and their personal experiences, the possibility of recall bias or personal interpretations are present. The validity of the findings may be impacted since participants may not always accurately recall their experiences or challenges. In addition, using interviews as the primary data source, there is a potential for subjective interpretation and personal biases from us researchers in the presented findings. Our preconceived notions, beliefs and expectations could have impacted the questions asked and our interpretation of the answers presented. To minimize this risk, the interview questions were constructed after some of the pivotal points of the theory had been analyzed to get an academic base to the questions asked. We also tried to minimize personal biases when interpreting the interviews by conducting thematic coding on NVivo.

The transcribed interviews that were coded through NVivo, were divided between us researchers who coded three interviews each. Although there was regular contact and information flow between the two of us, there could be room for misinterpretation for the codes placed out. However, one could argue that the two takes on the transcriptions adds depth to the analysis with an additional individual's perspective being taken into account.

Another perceived flaw in the study is the limited range in perspective. This was done purposely to stay within the limitations of the studies framework however, the selected sample does not represent the entirety of leadership within the humanitarian logistics. Other factors and leaders such as local community leaders, government officials and beneficiaries were not included in the study. The bigger range could provide additional valuable insight that hasn't been captured in the presented results. The time and resource constraints are a limitation that could potentially impact the research as well. A larger sample size as well as employing additional data collection methods could create bigger depth in the study. The resource and time constraints impacted this aspect of data collection.

Lastly, the lack of triangulation could impact the findings. Since the study mainly relies on interviews and secondary data from previous studies and recognises leadership models, there could be more depth in the data collection. A huge aspect of the secondary data was also taken from a literature which gathered many sources, the literature may have impacted the data collection negatively since it already procured the considered relevant sources. By using additional data sources and methods it could add depth and increase the validity in the findings.

It is important to acknowledge and consider the potential flaws and limitations when interpreting the findings of our results. This to gain a knowledge of context for interpretations, as well as the improvement for future studies validity, generalizability and reliability. Although there are potential flaws in the conducted study, we believe that our findings still maintain a viable basis.

5.7.1 Validity

The validity of the findings refers to the extent of which the findings represent the phenomenon being studied, the correctness of the findings (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). The sample includes leaders from several different types of organizations, which means that there is a possibility of generalization, resulting in that the validity is moderate. Although the perception can be questionable as only six interviews were conducted (due to time constraints and the qualitative nature of the study), the context for different types of organizations and their humanitarian efforts can be varied endlessly. For increased validity one can either focus on one sole organization or one certain type of humanitarian relief effort for an in depth analysis. The presence of multiple researchers in the analysis process helped engage the internal validity of the findings by presenting different perspectives.

5.7.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of the findings, if the measuring procedure would result the same with repeated trials (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Depending on how extensive a study is, the results can differ. However, leadership in crisis situations within humanitarian leadership narrows the perspective of how the leadership within this area is perceived. The overall challenges the leaders face within this area are of a specific type, meaning that regardless of the organization they work for they face similar scenarios. Additionally, the semi-structured interviews as well as the standardized interview questions helped maintain consistency in the data collection. As mentioned before the reliability could be impacted by the emailed interview as it is an outlier to the standardized data collection. A systematic approach gathering the findings was also conducted with thematic coding to add additional structure to the findings.

5.7.3 Generalizability

Generalizability refers to the extent to which the findings of the study can be applied to a broader population or context (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Since the research has a specific focus on leadership within humanitarian logistics, generalizability is limited even though efforts were made to reach out to different organizations with similar projects. The sample size being low also has an impact on the findings overall generalizability. Although generalizability is limited, the study still provides valuable insight to leadership challenges faced by actors in similar organizations and contexts, and could therefore serve as a foundation for further research in related areas. The idea of specifying the study to be directed towards leaders within humanitarian logistics, can now afterwards be concluded as too niched, since there isn't a huge difference between the challenges of a humanitarian worker in another field. The miscalculation means however that the findings can be applied to more contexts than expected.

6. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to analyze leadership that occurs within humanitarian logistics on a strategic level and what makes effective leadership within the field, but also to identify the most occurring leadership style as well as the challenges practitioners face in these settings.

6.1 Identified leadership style

On the basis of six interviews we have been able to conclude that the leadership styles described in the theory are more nuanced in reality. There were many leadership qualities showing from the transformational leadership style, but that is supplemented with other qualities as well i.e. the ones in situational leadership. What these qualities are depends both on the situation, the leader itself but also previous experiences. In addition to this, it can also be stated that leadership in humanitarian settings is a very complex phenomenon and should be considered with several dimensions and perspectives, as leadership within this field truly is not a “one size fits all”. Some generally appreciated approaches are however being open minded, agile as well as respectful to one's team.

6.2 Identified challenges and possible solutions

The most distinct challenges the leaders faced were the logistical aspects as the majority of it was something that went beyond their control. One can not know beforehand how accurate one's forecasting will be and we figure that that is just the nature of the humanitarian field. As long as one is aware of the changes in a situation and acts quickly when new decisions are due, there is not much one can do to change that fact. A frequently mentioned approach to minimize uncertainty was to be prepared. Training for the possibilities as well as learning from previous experiences.

Another challenge we found was concerning the cultural aspect, as there are many people from different nationalities involved, the leaders struggle with finding the right communication which can be applied to everyone. Obviously this is a mutual problem which the subordinates also need to adapt to, as communication is a two-way street. It is important that both parties are open-minded to each other and their cultural differences as it remains a crucial part of the work environment and the team dynamics. Cultural awareness training could be of importance, as Chemers (1994) mentioned, it is crucial for a successful leader to adapt their leadership style to the dominant traits of the culture to be successful. Minimizing cultural communication errors could therefore have a bigger impact on leadership than one would expect.

An improvement regarding the team dynamics we would say, is implementing Hersey & Blanchard's (1977) subordinate maturity-model where the leaders could monitor the level of maturity each team member operates on. We do believe that it would be a way of increasing the leader's support toward the subordinates.

We also concluded that organizations who work with humanitarian aid relief should put more emphasis on the evaluation of their field managers as they themselves feel that there is a deficiency in that area. We got the impression that feedback was not playing a significant role in their evaluation work, and that as long as emergency projects were done and were successful, one could just move on to the next mission without fully evaluating what the actual team members thought of their leader. As previously mentioned in the theoretical framework, feedback is an untapped potential, by utilizing it we do trust that it could bring noticeable differences in their work. The measurement of successful leadership also seems to be tricky since there are plenty of unforeseen situations that can impact the quality of humanitarian relief provided that aren't leadership related. It is therefore of importance to consider the external disturbances in one's evaluation.

The volatility of the humanitarian relief profession has resulted in many changing their line of work as well as the general turnover rate being very high in the projects themselves. The constant change in team members and environmental stress has a huge toll on the leader and it is therefore important for the organization and higher appointed staff to consider the leaders inherent needs. Autonomy and self-actualization are two highly appointed needs identified in the empirical evidence as well as other sources provided in the theoretical framework. It promotes the leaders intrinsic motivations to further push the team to where it should be and creates an opportunity to find a common value which is argued in the theoretical framework as an important aspect of successful leadership. A leader with influence will be able to properly lead their team to success since there are certain situations where you need to break protocol and rules to achieve the best results.

Providing the leaders of a sense of safety can be difficult since there are active changes constantly in the humanitarian field. It seems that fast pace leaders are generally aware of the fact that safety can always be expected or highly priorities. Psychological safety however, is valued highly within the humanitarian field since the team can be exposed to life threatening situations and trust is crucial. The achievement of psychological safety falls back on mutual trust and clear communications throughout the team. Other support systems during and after the projects also seem to be valuable for a leader to be able to feel a level of psychological safety, it can be done with contact with loved ones, coping mechanisms such as exercise or use recreational substances such as nicotine and therapy once one is done with the project.

Coping mechanisms, therapy and mutual trust and respect in teams could also be the solution for the common challenge of the logistical leaders feeling pressure and stress during and sometimes after their missions. It is both shown in the theoretical framework and the empirical evidence that stress, at an unhealthy amount that is, could severely impair a leader's decision making. It is therefore of great importance for the leaders to self preserve their emotions for the greatness of the team. Being a leader is said to be lonely by practitioners, it is therefore important to minimize that feeling for the improvement of the leadership quality.

The general consensus through research is that there are plenty of challenges within humanitarian logistics, and optimizing some aspects of the leadership and support may cause improvements. Leaders within humanitarian logistics seem to be faced with similar challenges as other humanitarian relief leaders, and general leaders as well. The planning and procurement aspect is one of many challenges a humanitarian logistician faces.

6.3 Recommendations for further research

The fact that the study is only based on six interviews results in that the potential of generalization is relatively low, but that it should still be able to provide an insight to leadership within humanitarian logistics, especially when the results are both compared and supported by theory. This insight shows that further studies within this field would be rewarding as leadership takes place under special and extreme circumstances. Above all, this study would benefit from being carried out on a larger scale that includes both several field managers, but also other dimensions such as the leaders' subordinates and the leaders' bosses. Thus, the picture would be more reasonable.

Additionally, it can also be concluded that leadership within humanitarian logistics might be too distinct, since most challenges can be applied to a general humanitarian relief profession.

Both qualitative and quantitative studies are needed to be able to cover relevant aspects. In this way, leadership, for what is described as a special situation, would become more clear and understandable. Many would benefit from such studies, including field managers, the team members, but most importantly, the population that receives the humanitarian aid.

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APPENDIX 1

Interview questions

1. What do you work with, what is your position?
2. What are your work experiences?
3. What is your educational background?
4. What type of operations have you worked on? Civil? Emergency operations?
5. Can you describe the situation at the operations regarding...
 - a) your duties
 - b) logistical aspects
 - c) infrastructure
 - d) resources and finances
 - e) experiences gained from them
 - f) how many people in your team
 - g) their ages
6. What makes an emergency situation different from others in terms of having a leadership role in them?
7. Which leadership qualities/behaviors do you think (according to your experiences) would be preferable in crisis situations?
8. Are there any leadership qualities that you think would work worse in such a situation (as you previously described)?
9. How would you describe the impact of different cultural aspects in leadership?
 - a) What effects do they have in crisis situations?
10. What is the most challenging aspect of your profession regarding leadership?
11. What are some common mistakes that leaders make during a crisis, and how can they be avoided?
12. What are important factors when making decisions during a crisis?
 - a) Does the quality of those decisions ever get compromised?
13. How can a leader manage their own stress and emotions during a crisis?
 - a) What impacts could that have in the specific situation?
14. How can a leader learn from past crises, in order to improve their response to future crises?
15. Is it important to balance stakeholders during a crisis, such as employees, customers, shareholders, and the broader community?

- a) Conflicting goals
- b) Communication

16. Is there any other topic that you think we haven't touched up on, is there anything you would like to add. Do you know any other people we can interview?

APPENDIX 2

Consent form

CHALMERS

**Informed consent for participation in Bachelor thesis project
"Leadership from a crisis management perspective within humanitarian
logistics"**

Chalmers University of Technology
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Department of Maritime Studies, International logistics
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Maria and Kimia are studying their last year of international logistics at Chalmers university of technology. They are currently writing a thesis on leadership from a crisis management perspective within humanitarian logistics. Since the topic isn't that touched up on within the realm of research, they thought it would be an interesting topic to investigate since leadership is a prevalent aspect within humanitarian logistics. The aim of this report is to analyze leadership that occurs within humanitarian logistics on an operational level, and what makes effective leadership to what it is within this field. The aim is also to analyze situations where the leadership has been inadequate, and the improvements necessary for future implementation as well as what has been successful.

Maria and Kimia hope that the knowledge gained from this interview will contribute to the research positively and give a deeper insight within the practicality of such leadership.

If you want more information about the project, you are welcome to contact the supervisor and/or the students.

Before we ask for your participation, we want to inform you about the ethical rules that apply in the project.

- *I have read the information about participating in the study and am aware of how the data collection is performed and the estimated time it takes.*
- *I have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the study and have them answered beforehand.*
- *I participate in this study completely voluntarily and have been informed about why I have been asked and what the purpose of my participation is.*
- *I am aware that I can cancel my participation at any time during the study without having to give a reason for this.*
- *I give my consent to Chalmers University of Technology.*
- *I give this consent provided that no one other than the student/-s / supervisor / researchers associated with the study will take part of the collected material.*
- *I am aware that the study is completely anonymous and collected data will be reported without connection to person, vessel or company / shipping company.*
- *My personal data will be handled in compliance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and in a manner that does not infringe my personal integrity.*

By signing this form, you give your so-called informed consent to participate in the study under these conditions and that you have read the information presented.

☐ I agree that the interview will be recorded for analysis purposes.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Place: | Date: |
| Signature: | |
| Name clarification: | |
| Contact information: VOLUNTARY | |

DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICS AND MARITIME SCIENCES
CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Göteborg, Sweden, 2022
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