

# An Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of Department level in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland

By

NEIL O' SULLIVAN

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Waterford Institute of Technology

School of Business

Waterford Institute of Technology

Research Supervisor: Dr Alma McCarthy, NUI Galway, Ireland

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## Abstract

Change management is becoming increasingly important in the public sector. The role of leadership in delivering such change is critical yet remains under-researched, Sadeghi and Pihie, (2012). Focusing on higher education, this study will address this gap by exploring effective leadership facets at Head of Department (HOD) level in the Institute of Technology (IOT) sector in Ireland.

Using a conceptual model developed by Bryman for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) (2007; 2009) in the United Kingdom, the study explores the leadership facets which are deemed important for IOT HODs and also the extent to which these leadership behaviours are displayed by incumbent HODs. The study was conducted in eleven Institutes of Technology in Ireland amongst academic staff. The number of responses received was 327 equating to a response rate of 10.4%.

The findings indicate strong support for the importance of all eleven leadership facets set out in the LFHE study for HOD leadership effectiveness. However, the extent to which HODs actually display these leadership facets is statistically significantly lower than the importance ratings for each of the eleven behaviours. Additionally, qualitative data presents some negative perceptions of leadership facets at HOD level and there were also comments pointing to additional important leadership facets for HODs which could form the basis of further research studies.

The study contributes to the field by providing insights into higher education leadership within the public sector and presents a study which is the first of its kind to do so in Ireland. The second substantial contribution is the identification of a competency framework for the IoT HOD role which can be used for leadership development initiatives aimed at enhancing HOD leadership effectiveness. The study concludes with a discussion of the implications for research and practice and the limitations of the current study.

Neil O' Sullivan

## Declaration

The author hereby declares that, except where duly acknowledged this thesis is entirely his own work.

This thesis is not one for which a degree has been or will be conferred by this or any other university or institution.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

NEIL O' SULLIVAN

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## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	ii
Declaration .....	iii
Acknowledgements .....	iv
Table of Contents .....	vi
List of Abbreviations.....	1
List of Figures .....	3
List of Tables.....	5
Glossary of Terms .....	7
Section 1: Introduction & DBA Overview .....	8
An Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets in the IOT Sector in Ireland: Setting the Context and Study Rationale.....	9
<i>Abstract</i> .....	9
Introduction .....	10
Leadership theory .....	13
What is effective leadership?.....	18
Private versus public sector leadership.....	19
Higher education leadership .....	23
Middle managers .....	26
Research Method .....	29
Reasons for selection of IOT sector in Ireland.....	30
Original contribution .....	32
Research objectives .....	33
Summary .....	35
References/Bibliography .....	36
Section 2: Cumulative Paper Series, Paper 1: Conceptual Paper .....	42
Leadership Facets and Perceptions of their Effectiveness in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland .....	43
Abstract .....	43
Introduction .....	44
Critique of literature .....	46
Evolution of leadership - Classical leadership theories.....	49

Summary .....	51
‘New’/contemporary leadership theories .....	51
Summary .....	53
What is effective leadership?.....	53
Leadership in public organisations.....	58
Leadership in higher education .....	62
Proposed research study .....	63
Original contribution .....	65
Research methods.....	65
Conceptual framework .....	66
Conclusions .....	67
References/Bibliography .....	69
Preface between Paper 1 (Conceptual Paper) and Paper 2 (Research Methodology).....	77
Introduction .....	77
Researcher’s responses.....	77
Section2: Paper 2 Research Methodology.....	80
Research Methodology for an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of School and Department levels in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland .....	81
Abstract .....	81
Introduction .....	82
Research philosophy.....	84
Research techniques/methods.....	86
Research design.....	88
Reliability and validity .....	89
Survey features and design.....	91
Web-based surveys.....	94
Ethics.....	96
Maximising completion and return rates.....	97
Sampling.....	99
Data analysis.....	102
Conclusion.....	103
References/Bibliography .....	104

Preface between Paper 2 (Research Methodology) and Paper 3 (Survey Instrument Design)	108
Introduction	108
Researcher's responses	109
Paper 3 Survey Instrument Design	114
Survey Instrument Design for an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland	115
Abstract	115
Introduction	116
Questionnaire design	119
Pre-testing of survey instrument	123
Sampling	129
Response rates	130
Reliability, validity and generalisability	131
Primary Research	133
Conclusions	133
References/Bibliography	136
Preface between Paper 3 (Survey Instrument Design) and Paper 4 (Findings)	141
Introduction	141
Researcher's responses	142
Section 2: Paper 4, Findings Paper	146
Findings from an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of Department level in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland	147
<i>Abstract</i>	147
Introduction	148
Pre-access process	150
Questionnaire	151
Response rates	152
Internal Reliability of Instrument	153
Demographics and characteristics of sample	155
Effects of demographics on answer patterns	160



Importance and existence of effective leadership facets .....	169
Correlations .....	173
Exploratory factor analysis.....	178
Overall effectiveness of leadership .....	180
Expansion of existing leadership facets .....	181
Perceptions of poor/ineffective leadership .....	185
Additional effective leadership facets not included in the LFHE model .....	188
Distinctiveness of leadership in higher education .....	190
Summary .....	197
References/Bibliography .....	205
Preface between paper 4 (findings paper) and section 3 (paper on discussion, conclusions and recommendations) .....	209
Introduction .....	209
Researcher’s responses .....	213
Section 3: Conclusions and recommendations .....	215
Discussion on Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations from an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of Department level in the IOT sector in Ireland ....	216
Abstract .....	216
Introduction .....	217
Response rates .....	218
Internal reliability of instrument.....	218
Demographics of respondents .....	219
Demographics of Heads of Department .....	221
Effect of demographics on answering patterns .....	221
Effective leadership facets.....	222
Additional/’new’ effective leadership facets.....	225
Poor/ineffective leadership.....	226
Distinctiveness of leadership in higher education .....	227
Others providing effective leadership in the IOT sector .....	228
Discussion summary.....	229
Conclusions .....	230
Limitations of study.....	238

Recommended areas for further studies and practice changes .....	239
References/Bibliography .....	241
Extracts from DBA Reflective Log.....	245
Induction (August 2010) .....	245
September – December 2010 .....	246
January-October 2011 .....	251
November 2011 to December 2012.....	255
January – October 2013.....	260
October 2013 to May 2014.....	263
General Reflections on the DBA.....	265
Research Expectations.....	268
Supervision .....	272
Risk Analysis.....	272
References/Bibliography .....	276
Appendix 1: Head of Department, job description.....	278
Appendix 2: Effective leadership facets.....	281
Appendix 3: Approval for study from WIT Ethics Committee.....	289
Appendix 4: Pre-access letters .....	290
Appendix 5: Final version of questionnaire .....	297
Appendix 6: Additional leadership facets .....	313
Appendix 7: Distinctiveness of Higher Education Leadership .....	328

## List of Abbreviations

DBA	Doctorate in Business Administration
EI	Emotional Intelligence
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HOD	Head of Department
HOS	Head of School
HRM	Human Resource Manager
IOT	Institute of Technology
LBDQ	Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire
LFHE	Leadership Foundation for Higher Education
LPI	Leadership Practice Inventory
MAME	MA in Educational Management
MBA	Masters in Business Administration
MLQ	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
TDM	Total Design Method
TL	Transformational Leadership
TU	Technological University
TUI	Teachers Union of Ireland

UCD University College Dublin

UK United Kingdom

WIT Waterford Institute of Technology

## List of Figures

### Section 1: An Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets in the IOT sector in Ireland; Setting the Context and Study Rationale

Figure 1: Stages of research study..... 12

Figure 2: Typical academic management structure in an IOT ..... 28

### Section 2: Cumulative Paper Series

#### Paper 1: Leadership Facets and Perceptions of their Importance in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland

Figure 1: Generic practitioner model of organisational leadership (Van Wart, 2003) ..... 47

Figure 2: Typical management structure in an IOT ..... 64

Figure 3: Proposed conceptual model for evaluation of leadership facets and their perceived  
importance in IOTs ..... 66

#### Paper 2: Research Methodology for an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of School and Department levels in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland

Figure 1: Typical IOT academic management structure..... 82

Figure 2: Deductive Approach (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010) ..... 84

Paper 3: Survey Instrument Design for an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets  
at Head of Department level in the Institutes of Technology (IOTs) Sector in  
Ireland

Figure 1: Sample Study findings.....134

Paper 4: Findings from an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of  
Department level in the Institutes of Technology (IOTs) Sector in Ireland

Figure 1: Pattern of response rates .....	153
Figure 2: Length of service of respondents .....	156
Figure 3: Age range of respondents .....	157
Figure 4: Number of staff in respondents' departments.....	158
Figure 5: Gender and nationality of HODs .....	160
Figure 6: Others demonstrating effective leadership facets in the IOT Sector .....	1966
Figure 7: Summary of study findings .....	200

## List of Tables

### Section 2: Cumulative Paper Series

#### Paper 1: Conceptual Paper

Table 1: Leadership elements.....	46
Table 2: Summary of main leadership theories.....	55
Table 3: Emerging Model of effective leadership (Higgs, 2003) .....	57
Table 4: Effective leadership facets (LFHE, 2007; 2009).....	58

#### Paper 2: Research Methodology for a Study of Effective Leadership at Head of School and Department levels in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland

Table 1: Features of deductive approach .....	85
Table 2: Features of quantitative and qualitative methods.....	86
Table 3: Effective leadership facets (LFHE, 2007; 2009) .....	89
Table 4: Strategies for conducting web-based surveys.....	95
Table 5: Forms of Consent (Salant and Dillman, 1994) .....	97

#### Paper 3: Survey Instrument Design for a Study of Effective Leadership Facets in the Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland

Table 1: Effective leadership facets (LFHE, 2007; 2009) .....	117
Table 2: Research sub-questions.....	118
Table 3: Questionnaire design tips.....	121
Table 4: Sample question .....	122
Table 5: Pre-test feedback.....	124
Table 6: Changes to questionnaire .....	125
Table 7: Linkages in Questionnaire .....	129
Table 8: Response rate factors, (Frazer and Lawley, 2000), (Muijs, 2004).....	131

Paper 4: Findings from a Study of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of

Department level in the Institutes of Technology (IOTs) Sector in Ireland

Table 1: Research sub-questions .....	149
Table 2: Details of Response Rates.....	152
Table 3: Cronbach’s alpha values .....	154
Table 4: Gender/nationality of respondents .....	156
Table 5: Subject domain of respondents .....	158
Table 6: Age range/length of service of HODs.....	15959
Table 7: Skewness of behaviour scales.....	1611
Table 8: Between group differences based on subject domain (X or X1 v Y or Y1 denotes differences).....	166
Table 9: Between group differences based on department size (X v Y denotes differences) .....	1677
Table 10: Mean scores for importance of each effective leadership behaviour.....	170
Table 11: Mean scores for existence of each effective leadership behaviour.....	172
Table 12: Importance Correlations .....	174
Table 13: Correlations between existence variables .....	177
Table 14: Rotated factor matrix of scales in terms of their importance.....	178
Table 15: Rotated factor matrix of scales in terms of their existence.....	179
Table 16: Responses to question that ‘My head of department is effective in his/her day to day role’ .....	1811
Table 17: Responses on additional effective leadership facets.....	1822
Table 18: Distinctiveness of leadership in higher education .....	1911
Table 19: T-test outputs examining the statistical difference between importance and existence of effective leadership facets.....	2011
Section 4: Extracts from Reflective log	
Table 1: Reasons for not achieving a Doctorate .....	266
Table 2: Examples of Originality.....	268
Table 3: Becoming a fully professional researcher (Phillips and Pugh, 2000).....	270



## Glossary of Terms

<i>Bona Fides</i>	Good intentions.
<i>De Novo</i>	Original or new.
<i>Dyadic</i>	Relationship between leaders and followers.
<i>Heuristic</i>	Leaders can learn a lot about themselves and how they are perceived by others by reflecting on their own behaviours.
<i>Icarus complex</i>	‘Flying to close to the sun.’ In this study it applies to leaders who do not recognise their own limitations.
<i>Inter alia</i>	Among other things.
<i>Cronbach’s Alpha</i>	Measure of internal reliability.
<i>Laissez-faire Leadership</i>	This describes a system whereby management do not interfere in the day to day running of an organisation. It is sometimes known as passive/avoidant leadership.
<i>Moodle</i>	Virtual learning environment.
<i>Sine qua non</i>	Without which there is nothing.
<i>SPSS</i>	Statistical software for quantitative data analysis.

## **Section 1: Introduction & DBA Overview**

# **An Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets in the IOT Sector in Ireland: Setting the Context and Study Rationale**

## *Abstract*

*Leadership is a subject which has been extensively researched for hundreds of years. Many different meanings of leadership have been proposed in that time but researchers have failed to agree on a universal definition which would apply in all organisational settings. A debate still continues on the similarities and differences between management and leadership. The literature has demonstrated that there is a wealth of research on leadership in the private sector but studies on leadership in the public and Higher Education (HE) sectors is far less prolific. Few studies have taken place on leadership in the Irish public and HE sectors. This chapter opens with a brief overview of leadership theories followed by a critique of leadership in the public and HE sectors. The selection of the sample base for the study, namely the Institute of Technology sector in Ireland is justified. It is also proposed that leadership in the public and HE sectors can be different to that in the private sector. Some distinctions have also been drawn between management and leadership as the types of leadership required by self-directed professional staff. The key role of middle managers has also been highlighted. A final section of the paper has set out the research objectives for the study. The potential contribution of the study to both academic theory and leadership practice is outlined. The outline of the thesis is also detailed.*

*Keywords: Leadership, Public sector, Research objectives, Contribution*

## Introduction

It is suggested that the topic of leadership has been extensively researched for hundreds of years (Silvia and Maguire, 2010), but that debate still rages on agreed definitions and meanings for leadership. Bennis (1959), cited by Antonakis *et al.* (2004:4), support this view stating:

*“Of all the hazy and confounding and confusing areas in social psychology, leadership theory undoubtedly contends for top nomination. Ironically, probably more has been written and less is known about leadership than about any other topic in the behavioural sciences”*

The researcher sees this statement as highlighting the challenge and attraction involved in pursuing a topic that has caused difficulties for so many researchers throughout the years. It is also proposed that this subject presents an excellent opportunity to contribute significantly both to the body of academic knowledge and indeed the practice of leadership. As stated above, there appears to be no universally accepted definition of leadership. In the past fifty years, there have been numerous different classifications used to define the dimensions of leadership. These are discussed in detail in Section 2, Paper 1. Osborne and Gaebler (2002), cited by Vogel and Masal (2012), stated that: nothing was more important than leadership’. Bellow (1992), cited by Lawler (2008:30), present a more sobering view suggesting that: *‘In every community there is a class of people profoundly dangerous to the rest. I don’t mean the criminals. For them we have punitive sanctions. I mean the leaders. Invariably the most dangerous people seek power!’* In the Dutch language the word for ‘leader’ can have two meanings, one of which is martyr, someone who suffers (Coutu, 2004). Grint (2005), cited by Lawler (2008), stated that leadership is also deemed not to be like following a cooking recipe as the ingredients that leaders use are not dead but alive, not compliant but resistant. These references are rich in metaphors and contrasting meanings about leadership thus highlighting the difficulty of absolute definitions of the topic. While there have been some international studies of leadership in HE, it is suggested that this will be one of the first studies of leadership and its effectiveness in the IOT sector in Ireland.

The current study is confined to the perceptions of academic staff of leadership in the sector as they constitute the largest staff discipline and are the frontline deliverers of teaching, learning and research in the sector. There are many definitions and explanations of leadership in academic literature. However, it is suggested that sufficient room to explore further meanings of leadership and its effectiveness particularly in the context of the Institute of Technology (IOT) sector in Ireland which is the chosen population base for this study.

This thesis is divided into three sections. Firstly, this chapter (Section 1) will detail the theoretical and practice contexts of the study. In particular, the research problem, objectives and aims will be stated. The justification for the selection of the IOT sector as the sample base for the study will be outlined. Section 2 will consist of the cumulative paper series:

Paper 1- Conceptual Paper

Paper 2- Research Methodology

Paper 3 – Survey Instrument Design

Paper 4 – Research Findings

Section 2 will also feature preface narratives between each paper responding to the examiners' feedback and detailing the evolution of the research study.

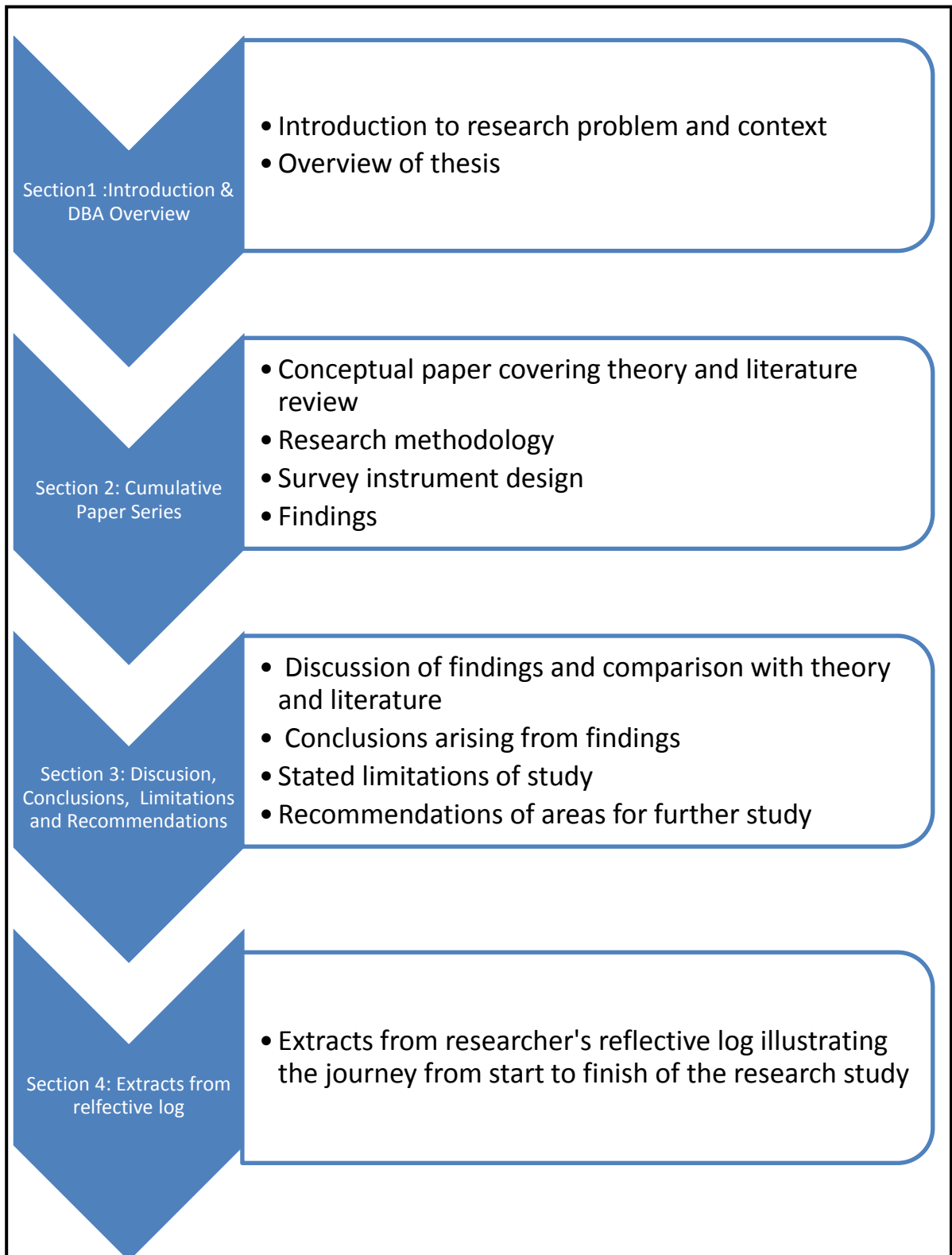
Section 3 of the thesis will include discussion of the findings; conclusions; limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

Section 4 will illustrate some extracts from the researcher's reflective log.

The thesis will conclude with some appendices covering the survey instrument; ethical approval and related documents. This chapter will now continue with an overview of the theoretical and practice research contexts; the proposed selection of the IOT sector as the sample base for the study and the research aims and objectives.

The various stages of this research study are outlined in Figure 1 below:

**Figure 1: Stages of research study**



## Leadership theory

Hunt and Dodge (2000), cited by Gardner *et al.* (2010:922), stated: *'To know where we are going with leadership research, we must know where we are, and where we have been – we must look backward and forward at the same time'*. Leadership theories tend to fall into two main fields known as classical and those labelled as 'new'/contemporary. Those in the classical field are generally known as:

- *Traits theory*
- *Situational/contingency theory*
- *Behaviour/style theory*

This will be discussed in greater detail in Paper 1, Section 2. However, some brief introductory description is provided in this section. A recent book on leadership (Zehndorfer, 2014) cites a number of contemporary leaders as matching the '*Great man*' theory of traits leadership. These include Winston Churchill, who was considered to be one of the great wartime leaders. However the book is silent on his perceived lack of success as a post-war leader. This point will be addressed again in a later section. Barack Obama is also cited as a leader who meets the criteria of traits theory. A further debate also rages on whether leaders are 'born and not made'. John F Kennedy espoused the view that: *'Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other'* (Kennedy, 1963). This view would find support amongst those who oppose the view that leaders are 'born not made'.

Hersey and Blachard (1969), cited by Northouse (2001), initially proposed the idea of *Situational theory*. The basic definition of this theory is that it matches leaders to appropriate situations and effective leadership is contingent on matching a leader's style to the right setting. Mario Monti was elected as Italian Prime Minister during an economic crisis and was very successful in resolving the country's fiscal crisis. However, he failed to adopt his style of governance to changing circumstances and was defeated in a subsequent election by Silvio Berlusconi and Beppe Grillo (Zehndorfer, 2014). It is argued that the same fate befell Winston Churchill after the Second World War.

*Contingency theory* was developed mainly by Fiedler and Fiedler and James (Northouse, 2001). Consequently, the key concept underlying this theory is that the focus has moved from the leader to the social context in which the leadership occurs. It suggests that the leader's effectiveness is based on whether the leader's *motivational orientation* (task or relationship oriented) is in line with his/her *situational control*. To expand on this point it can be inferred that the rationale for this theory is that the relationship or influence between leaders and followers is critical to the success of organisations (Rost 1993, cited by Northouse 2001).

It can be deduced that both theories rely heavily on the *dyadic* relationship in organisations. *Dyadic* processes focuses on the relationship between a leader and another individual who is usually a follower (Yukl, 2006). It is also inferred that these theories propose that leadership traits alone will not guarantee the success of the organisation. Some of the clear strengths of these models include its use as a basis for training leaders.

*Behaviour/style theory* places an emphasis on the behaviour of the leader rather than his/her traits/characteristics (Northouse, 2001). The theory combines the twin elements of motivating employees and the maximisation of employee productivity and performance. However, sometimes this can fail with dire consequences. There is the chilling reminder of the 'tragedy at Longhua', every manager's worst nightmare with 14 workers committing suicide at the Foxconn factory in Longhua China due to terrible working conditions (Zehndorfer, 2014).

The main 'new'/contemporary theories that emerged during the 1980s/90s were:

- *Transformational leadership*
- *Charismatic leadership*
- *Authentic leadership*
- *Full range leadership*

Each of these leadership theories will now be examined.



A survey conducted amongst 90 leaders identified four common core strategies of *transformational leaders* (Bennis and Nanus 1985, cited by Northouse 2001):

- Clear vision of future state of their organisations
- Social architects for their own organisations
- Created trust
- Used creative deployment of self through positive self-regard

Vision, trust and leading change are strong elements emerging from these research studies. Transformational leaders create a climate for change and they do so by gaining the trust of their followers by articulating a vision which is not just that of the leader but one that his/her followers can believe in and make happen. Bass and Avolio (1994), cited by Northouse (2001), saw transformational leadership as part of the full range of leadership model.

Moving to *charismatic leadership*, it is suggested that it is a transitory and unstable phenomenon and that charismatic leaders are capable of both ethical and unethical leadership (Weber 1924, cited by Zehndorfer 2014). Weber also said that it exists only '*in statu nascendi*' or state of formation. One example of a charismatic leader is Bill Wilson founder of Alcoholics Anonymous (Conger and Kanungo, 1998). He established:

1. An effective administration process independent of the founder
2. Rites that diffused charisma among the members
3. Written and oral traditions that sustained the leader's message over time

However, charismatic leadership follows the established route of leader/follower interactions. Some charismatic leaders resort to force to keep power, for example, Fidel Castro and Robert Mugabe. This researcher views the excesses of charismatic leadership as a form of '*Icarus*' complex whereby such leaders perceive themselves as invincible until it is too late and everything has gone horribly wrong.

However, not all charismatic leaders fail. Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and John F Kennedy are often put forward as examples of those who succeeded. These leaders have also been cited as examples of transformational leaders, thus further strengthening the links between the two theories. History has also produced leaders who have been seen as bad charismatic leaders. Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin and Pol Pot are perhaps the most obvious examples of this type of leader. These leadership styles have become accentuated by recent corporate and leadership scandals including Berlusconi, Enron and the Catholic Church. Zehndorfer (2014) cites the example of the journalist Donald Wood's courageous stance on apartheid especially in relation to the case of Steve Biko. This highlights the sacrificial and selfless nature of transformation leadership.

*Emotional intelligence* (EI) is also closely linked to transformational, charismatic and authentic leadership. Key authors such as Goleman view EI is the *sine qua non* of leadership. Other authors including Salovey and Mayer; Van Rooy and Viswesvaran define EI as including monitoring feelings and emotions to guide one's thinking and actions. It is suggested that practitioners relate better to EI than academics (Zehndorfer, 2014). Some academics believe that it is very similar to self-leadership. Goleman (1995, 1998), cited by Zehndorfer (2014), claimed that EI was twice as important as technical skills and IQ in the emergence of excellence performance.

*Authentic leadership* traces its origins back to the moral failures of leadership in the 2000s. It is suggested to be a phenomenon rather than a theory/concept grown out the need for greater moral accountability in leadership (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Lance Armstrong is seen as inauthentic while Winston Churchill and Nelson Mandela are seen as exemplars of authentic leadership. Conversely, Sir James Crosby, former CEO of HBOS, voluntarily gave up his knighthood and 30% of his annual pension as a result of the collapse of HBOS. This was seen as act of contrition and authentic leadership behaviour! (Zehndorfer, 2014). Bennis (2004), cited by Zehndorfer (2014:217), views authentic leaders as those who 'create their own legends and become the authors of their lives in the sense of creating new and improved versions of themselves'.

There is a strong emphasis on morals, ethics and moral behaviour moving beyond self-interest. Criticisms of authentic leadership include that most of the work in the field relied on theoretical observation, that it is relatively new and that its effects could take many years to become visible. Also, much of the research on Authentic Leadership has focused on private sector CEOs who have ‘dared to be different’ and have attracted the label ‘Authentic’. Amongst the best known exponents of this type of leadership are Bill George, former Chairman and CEO of Medtronic and Warren Bennis, Distinguished University Professor of Business Administration at the Marshall School and also Founding Chairman of the Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California. Authentic leadership is seen as complementing other positive forms of leadership (Covey, 1992).

Authentic leadership is founded on trust and the more people trust the leader and each other, the more they take risks, make changes and keep organisations or political movements alive (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). However, as stated above, authentic leadership literature has tended to focus on private sector leaders and is an emerging construct of other theories such as transformational and charismatic leadership rather than as a theory in its own right. Furthermore, authentic leadership tends to have a primary focus on innate and personality characteristics of leaders such as trust and integrity. However, leadership in public sector contexts includes many variables and dimensions beyond individual leader intrapersonal qualities and, therefore, Authentic Leadership was deemed somewhat limiting as a theoretical lens through which to examine leadership in the current study.

Burns (1978), cited by Bodla and Nawaz (2010), was the first to identify the *Full range leadership model*. It essentially combines both transformational and transactional leadership. It has also been called ‘cutting-edge’ leadership theory. Some authors also claim that model includes *laissez-faire* style of leadership. Avolio (1999), cited by Bodla and Nawaz (2010), argue that full range leadership does not mean that it covers all aspects of leadership but that it does cover the range of leadership from passive/avoidant to charismatic/transformational.

In summary it can be stated that leadership theories have been researched, developed and modified since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in many different contexts, countries and organisations. Each of the theories has its own supporters and detractors. However, as the opening quotation of this chapter highlights, the more that has been written on the subject, the less agreement there is regarding a number of leadership issues. Much of the literature (as will be demonstrated) focuses on leadership in the private sector with significantly less studies evident in the public and indeed the higher education sectors. It is argued that given the increasing demand for change and reform in the public sector that effective leadership is needed now more than ever to lead and deliver this change. The leadership theories outlined above serve as a starting point on which this study can be anchored. The current study will review the pertinent leadership theories available in the literature and determine the most appropriate leadership framework to adopt for the current study which is situated in the HE sector. The next section will review the topic of effective leadership.

### **What is effective leadership?**

Smith and Swain (2002) suggest that effective leaders focus on four key areas: setting direction, mobilising action, building capability and acting with courage. Turner (2008) adds that effective leaders enable organisations to innovate, respond to changes in markets and environments, creatively address challenges and sustain high performance. Leadership effectiveness in the public sector is deemed to be important because it determines citizens' satisfaction, trust and organisational reputation (Vigoda-Gadot *et al.* 2008, cited by Aziz *et al.* 2012). They also suggested that further research was needed on situational and leaders' characteristics used by countries with effective leadership so that these could be used as a model.

These are just some examples of the ingredients of effective leadership. Many more will be explored throughout this thesis in the context of underlying leadership theories. It is also evident that demands for effective leadership increases in the wake of major crises.

For example, such a plea arose in the wake of 9/11 (Antonakis *et al.*, 2004). This ‘call to arms’ extended right across society with Bruce Springsteen releasing his album ‘*The Rising*’ in 2002 based on his reflections of the tragedy. It is rumoured that he was inspired to write and record the album when a motorist stopped next to him in traffic said that America needed him now.

Kouzes and Posner (2007) identified five practices of exemplary leadership:

- Model the way
- Inspire a shared vision
- Challenge the process
- Enable others to act
- Encourage the heart

They also stated that leaders should dream big but start small and that success does not breed success, it breeds failure. It is failure which breeds success. Effective leadership is deemed to be a critical component of good public governance (OECD 2004, cited by McCarthy *et al.* 2011). The same report cites Ali (2007) who highlights the importance of leadership in public sector reform. Similar importance is reported in a public sector study of senior management competencies in the US, Canada, UK, Australia and France (Charih *et al.* 2007, cited by McCarthy *et al.* 2011). Leadership effectiveness has always been and will continue to be critical to the success of organisations (Wilson and Mujtaba, 2011).

### **Private versus public sector leadership**

Leadership it is argued, is a key issue in the public sector (Teelkan *et al.* 2012, cited by Vogel and Masal 2012). However, it also suggested that the transferability of leadership styles from the private to the public sector lacks empirical evidence (Tripathi and Dixon 2008, cited by Vogel and Masal 2012). It is further argued that in all organisations regardless of sector, leadership is key to efficiency and effectiveness (Lowe *et al.*, 1996, cited by Vogel and Masal 2012).

A study by Hansen and Villadsen (2010), cited by Vogel and Masal (2012), found significant differences between leadership in the private and public sectors. The key finding was that leaders in the public sector favoured a participative leadership style while those in the private sector tended to practice a directive leadership style. In addition, public sector managers see their roles as being more complex, fulfilling the demands of numerous stakeholders and are more autonomous.

Perry and Rainey (2001), cited by Andersen (2010), believe that public-private distinction is a significant area of organisational research that needs further analysis. Murray (1975), cited by Javidan and Waldman (2003), states that the differences are fundamental and labels it the 'apples-and-oranges' syndrome while it is also suggested that the public and private sectors are alike in all unimportant respects! (Dobell 1989, cited by Javidan and Waldman 2003).

The public sector is argued to be different from the private sector because of the demands for flexibility and innovation while also focusing on not-for-profit, service and accountability to a diverse range of stakeholders (Parry and Proctor-Thomson, 2003). Van Wart (2003), cited by Fernandez *et al.* (2010), calls for rigorous empirical research on leadership in the public sector as there is little evidence in the journals of such research. He adds that given the significant investment by public organisations in leadership development and the growing emphasis on performance management, that research is needed to provide direction for this investment. Van Slyke and Alexander (2006), cited by Fu (2011), develop these views further by stating that the public sector context and constraints uniquely affect leadership and organisational effectiveness and so it requires a more specific model than those found in generalised leadership theory.

Fletcher and Kaufer (2003), cited by Fernandez *et al.* (2010), argue that new models of leadership indicate a trend towards distributed or shared leadership at different levels within organisations. It is also argued that it remains extremely difficult to distinguish between leadership and management (Fernandez *et al.*, 2010). It is proposed that studies of leadership in the public sector need to focus on both transactional and transformational elements (Van Wart 2003, cited by Fernandez *et al.* 2010).

Huxham and Vangan (2005), cited by Morse (2010), propose that mainstream leadership theories do not always fit neatly into organisations in the public sector where collaboration is required. There is also the concept of the ‘invisible leader’ which is the common purpose binding leaders and followers together (Morse, 2010). Despite some views that transformational leadership (TL) does not exist in the public sector (Bass and Riggio 2006, cited by Wright and Pandey 2009) there are also those who strongly believe that TL is very evident in the sector (Dumdum *et al.* 2002, cited by Wright and Pandey 2009). A distinctive feature of public sector organisations is that they have ambiguous and hard-to-measure performance goals as well as poor relationships between extrinsic rewards and employee performance (Wright 2001, cited by Wright and Pandey 2009). Fernandez and Rainey (2006) argue that managerial leaders must build support within their organisations for change. They add that involving organisational members creates psychological ownership of the change.

It has been argued that the move towards leanness and flexibility has been at the expense of public sector values and that standards of service are best maintained by bureaucratic systems (Van Wart and Berman 1999; Theobald 1997; cited by Perry and Proctor-Thomson 2003). However, it is also suggested that unless organisational cultures develop and change that they will fail (Kilman 1985, cited by Perry and Proctor-Thomson 2003). This leads to an argument in support of transformational leadership (Valle 1999, cited by Perry and Proctor-Thomson 2003). There is also support for the view that leadership and organisational culture are functions of each other (Hampden-Turner 1990, cited by Perry and Proctor-Thomson 2003). The study (Perry and Proctor-Thomson, 2003) found that leadership had far greater impact on work unit/organisational outcomes than organisational climate. The research also found that public sector organisations must develop individual leadership within or even in spite of a transactional environment. It further found that leadership of all forms including distributed/shared leadership was critical.

It has been argued that the slowdown in the pace of change in the Irish public sector after 1998 was caused by a mixture of the end of the ‘top-down’ phase of implementation and the ‘bottom-up’ follow through being hindered by capability, leadership, structural deficits and failures (Murray 2001, cited by McLoughlin and Wallis 2007).

A study was conducted amongst senior/middle managers in the Irish public service in 2001/02. However, this study was confined to the Civil Service; Local Government; Health Services and State Agencies. Managers from the HE sector were not included in the study. Notwithstanding this exclusion, it is interesting to note that there were few differences between the four populations surveyed. This suggests that there is an over-arching public service culture and ethos that shapes the facets of managers in all areas of the public sector (McLoughlin and Wallis, 2007).

It would appear that public sector leaders have less discretion to get people to accomplish goals and set goals than private sector leaders (Whorton and Worthley 1981, cited by Hooijberg and Choi 2001). Managing conflict and getting people to work together are key challenges for public sector leaders due to frequently changing priorities and unstable coalitions (Ring and Perry 1985; Denhardt and Pregovosick 1992; cited by Hooijberg and Choi 2001).

It is also argued that the focus of attention on the individual leader is taken at the cost of a fuller debate on the importance and relevance of distributed or collective leadership for public sector organisations (Lawler, 2008). *'In the public and quasi-public sectors, leadership, rather than management, has been identified as the key requirement in making the step changes necessary for 'modernisation' and effectiveness in the 21<sup>st</sup> century'* (Rodgers *et al.* 2003, cited by Lawler 2008:22).

What do all these different viewpoints tell us about leadership in the public sector? It is argued that public sector is now in a state of constant flux, serving multiple stakeholders and demonstrating leadership that does fit neatly into one of the many classical or 'new'/contemporary leadership styles identified earlier. It can also be inferred that empirical research is needed to establish what is occurring in leadership in the sector and also what type of leadership is seen as effective. It is important to stress that the public and private sectors have differing end goal objectives. By and large the public sector is focused the achievement of social objectives such as provision of essential services including health and education. The focus in the private sector is predominantly economic.



The owners and/or shareholders expect a return for their investment so there is a focus on the bottom line in terms of cost reduction and profit maximisation. The public sector is governed by a plethora of legislation, rules and regulations. Elected politicians set the policy and agenda for public sector bodies. These directions are subject to constant change due the changes in the composition of the Government, local councils, governing bodies and other similar organisations. In addition there is what is known as the ‘permanent Government’ which comprises the civil servants in Government Departments who span successive Governments and set the on-going agenda for the operation of public bodies. As mentioned above, there are local political bodies charged with overseeing public sector organisations.

In addition, there are executive management structures which are established to work with these bodies to implement policy and strategy at the behest of their political leaders. By contrast, in the private sector, there is a firm focus on executive leadership to maximise the profits of the organisation for the shareholders/owners. It is argued that executive leaders in the private sector may enjoy more autonomy in decision making due to the virtual non-existence of party or electoral political influences in their working environment. As stated above, it would appear that not all leadership is vested in the most senior leaders and also that leadership exists beyond the individual in the sector and this study will address the importance and existence of leadership facets in the IOT sector in Ireland as perceived by academic staff.

### **Higher education leadership**

As stated earlier, most academic literature on leadership focuses on leadership in the private sector. While there is some evidence of a focus on public sector leadership, this continues to be an under researched area as does the specific field on leadership in the HE sector. Lawrence Summer stated when he assumed the Presidency of Harvard University in 2001 that the education of future leaders would be a critical priority (Kellerman, 2004).

Yale President Richard Levin claimed that the university's goal is to become truly global by 'educating leaders' (Kellerman, 2004). It is argued that leadership education is of major importance in HE. Connaughton *et al.* (2003), cited by Tilstra (2006), argued that colleges and universities have a fundamental responsibility to provide leadership development for their students.

Leadership in the HE sector tends to include shared decision making (Harris 2003; Lumby 2003; cited by Lawler 2008). This is sometimes called '*Shared or Distributed leadership*' which is considered to be strongly normative and based on agreement. It was particularly evident in post-apartheid South Africa where a powerful commitment to democratic institutions was fuelled by an understandable reaction to the injustices and inequities of the past. It is particularly suited to colleges that have significant numbers of professional staff authority or expertise (Spillane *et al.* 2004, cited by Lawler 2008). It is thought that the collegial models in HE originated within the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge universities (Beecher and Kogan 1972, cited by Lawler 2008). Transformational leadership is seen to be consistent with the collegial model in that it assumes that leaders and staff have shared values and common interests. Dunoon (2002), cited by Andersen (2010), supports this view saying that he favoured the learning-centred leadership approach to public management which is linked to TL theory.

Within the broader public service, both the health services and HE in particular feature large numbers of highly qualified professional staff who, as is suggested above, wish to be involved in decision making. It is also inferred that they favour being led rather than managed and see themselves mainly as self-directed professionals. This may have implications for leadership in HE institutions and may need to be examined as part of this study. This view finds support from Mintzberg (1998), cited by Bryman (2007:707), who states that: '*Most professional workers require little direct supervision from managers instead they require a covert form of leadership entailing protection and support*'. The researcher gave significant consideration to viewing leadership through a shared/distributed lens as part of this study. As outlined above, there is evidence of its existence in HEIs.

However shared or distributed leadership has been criticised for not taking adequate consideration of the *situation* within which leadership is enacted, such as the relationships between leaders and followers, or the inevitability of power difference in organisations (Wright, 2008). In addition, it is proposed that it does not capture all the effective leadership facets as outlined in Bryman's model (LFHE, 2007; 2009) – the latter having the benefit of being derived in the educational context. In addition, while shared/distributed research has been the subject of research at primary/secondary school level, there has been far less evidence of such research activity in HEIs (Gronn cited by LFHE, 2007; 2009). It was decided that it would be more suitable to develop variables and scales from the LFHE research and then add some open-ended questions on other leadership facets and distinctiveness of the sector which would allow any evidence of shared/distributed leadership to emerge.

There is also evidence that 'top down' leadership leads *inter alia* to lack of flexibility and resistance to change in HEIs (Davidson *et al.*, 2013). Distributed leadership is quite evident in the primary and secondary levels but less so in HEIs. It is suggested that this scarcity is linked to growing academic workloads and the 'corporatisation of the academy' (Deem and Brehony 2005, cited by Davidson *et al.* 2013). There appears to be little research about what HODs contribute to department culture, collaborative atmosphere and department performance (Gomes and Knowles 1991, cited by Bryman 2007).

This is taken a step further by those who argue that while there is some evidence of research on leadership practices, there is little research on effectiveness at departmental level (Harris *et al.* 2004, cited by Bryman 2007)

Many researchers on HE leadership believe that the sector has changed dramatically in the past 20 years (Bryman, 2007). The same author states that the department represents a critical unit of analysis in universities because it is a key unit for the allocation of resources and also the frontline provider of teaching and researcher activities. Bryman (2007) also proceeded to identify eleven effective leadership facets at department level.

He argues that if training programmes were designed to develop leaders in respect to these facets, then leadership effectiveness at HOD level would be greatly improved. A study by Bolden *et al.* found differences between *academic management* (tasks and processes) and *academic leadership* (academic values and identities) (LFHE, 2012).

This section essentially concludes strongly that middle managers, in this instance, HODs have also a key role to play alongside senior managers in leadership in HEIs. The next section develops this theme in greater detail.

### **Middle managers**

It is argued that the role of middle managers in the facilitation of change is becoming increasingly important (McGurk, 2009). It is proposed that their ‘midway’ position in organisations enables them to interpret and frame strategic objectives for front-line staff (Balogun, 2003; Huy, 2002; Mayer and Smith, 2007, cited by McGurk 2009). The literature also portrays an overlooking of middle managers due to an over concentration on so called elite leaders (McGurk, 2009). He also argues that the middle manager role requires both management and leadership skills and knowledge. Borins (2002) states that middle management can exert significant influence on governmental reform and innovation. In summary, it can be inferred that middle managers play a critical role in achieving and supporting change in organisations. They can as outlined above act as a conduit for translating top level strategies into meaningful actions for staff.

Distinction is also drawn between management and leadership development programmes. Day (2001), cited by McGurk (2009), suggests that management development is mainly focused on problem solving to find solutions for known problems whilst leadership development focuses on developing the individual ‘to think in new ways’. Turner (2008) argues that leadership development needs to focus on three core areas: the organisation’s mission and culture; the individual’s personality and strengths and organisational specific leadership facets, skills and knowledge.

He also suggests that in the absence of such leadership programmes that interventions such as challenging assignments; informal mentoring by effective leaders; following the leadership of effective superiors and formal academic leadership education should be used. In this section, the importance of both formal and informal development interventions is highlighted. This links with suggestions made earlier in the paper which called for leadership development and training to enhance leadership skills. O' Brien (2002) states that public sector managers need to adopt their approaches to change management programmes to make them appropriate to the dilemmas and challenges facing them.

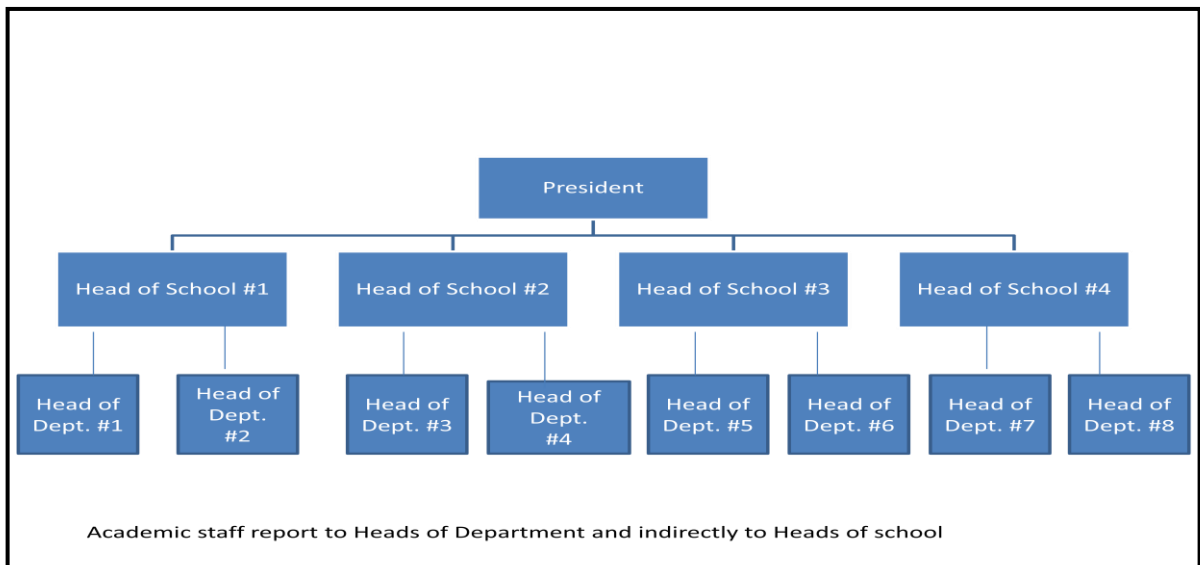
It is also suggested that involvement of staff is critical to the success of change programmes and that so called top down initiatives are likely to fail (Pfeffer 1984, cited by O' Brien 2002). The devolution of authority, development of performance systems and the focus on operations and service delivery that characterise recent public sector reform movements all suggest that top-down policy leadership needs to be complemented by effective 'middle-out' organisational leadership (McLoughlin and Wallis, 2007). This essentially reinforces the points made in earlier paragraphs which highlight the increasing importance of the middle manager in organisations. HODs fulfil the role of middle managers in the academic management structure in the IOT sector. A copy of the job description for this role is included at Appendix 1 to this thesis.

This description states *inter alia* that the appointee will be responsible, through the Head of School to the President for:

- The efficient and effective management and control of the assigned Department, and for its development in accordance with Institute policy and plans.
- Leading, directing and managing the academic programmes at Department level including teaching, research, programme development and design, academic assessment and academic administration.
- Managing and directing the staff of the Department including timetabling and evaluating staff performance.

Figure 2 below outlines the typical academic management structure for an IOT.

**Figure 2: Typical academic management structure in an IOT**



It has been demonstrated above that HODs perform a key role in the leadership of IOTs at middle management level. As illustrated in Figure 2, they lead and manage academic departments at the behest of Heads of School and they manage a multidisciplinary team of academic staff. As stated earlier, they can act as translators of strategic objectives into meaningful actions for frontline academic staff. It is suggested that change management initiatives can start with or be stopped by these key managers. The identification of HODs as key middle managers has implications for this study.

These implications include:

- While it is clear that senior academic and functional managers have major roles in the development of strategic plans and priorities for IOTs, the delivery and implementation of these plans cannot occur without the significant involvement of HODs.
- HODs are the first point of leadership contact for academic staff and so their responses and direction to such staff can be critical to the effective running of academic departments.

- HODs as managers of physical and financial resources can create enabling environments for academic staff to develop, amend and run academic programmes that meet the needs of present and future students.

### **Research Method**

Paper 2 will deal with the subject of Research Methodology and methods employed in the current study. However, it is important at this juncture to give a brief overview of the approaches chosen to enable the reader understand the rationale behind the chosen methodology and method. As outlined in the introduction, it was decided to study effective leadership facets in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff. The starting points for this research are the eleven effective leadership facets established by Bryman's study (Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE), 2007; 2009). Their study was a qualitative study based on an extensive literature and interviews with leadership researchers. Following the submission and presentation of the conceptual paper at the doctoral colloquium in December 2012 it was decided to pursue a large scale empirical study of these effective leadership facets in the IOT sector.

The research then considered the philosophical positioning of the study and determined that it in terms of ontology it was closer to Realism rather than Nominalism. In respect of the study's epistemology, it was decided that it was closest to Positivism. A web-based (SurveyMonkey) questionnaire was used to examine the importance and existence of each of the eleven effective leadership facets in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff. A questionnaire based on the eleven effective leadership behaviours (LFHE, 2007; 2009) was developed for the study. The questionnaire was pre-tested amongst a small number of academic staff in Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). In addition the views of Human Resource Managers throughout the IOT sector were also sought and taken on board. Initially, it was proposed to survey academic staff in five IOTs only as part of this study. However, based on the feedback from all these sources, it was decided to include all fourteen IOTs in the study. Subsequently, three IOTS declined to participate in the study so ultimately eleven IOTs participated.

Questionnaires were distributed *via* SurveyMonkey in order to minimise cost and to maximise the level and speed of distribution as well as ease of return of completed responses. Each HR Manager in the IOTs was asked to forward an e-mail to all academic staff which contained a link to the questionnaire on SurveyMonkey and a letter explaining the purpose of the study. Participants were invited to complete the questionnaire and submit it *via* SurveyMonkey through the link provided. This was to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. In addition, academic staff self-selected on a purely voluntary basis whether they would participate in the survey or not.

The total number of responses received was 327 from a total population of 3,155 academic staff across eleven IOTs equating to a response rate of 10.4%. The total number of Heads of Department in the participating IOTs was 126.

### **Reasons for selection of IOT sector in Ireland**

The IOT sector has been chosen as the population base for this research study for a number of key reasons:

*The IOT sector is a major higher education provider and an economic entity in Ireland. The sector consists of 14 IOTs, employs in excess of 8,200 staff, provides education to over 65,000 full-time and almost 20,000 part-time students and had a budget in 2013 of €394m (HEA, 2013).*

*The sector faces major strategic challenges and change in the coming years. The Public Service ('Croke Park') Agreement (2010); The National Recovery Plan (2010); The National Strategy for Higher Education (Hunt Report) to 2030 (2011) and the Haddington Road Agreement (2013) all signal major challenges and changes for the IOT sector. The dichotomy faced by the sector is that it is expected to perform a key role in the recovery of the economy while at the same time experiencing reduced budgets, physical and human resources. Effective leadership is critical in delivering changes, addressing these challenges and meeting the needs of a wide range both internal and external stakeholders.*



In an article in the *Irish Independent* newspaper, it said that the proposed changes include: mergers of IOTs to form Technological Universities; revised terms and conditions of employment for staff; reductions in capital and revenue grants; revision of funding models; introduction of educational fees; greater transparency of workloads and the introduction of quality assurance systems including student feedback mechanisms (Walsh, 2011). These changes will require effective leadership to deliver these difficult changes.

*There is no agreed definition of what constitutes effective leadership in the IOT sector.* The sector is just over 40 years old and does not have the extensive leadership experience of the University sector which dates back hundreds of years in some cases. There is a strong view that there are poor or incomplete links between general leadership theories and concepts and their application to higher education (Middlehurst, 2008). This study responds to this deficiency by examining general leadership theories in the context of the IOT sector in Ireland and establishing their relevance (or otherwise) and also determining if there are specific leadership theories and concepts that are applicable to HEIs and in particular the IOT sector in Ireland.

*In addition, there appears to be no policy or existing practices on leadership development in the IOT sector.* While formal qualifications exist for teaching roles in primary and second level education, there is no evidence of any formal or informal training and development initiatives for staff that aspire to or achieve leadership roles in the IOT sector. This is worrying given the key role that academic managers are expected to play in IOTs. This contrasts sharply with the ongoing training interventions by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) in the UK.

### Original contribution

This study presents an opportunity to empirically test a conceptual model of leadership that has not been tested to date in the Irish HE and more particularly the IOT sector. This model has been developed by the LFHE based on an extensive literature and interviews with leadership researchers in the UK. Essentially the study will test the importance and existence of the eleven effective leadership facets established by Bryman (LFHE 2007; 2009).

It is proposed that this research study will make a significant contribution to knowledge and understanding of effective leadership in HE and in particular the IOT sector in Ireland. It is inferred that it will do so because there is a recognizable deficiency in the literature in relation to strategic level leadership in HE particularly in the Irish context. Van Wart (2003), cited by Silvia and Maguire (2010), stated that only a handful of articles on public sector leadership had been written in the last sixty years.

It is also proposed that this research will make an original contribution to practice in the area of strategic level leadership in the IOT sector. The concept of strategic leadership in the sector is relatively new with many IOTs only publishing their first strategic plans in 2007. The lack of theory and research is more evident at the strategic leadership level in organisations (Day 2000; Finkelstein and Hambrick 1996, cited by Antonakis *et al.* 2004).

The research will make a significant contribution to the recruitment and selection processes of strategic level leaders in the IOT sector. Middlehurst (2008) stated that there needs to be closer links between research findings about leadership and the recruitment and selection processes for those who will fill leadership positions in HEIs. The potential to develop existing and future leaders in the IOT sector will also be a tangible outcome of this research. This objective is consistent with *behaviour/style theory* which states that effective facets can be taught to people to make them successful leaders (Kanji and Moura E SÁ, 2001).

It is also strongly suggested that the potential exists to develop and offer a post-graduate programme at level 9/10 (Masters/Doctoral level) in Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) dedicated to leadership and management in Higher Education in Ireland.

Currently, such a programme exists at level 10 (DBA) in the University of Bath in the UK. Also, a programme at level 9 exists in WIT dealing with Management in Education. Several other Irish HEIs offer level 10 programmes in the field of education but they so pre-dominantly in the areas of pedagogy (e.g. Dublin Institute of Technology's D.Ed. or University College Cork's cohort PhD programme).

If such a course was established, then research and consultancy services could be developed for Irish and indeed international HEIs to assist them in recruiting and developing leaders and providing support for specific challenges such as change management and strategic planning and implementation.

Furthermore, the research offers the opportunity to develop sector specific training and development programmes (in addition to the level 9/10 programmes suggested above) for HODs ranging from induction to skills/competency based programmes.

Finally, this study presents an excellent opportunity for the researcher to develop his own leadership skills and abilities through a review of the literature, primary research on current HODs and through personal observations and learning. The next section proceeds to identify the research objectives for the study.

### **Research objectives**

There have been many studies of leadership in the private sector but relatively few in the public and HE sectors. Evidence of such studies in an Irish context is virtually non-existent. The researcher works in the IOT sector in Ireland and welcomes the opportunity to study leadership at strategic levels in the sector. There are many existing qualitative studies and also some quantitative studies on leadership which have used a variety of instruments including: extensive literature reviews; interviews; focus groups; bespoke questionnaires and surveys.

The researcher notes with interest the study by Bryman (LFHE 2007; 2009) on UK universities. In particular, he notes the identification of effective leadership facets at departmental level. However, these were identified through a combination of an extensive literature review and interviews with leadership researchers. Academic staffs were not consulted on their views in that report and so this study presents an opportunity to empirically test these findings in a specific population base, namely, academic staff in the IOT sector in Ireland. This leads to a number of questions which would need to be addressed by the study such as: Are these effective leadership facets universal in the HE sector? Are they important in the Irish HE sector, particularly the IOT sector? Do these effective leadership facets exist in the IOT sector? Does shared/distributed leadership exist in the IOT sector? If, so, which other staff are involved in leadership in the IOT sector? Is leadership in the IOT/HE sector distinctive from other sectors of employment? Are there examples of poor/ineffective leadership in the sector? Are there leadership facets that are specific to the IOT sector?

From these questions a number of research objectives are now beginning to emerge:

- To determine which leadership facets are deemed important for Head of Department managers by academic staff in the IOT sector in Ireland as perceived by staff.
- To determine the extent to which various leadership facets exist among Head of Department managers in the IOT sector in Ireland as perceived by academic staff.
- To examine IOT context specific factors that impact on effective leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland
- To investigate ineffective leadership facets in the IOT sector in Ireland.

Section 2 of this thesis which contains the cumulative paper series will address the literature, conceptual framework, research philosophy, methodology and methods necessary to achieve these research objectives. This chapter now concludes with a summary section.

### Summary

In this chapter, a brief introduction to leadership theories has been outlined. Also, the perceived differences between management and leadership have been discussed and leadership in the specific public and HE sectors has been critiqued. The selection of the IOT sector as the sample base for the study has been justified. It has been concluded that leadership in the Public and HE sectors can be different to that which exists in the private sector. Some distinctions have also been drawn between management and leadership as the types of leadership required by self-directed professional staff. The key role of middle managers, namely HODs, has been highlighted and effective leadership has been critiqued. A final section of the paper has set out the research objectives for the study. The next steps for this research study will involve a comprehensive literature review and comprehensive review of methodology and methods to achieve these research objectives.

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**Section 2: Cumulative Paper Series, Paper 1: Conceptual Paper**

# **Leadership Facets and Perceptions of their Effectiveness in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland**

## *Conceptual Paper*

*Neil O' Sullivan, DBA Student at Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)*

*Supervised by Dr Alma McCarthy, NUI Galway*

*Submitted on 23rd November, 2012*

### **Abstract**

*Academic literature has focused predominantly on leadership in the private sector. However, research specific to the public sector is far less prolific. This paper will focus on academic staff perceptions of leadership facets and their effectiveness at middle and senior management levels in the Institute of Technology (IOT) sector in Ireland. Given the proposed key role of IOTs in stimulating the economy and the increasing rate of change in the sector, it is asserted that a study of leadership facets is timely and important. A critique of the literature demonstrates the evolution of leadership theories and then focuses on leadership facets in the public and higher education sectors to adequately contextualise the focus of the current study. Some existing conceptual models are examined before a framework is proposed that will be tested in the current study. It is planned to use a questionnaire amongst academic staff in five IOTs in order to establish their perceptions of existing leadership facets and their effectiveness in the sector. Amongst the many proposed benefits expected to arise from this study are an enhancement of the existing body of literature on leadership; development of a specific research stream on leadership facets in the IOT sector in Ireland; insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes in IOTs in Ireland for existing and future leaders.*

*Keywords: Leadership facets, Institutes of Technology, Change, Effectiveness.*

## Introduction

Warren Bennis (1959), cited by Antonakis *et al.* (2004), stated that leadership was the most written about but least understood topic in the behavioural sciences,. While this may infer that the area has been extensively researched, it is important to note that leadership theories are constantly evolving. George *et al.* (2007); Higgs (2003) and Spendlove (2007) have all examined emerging models of leadership. Scholars are now arguing that leadership is a shared effort, distributed amongst many organisational members at different levels (Meindl 1990; Pearce and Conger 2003; Crosby and Bryson 2005; Ensley *et al.* (2006); Hiller *et al.* 2006, cited by Fernandez *et al.* 2010). The following quotation supports this assertion: ‘*What we have discovered and rediscovered, is that leadership is not the private reserve of a few charismatic men and women. It is a process ordinary people use when they are bringing forward the best from themselves and others*’ (Kouzes and Posner 2002: xxiii, cited by the LFHE 2012). It is, therefore, important to not only explore leadership at senior management levels but also leadership at other levels including middle management.

This paper will critique the main leadership theories in the academic literature. Van Wart (2003) states that the mainstream literature on leadership has been prolific, but that research on public sector leadership has neither enjoyed the same volume nor recognition. Simpson and Beeby (1993) argue that reform and the management of change are becoming increasingly important in the public sector. This suggests that leadership is now an important issue in the public sector (Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012). Also, because public sector managers have to deal with frequently changing agendas and unstable coalitions, managing conflict and getting people to work together becomes critical (Ring and Perry, 1985). While there are some key studies into public sector leadership styles internationally by such bodies as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the LFHE in the United Kingdom (UK), few studies exist in the Irish context. A notable exception is *Leadership in the Irish Civil Service* (McCarthy *et al.*, 2011).

No studies have been detected to date dealing specifically with leadership at any level in Irish HE institutions. *The Public Service* ('Croke Park') *Agreement* (2010); *The National Recovery Plan* (2010) and *The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* ('Hunt Report') (2011) all signal major changes and implications for leadership in the HE sector.

Among the changes proposed are: merging of IOTs to form Technological Universities (TUs); revised terms and conditions of employment for staff; reductions in capital and revenue grants; revision of funding models; introduction of educational fees; greater transparency of workloads and the introduction of quality assurance systems including student feedback mechanisms. The sector consists of 14 Institutes, employs over 8,000 staff, provides education to over 65,000 full-time and almost 20,000 part-time students and had a budget in 2013 of €394m (HEA, 2013). This scale of the sector clearly demonstrates a need for effective leadership facets especially in times of great change and diminishing resources. This is one of the key justifications for the pursuit of this study. It is proposed that this will be one of the first studies of its kind of leadership and its effectiveness in the IOT sector in Ireland. The study will be confined to perceptions of academic staff as they constitute the largest staff discipline and are the frontline deliverers of teaching, learning and research in the sector.

The study will contribute to both the existing mainstream body of literature on leadership as well as developing a new stream dedicated to leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland. Another potential outcome is the development of insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes for senior and middle managers in the sector. Such initiatives are now commonplace in European and other international countries. A further expected outcome is a clear indication of the leadership facets that exist and are deemed to be effective by academic staff within the participating organisations. This in turn will assist present and future leadership practitioners in the IOT sector. This paper will continue with a critique of the main leadership themes in the literature on both the mainstream and public sectors. It then proceeds to evaluate leadership theories and to determine elements of leadership effectiveness.

A number of models of leadership theories will be discussed before illustrating a conceptual framework with accompanying research questions that will be tested in four Institutes of Technology using a questionnaire. Subsequently, the importance and relevance of the proposed study to literature/theory and practice is articulated. The paper then presents a number of conclusions and a comprehensive bibliography.

### Critique of literature

Leadership has been discussed since the time of Plato (Goffee and Jones, 2000). Despite this intensive research, a universally accepted definition of leadership has not been established. Table 1 below highlights some of the elements that contribute to an understanding of leadership. Based on these elements, it has been decided to adopt the following working definition for the current study. Leadership is: *‘An organisational intervention through which an individual (or individuals) creates and manages change by influencing people, culture and context’*.

**Table 1: Leadership elements**

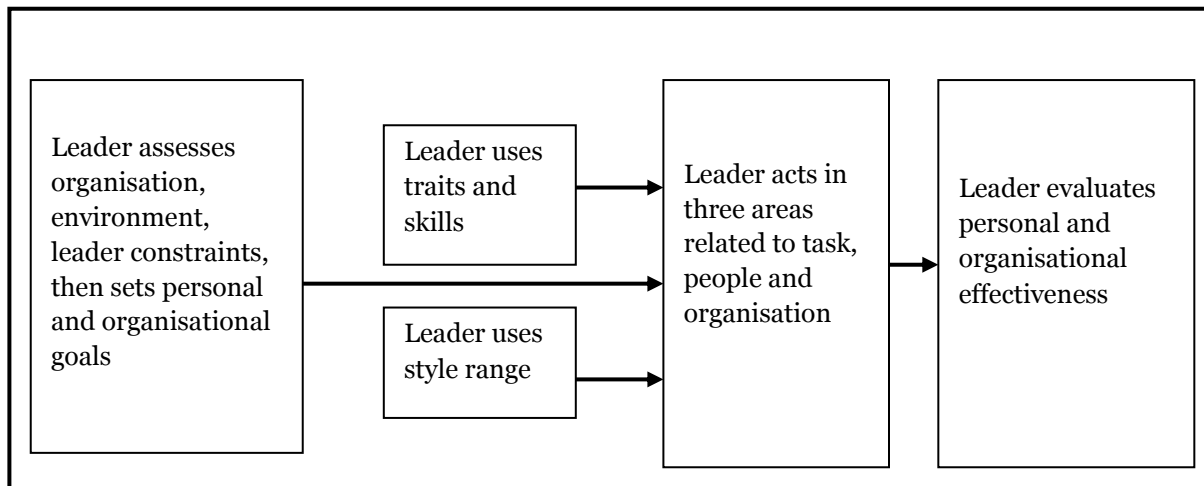
Definition	Reference
Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal	(Northouse, 2001)
A leader is someone who will help us overcome an obstacle or navigate troubled waters. It is a person who we expect can accomplish a goal	(Turner, 2001)
Essential function of leadership is to produce adaptive or useful change	(Kotter 1990, cited by Van Wart 2003)
The only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture	(Schein 1985, cited by Van Wart 2003)
Leadership is the lifting of a man’s vision to higher sights, the raising of a man’s performance to a higher standard, the building of a man’s personality beyond its normal limitations	(Drucker, cited by Cohen 2008)



Definition	Reference
Leadership is a relationship between the leader, follower and context	(Allen, 2007)
The ability to inspire confidence and support among the people that are needed to achieve organizational goals	(Dubrin 2007, cited by Sadeghi and Pihie 2012)

Boyatzis *et al.* (2008); Collins (2001); Doh (2003); George *et al.* (2007) and Higgs (2003) seek to explain the various styles of leadership required by modern organisations. The styles include characteristics such as self-awareness, empathy, intrinsic motivators, humility, integrity, resolve, vision, passion, credibility and authenticity. Van Wart (2003) proposes a generic practitioner model of organisational leadership as outlined in Figure 1 below. The proposed model incorporates leadership traits, skills and styles and their influence on leadership and organisational effectiveness. This model will inform the conceptual framework to be used in the current study which will be illustrated later in this paper.

**Figure 1: Generic practitioner model of organisational leadership, Van Wart (2003)**



The selection and inclusion of Van Wart's model is justified on the basis that it features the linkages between internal and external environments. In particular, it highlights the necessity for and importance of environmental/boundary scanning to inform leadership and organisational effectiveness and this is particularly relevant for IoTs in Ireland.

The model further demonstrates the need for leaders to use a range of skills, traits and styles to impact on organisations in order to provide effective leadership. It also identifies that tasks, people and the organisation itself need to be impacted by leaders in order to create organisational effectiveness. The model is included because of its parsimony and relevance to the IoTs in Ireland which takes account of internal and external factors impacting on leadership.

It is considered appropriate at this point to comment on the continuous debate on the differences and/or similarities between management and leadership. Mintzberg (1972), cited by Fernandez *et al.* (2010), listed 'leading' as only one of ten roles played by managers. Covey (1992) argued that managers must focus on the bottom line and leaders must look to the top for clear vision and direction.

Bush (1998) stated that leadership is linked to values or purpose and management is linked to implementation or technical issues. Fidler (1997), cited by Bush (1998), argues against a firm distinction between leadership and management stating that there is a great deal of overlap between the two concepts. It is suggested that management and leadership are not mutually exclusive and that leadership is the highest component of management (Covey, 1992). It is proposed that while many definitions and explanations of leadership styles exist in the academic literature, there exists ample room to explore further meanings of leadership style in HEIs and particularly in the context of the IOT sector in Ireland which is the chosen population base for this study.

The next section of the paper will trace the evolution of leadership theories from the early classical theories right through to the 'new'/contemporary theories which have emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. A summary of the main leadership theories and their key elements is contained in Table 2 below. Consequently, the narrative will focus mainly on the strengths and weaknesses of the various leadership theories.

### Evolution of leadership - Classical leadership theories

Classical leadership theories focus on three main approaches. These are typically classified in the literature as:

- Traits theory
- Situational/contingency theories
- Behaviour theory

The main strengths associated with traits theory are that it fits with the notion that leaders are special people chosen to lead us (Kirkpatrick and Locke 1991; Lord *et al.* 1986; Mann 1959, cited by Northouse 2001). It also focuses on the leader rather than leadership and by extension details the traits that those who aspire to become leaders should possess.

These assumptions have been challenged as far back as the 1940s (Stogdill 1948, cited by Northouse 2001) by those who have stated that people do not become leaders solely because they possess certain traits. Among the criticisms of traits theory are that there is no definitive list of traits that will guarantee successful leadership and that traits that may work in one situation may not work at all in a different set of circumstances. A further criticism is the ability to measure or identify traits. Bird (1940) and Bass (1990), cited by Antonakis *et al.* 2004, sought to observe up to 80 different leadership qualities. This led to many inconsistencies in the findings of such reports and ultimately challenged the credibility of traits theory. However, it has experienced somewhat of a revival in recent years. It is believed that this is due to its growing linkages with other theories such as situational/contingency and of course 'new'/contemporary leadership theories such as charismatic and transformational leadership.

Situational/contingency theories will be critiqued together as it suggested that there are not significant differences between the two models. The basic definition of situational theory is that it matches leaders to appropriate situations and effective leadership is contingent on matching a leader's style to the right setting.

The key concept underlying contingency theory is that the focus has moved from the leader to the social context in which the leadership occurs. Some of the strengths of these models include its use as a basis for training leaders. A report in 1993 suggested that they had been used in training programmes for over 400 of the Fortune 500 companies (Northouse, 2001). A further strength is that it introduces for the first time the concept of leader adaptability of flexibility and raises the notion of treating each employee differently based on their ability (competence) and/or commitment. A key strength of these models is that they are predictive and so point clearly to the type of leadership likely to be most effective in given contexts (Northouse, 2001).

Some of its criticisms are that research studies supporting these models are few and far between. This is extended to include doubts about how the key concepts of 'competence' and 'commitment' have been defined. Another underlying criticism is that different situations/contingencies will require different types of leaders. Yukl (2006) when discussing contingency leadership stated that different attributes will be effective in different situations and that the same attribute is not optimal in all situations. However, for all its criticisms these theories remain relevant today. Their emphasis on *dyadic* relationships is key to understanding many other models such as transformational and charismatic leadership.

Behaviour theory lays an emphasis on the behaviour of the leader rather than his/her traits/characteristics. In particular, it focuses on task and relationship facets (Northouse, 2001). The theory has its origins in the Ohio State and Michigan University studies which were conducted in the late 1940s. The strengths of the theory lie in the fact that it broadened leadership research beyond the limited studies on the traits only approach. Also, the Ohio State and Michigan University studies are deemed to be highly regarded research studies and have given credibility to the theory. A further strength of the theory is that it widens the definition of the leadership process to include tasks and relationships. The theory is also deemed to be *heuristic*.

Some criticisms of the theory include the view that the research has failed to adequately link leaders' behaviour style with organisational outcomes (Northouse, 2001). Furthermore it also fails to establish a preferred style of leadership. However, despite these apparent failings, behaviour theory has arguably led to the body of research on what we now know as transformational leadership. The relationship element in particular has many parallels with transformational leadership while the focus on tasks relates strongly to transactional leadership.

### Summary

These classical leadership theories begin with the premise that leaders are 'born not made', then argue that leadership facets/style are important, that leadership is required to match the needs of the followers/employees of a given organisation and that success can be achieved by focusing on employee motivation. These approaches may at first glance seem mutually exclusive but that is not the belief of the researcher or indeed many academic writers.

Arias (2001), cited by Doh (2003:54), states that: *'The basics of leadership can be taught. What is desperately needed is more responsible leadership....'* Conger (2003), cited by Doh (2003), sound a note of caution when he says that not everyone can become outstanding with coaching but that most will improve. He also suggests that there are three distinct elements of leadership, namely, skills, perspectives and dispositions. He argues that the first two can be learnt and taught but that dispositions are inherent qualities. It is now proposed to look at 'new'/contemporary leadership theories.

### 'New'/contemporary leadership theories

A new set of leadership theories began to emerge in the 1980s and 1990s. A number of key authors (Bass, 1985) began to question the classical view of leadership stating that it in the main it was too transactional orientated. His views were supported by others (Avolio *et al.* 1991; Hater 1988, cited by Antonakis *et al.* 2004) who were keen to promote visionary based leadership. The main theories that emerged during this era were:

- Transactional leadership
- Transformational leadership
- Charismatic leadership

Transactional leadership is considered to be part of transformational leadership. It is based on the allocation of tasks and duties to staff, the supervision of these tasks and an emphasis on management by exception. It is suggested that it is closer to a model of functional management than leadership. Its strengths are that it maintains the status quo, 'gets the job done' and maintains a sense of normality (Higgs, 2003).

Among its perceived weaknesses are that it is one paced; reactive rather than proactive; does not flourish in a crisis; does not inspire followers and does not lend itself to change management (Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012).

Transformational leadership theory can be defined as the process where an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower (Burns, 1978). Some examples of those considered to be transformational leaders include Mahatma Gandhi, Ryan White (Aids Awareness), Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy (Northouse, 2001).

Some of the strengths of transformational leadership include the fact that it has been widely researched from many different angles. The process that links leader and followers also lends credibility to the theory. It also presents a broader view of leadership that adds to other models such as contingency, behaviour and charismatic leadership. Finally, it places a significant emphasis on morals, values and follower needs (Northouse, 2001). This last point is particularly important in light of the need to rebuild trust in leadership following so many scandals, corruption and failed leadership in all areas of society in recent years. However, the theory is not without its flaws. It has been criticised for lacking conceptual clarity (Yukl, 2006). Therefore its boundary assumptions and constraints are not always clear. Sometimes the theory has also been interpreted too simplistically. There has also been a tendency to treat transformational leadership as a variant of traits theory rather than an extension of behaviour theory (Yukl, 2006).

Charismatic leadership advocates a vision, suggests that leaders act in unconventional ways, make self-sacrifices, display trust, are confident about their proposals, use visioning and persuasive appeals and use skills and expertise (Yukl, 2006).

The origins of charismatic leadership can be traced to the work of Max Weber who differentiated charismatic authority from more traditional or legal/bureaucratic forms of authority (Javidan and Waldman, 2003). Charisma tends to occur when there is a social crisis, a leader emerges with a radical vision, they offer a solution to the crisis, and the leader attracts followers who believe in the vision (Yukl, 2006).

There are a number of weaknesses associated with charismatic leadership (Conger and Kanungo, 1998). These include the possibility that:

- Personalised charismatic leaders are authoritarian
- Charismatic leaders can disregard established and legitimate channels of authority as well as the rights and feelings of others
- They can demand unquestioning obedience and dependence in their followers.

### **Summary**

Transactional, transformational and charismatic leadership theories represent a shift from a focus on the leader alone to the interaction between leaders and their followers and how they influence each other. It is proposed that these theories do not fully explain the leadership models that exist in organisations. The theories also fail to recognise that leadership is not vested in one individual only and will most likely also be found throughout the organisation. It is argued that to date no dominant leadership theory has emerged and that the literature remains in several competing 'silos' of styles and approaches, each emphasising different aspects of leadership (Fernandez, 2004).

### **What is effective leadership?**

The previous section highlights the diverse leadership styles which exist in the workplace. However an important question for any organisation is: what is effective leadership, and how can this be defined, measured and improved? It has been suggested that effective leadership occurs when an organisation is willing to give increasingly broader leadership responsibilities to its leader (Howard and Bray, 1980).

Another indication of leadership effectiveness can occur when the group or organisation is successful (Likert, 1961; 1967, cited by Antonakis *et al.* 2004). The ability to bring about change is another hallmark of effectiveness (Collins 2002, cited by Antonakis *et al.* 2004). It can be inferred that trust is a significant element of effective leadership as is the ability to lead and implement change.

These elements in particular will be examined in the context of exploring the leadership facets that exist among middle and senior IOT managers and how effective these facets are deemed to be by academic staff.

Conger (1999), cited by Antonakis *et al.* (2004), identified nine components of effective leaders based on transformational and charismatic leadership styles. These were: vision; inspiration; role modelling; intellectual stimulation; meaning making; appeals to higher-order needs; empowerment; setting of high expectations and fostering of collective identity. These are just some examples of the elements of effective leadership. Many more will be explored throughout this paper in the context of underlying leadership styles. A summary of the features of the main leadership styles is outlined in Table 2 below followed by an emerging model of effective leadership in Table 3.



**Table 2: Summary of main leadership theories**

Leadership theory	Significant Features	Reference
Traits	Only individuals with specific traits can lead organisations. Leaders are born not made. Individuals possess special or inborn characteristics that enable them to be leaders.	(Adair, 2006); (Kanji and Moura E SÁ, 2001); (Northouse, 2001); (Antonakis <i>et al.</i> , 2004)
Behaviour	Leader adapts his/her behaviour according to the state of the organisation at any given time.	(Kanji and Moura E SÁ, 2001); (Northouse, 2001)
Situational/contingency	Situational style suggests that leaders match their style to the right setting. Leadership is often considered without adequate regard for the structural considerations that affect and moderate its conduct. Focuses on style, style range or flexibility and style adaptability or leadership effectiveness. Contingency style focuses on the social context in which the leadership occurs.	(Fiedler, 1972); (Northouse, 2001); (Zaccaro and Klimoski, 2001); (Bruno and Lay, 2008)
Transactional (includes some elements of transformational)	Consists of contingent rewards and management by exception. Concentrates on the exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers. Transactional Leaders clarify followers' responsibilities, their performance objectives and their tasks that must be completed. An exchange process based on the fulfilment of contractual obligations and is typically represented as setting objectives and monitoring and controlling outcomes.	(Bass 1997, and Bass and Avolio 1996, cited by Higgs 2003); (Eptropaki and Martin 2005, cited by Sadeghi and Pihie 2012); (Avolio <i>et al.</i> , 1999); (Antonakis <i>et al.</i> , 2003)

Leadership theory	Significant Features	Reference
Transformational	Suggests a connection between the leader and his/her followers to create a vision for change and a desired future state of the organisation. Transformational leaders encourage followers to do more than they are required, are proactive and help followers to attain unexpected goals; they move followers beyond immediate self interest. Transformational leadership focuses on social values and appears in times of distress and change. There are four elements of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration. Transformational leaders are proactive, raise followers' awareness for transcendent collective interests, and help followers achieve extraordinary goals.	(Burns 1978 and Bass 1995 cited by Sadeghi and Pihie 2012); (Antonakis <i>et al.</i> , 2003); (Bass 1999); (Bass 1985)
Charismatic	Advocates a vision which the leader 'sells' to his/her followers and together they rise up to overcome a crisis. May be seen as additive of the classical Traits and Behaviour styles. Charisma can be conferred on leaders by people they lead.	(Weber 1947, cited by Javidan and Waldman 2003); (Conger and Kanungo, 1998); (Yukl, 2006)

**Table 3: Emerging Model of effective leadership (Higgs, 2003)**

Envision Engage Inquire Develop	Skills/competencies
Authenticity Integrity Will Self-belief Self-awareness	Being yourself

It is evident from Table 3 above that this emphasis on leadership requires both a range of skills and also high levels of personal values. The style of the leader is suggested to be one of the greatest contributors to leadership effectiveness (Higgs, 2003). Leadership effectiveness can closely depend on outcomes and consequences of the leaders’ activities for followers and the organisation (Yukl 2006, cited by Sadeghi and Pihie 2012).

As Warren Bennis (1996:160), cited by (LFHE) (2012), suggests: *‘effective leaders put words to the formless longings and deeply felt needs of others. They create communities out of words’*. Tables 3 and 4 illustrate the wide range of factors that contribute to leadership effectiveness. It is expected many of the factors identified will form the basis of a questionnaire to be used in the study. Participants will first be asked to identify the existence of a range of leadership styles and then asked to determine their effectiveness. The implications for the current study (as stated in the introduction) are that it is proposed that this will be one of the first studies of its kind of leadership and its effectiveness in the IOT sector in Ireland. Table 4 below illustrates a wide range of factors identified by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) which contribute to leadership effectiveness.

**Table 4: Effective leadership facets (LFHE, 2007; 2009)**

Effective behaviour	Reference
Providing strategic direction	Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE, 2007; 2009)
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	
Having personal integrity	
Having credibility to act as a role model	
Facilitating participation in decision-making; consultation	
Providing communication about developments	
Representing the department/institution to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf	
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department/institution	
Protecting academic staff autonomy	

### **Leadership in public organisations**

It is suggested that public-sector challenges require effective leadership at all levels. Leadership in the public sector can be difficult simply because it is very public and visible (Turner, 2001). Van Wart (2003) also highlighted the difficulties of leading ‘*in the public eye*’. These difficulties include greater access by the public, media focus and greater levels of public awareness. Also he states that the public are less forgiving of mistakes by public sector leaders. This latter issue may encourage safe or non-risk taking behaviour. The context in which leaders in public sector organisations operate has also grown in complexity. The mission, structure, culture and levels of discretion *inter alia* pose challenges for modern day leaders. Most specialised studies on public-sector leadership concentrate on military organisations (Van Wart, 2003). The current buzzwords in the Irish public sector are reform and change.

Managing organisational change has become a key challenge in the public sector, (Fernandez and Rainey, 2006). McLoughlin and Wallis (2007) have traced this reform and change agenda in the Irish public sector through a number of policy phases including:

- Strategic Management Initiative (1994)
- Delivering Better Government (1996)
- Freedom Of Information Act (1997)
- Delivering Quality Public Service (1999)
- Performance Management Development System (2000)
- Public Service ('Croke Park') Agreement (2010)
- National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 ('Hunt Report') (2011)

It is evident that many of these reforms have been driven by Government policy and have either been imposed externally or else agreed as part of national pay/social partnership agreements. It is also suggested that the management of change is becoming increasingly important in the public sector. This change is driven by a series of difficult challenges (Turner, 2007):

- Changes in policy direction caused by change of Government and sensitivity to topical issues
- Competing goals, missions and mandates
- Resource shortages
- Competition with the private sector for top talent

Public sector leadership is enormously challenging and requires individuals with the right experience and training (Turner, 2007). Change can be likened to transformation but it is suggested that they cannot be confined to a single transformational leader. Simpson and Beeby (1993) also state that the focus is moving from transformational leaders 'in position' to that of team and organisational process. This adds to the view that leadership is distributed throughout the organisations and not just confined to top management.

Fernandez *et al.* (2010) support this view stating that the continued treatment of leadership as a role played by a top executive runs the risk of failing to capture the range of leadership facets in the public sector. It is also proposed that employees are demanding their right to be informed and consulted on major decisions which affect their terms and conditions of employment including major organisational change (O' Brien, 2002). These rights are also enshrined in Ireland in the Employees (Provision of Information and Consultation) Act 2006. The OECD (2001) published a key report on leadership in the public sector. They based these findings on the changing environment which requires a new type of leadership. They suggested that the role of leadership in the public sector was to:

- Act as change/reform agents
- Enhance organisational capacity/performance
- Integrate other HR activities
- To recognise that the role differs in different contexts

However, Walker (2011) cites the difficulties facing public sector leaders attempting to affect change in their organisations. These include:

- Resistance to public sector change is real
- Too many masters, players and rules
- Not enough money to start over and do it right
- Ambiguity or disagreement about who gets to decide what the goals are
- Numerous risks attached to doing something different.

This view has been challenged on a number of occasions. There is a significant emphasis on achieving value for money and '*doing more with less*' (OECD, 2001). Aziz *et al.* (2012) suggest that the potential does exist for transformational leadership to appear at the top of public organisations. This is dependent upon a number of factors, including the organisation's history, the characteristics of the leader, his or her tenure of office, as well as numerous other factors.

However, the same authors caution against top level transformational leaders on the basis that they may unsettle existing traditions and systems. Lawler (2007) argues that the focusing on individual leaders deflects from the consideration of the relevance of distributed or collective leadership in the public sector. This supports the view that leadership cannot be seen as residing in top level leaders exclusively. McLoughlin and Wallis (2007) endorse this view by suggesting that top-down policy leadership needs to be complemented by effective 'middle-out' organisational leadership. They add that leadership needs to be developed at all levels of public organisations.

Most who have worked in or studied the working of the public service will agree that effective leadership is critical to organisational success and public sector performance (Moynihan and Ingraham, 2004). The public sector faces the paradox of requiring flexibility and innovation in order to cope with the changing demands of the environment, while at the same time maintaining a focus on not-for-profit service and accountability to a diverse range of stakeholders, a focus which requires stability and the restraint of innovative propensities (Parry and Proctor-Thomson, 2003). It is suggested that for public sector organisations to survive in the future, the focus of their leaders must be towards developing innovative organisational cultures in order to counter these negative implications of continual environmental change (Valle 1999, cited by Parry and Proctor-Thomson 2003). In effect, there is a tension between the need to be both transformational and transactional at once. Van Wart and Berman (1999) suggest that the move towards flexibility and leanness has been at the expense of public sector values. Theobald (1997), cited by Parry and Proctor-Thomson (2003), suggests that an organisational culture change to a more 'flexible' structure may in fact be detrimental to public service. He adds that a more standardised, transactional culture is necessary for effectiveness in the public sector. Valle (1999:245), cited by Parry and Proctor-Thomson (2003), proposes that *'the changing nature of public service requires new leadership, and that such leadership must promote flexibility and adaptability in organisations and in individuals'*. He also states that public sector leadership must involve clear and pronounced vision, effective communication, and inspired motivation towards organisational goals.

This section has highlighted the challenges facing the public sector both in Ireland and internationally. The importance of leadership to deal with these challenges has been articulated. The difficulties facing leaders and suggested strategies to overcome them have been identified. The distinctiveness of leadership in the public sector has been illustrated and as the HE sector is largely public sector in nature, the following section will specifically address this sector.

### **Leadership in higher education**

In the HE sector, there is a growing focus on leadership (Nuemann and Nuemann 1999; Sathye 2004; and Wisnewski 2004). It was found that many of the leadership facets used by HE institutions have their origins in the business sector (Spendlove, 2007). The academic literature reviewed has indicated a significant interest in United Kingdom (UK); American and Australian HE leadership. Kantabutra (2010); Nuemann and Nuemann (1999) and Spendlove (2007) refer to leadership qualities such as visioning, focusing, implementing, communicating, motivating followers, credibility and people skills.

*The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* ('Hunt Report') (2011) mirrors some of the publications in the United Kingdom (UK) such as: *Higher Education Futures: Key themes and Implications for Leadership and Management*, LFHE (2010) and *Higher Education Collaborations: Implications for Leadership, Management and Governance*, LFHE (2011). One of the key common themes linking these three reports is that influences on HEIs are changing and that they in turn are impacting on leadership in the HE sector.

LFHE (2007) also finds evidence of 'reluctant' managers at middle management level and increased 'managerialism' imposed by Government and other policy makers leading to reduced autonomy. They are often perceived as people in the middle, the 'meat in the sandwich', trapped between senior management and academic staff. Current trends in HE would seem to indicate that HODs are being pushed towards management rather than leadership. It has also been found that that the rise of 'managerialism' in UK universities reflects a withdrawal of trust by government from the universities (LFHE, 2007).



It is argued that similar developments are evident in Ireland where new funding models and staff control frameworks have seriously restricted the autonomy of leaders and managers. Additionally, the shift of the debate from ‘collegial’ to ‘managerial’ leadership, has led many researchers to the conclusion that there appears to be a struggle for control in HEIs between professional managers and academic staff (LFHE, 2012). Eleven effective leadership facets have been identified by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009). These are: *Providing strategic direction; Creating a structure to support the strategic direction; Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment; Establishing trustworthiness as a leader; Having personal integrity; Having credibility as a role model; Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation; Providing communications about developments; Representing the department/institution to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf; Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department/institution and Protecting academic staff autonomy.*

This section has illustrated the emerging trends in leadership in the HE sector drawing on the recent study in the UK context. It raises a number of important questions for middle and senior level leadership in the Irish IOT sector which is the focus of the current study. It has built on the sections dealing with mainstream and public sector leadership. The following section will establish the research question and the proposed conceptual framework/model to be used in the research study.

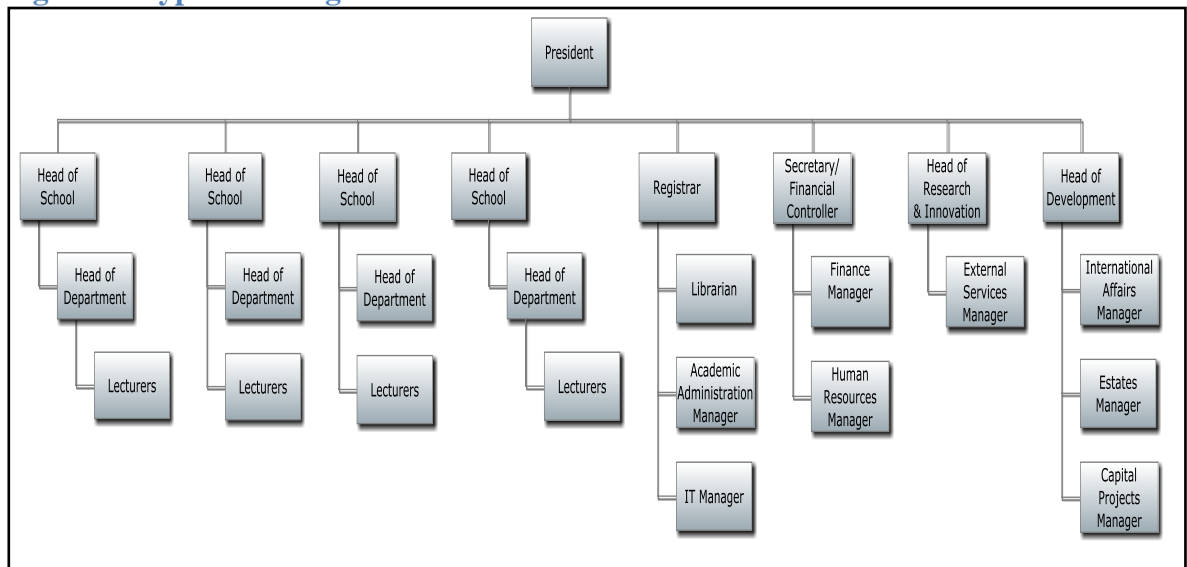
### **Proposed research study**

It is suggested that leadership can be shared or distributed throughout organisations. This has been labelled as ‘beyond authority leadership’ (Huxham and Vangen 2000, cited by LFHE 2011) or ‘distributed leadership’ whereby the leadership process is conceived of as dispersed across the organisation (within systems and relationships) rather than residing within the individual traits and capabilities of a formally recognised leader’ (Bolden *et al.* 2008, cited by LFHE 2011:16). A form of distributed leadership was evident in a study of UK vice-chancellors (Bargh *et al.* 2000, cited by LFHE (2007)).

This study found that at this level, leadership, if it is to be successfully accomplished, can rarely be a solitary activity and instead involves the constant interaction with colleagues in the pursuit of a ‘shared vision of reality consistent with broader organisational goals’. This further supports the view that leadership styles rather than leaders themselves should be the subject of this research study. Consequently, it has been decided to look at leadership styles at both senior and middle management level in IOTs.

Figure 2 below illustrates the typical management structure presenting in IOTs. This chart shows the senior management team led by the President supported by HOSs and Heads of Function. Each HOS has a number of HODs reporting to him/her and lecturers report to their respective HODs.

**Figure 2: Typical management structure in an IOT**



The research question emerging is: ‘*What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology and which are perceived to be important by academic staff?*’ This question has emerged from an extensive literature review to identify and classify leadership theories which are applicable to mainstream; public sector and specifically the HE sector. In order to move beyond a specific focus on individual leadership styles and leaders themselves, it is proposed to research leadership facets in five IOTs in Ireland at both middle and senior management levels.

The study will involve asking academic staff to identify leadership facets at both middle and senior management levels in their IOTs. This study presents an excellent opportunity to conduct an extensive study amongst academic staff in IOTs which will contribute greatly to the body of knowledge on leadership in HEIs.

### **Original contribution**

This research will make a significant contribution to knowledge and understanding of leadership facets and their effectiveness in HEIs and in particular the IOT sector in Ireland. It will seek to bridge the gap in the literature between general leadership and HE leadership facets. It can also be inferred that this research will make an original contribution to both the existing mainstream body of literature on leadership as well as developing a new stream dedicated to leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland. Another potential outcome is the development of insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes for senior and middle managers in the sector. In terms of academic theory contribution, the study has the potential to build on the extensive existing body of leadership literature. It will do this by growing the relatively low volume of literature which is specific to both public and HE sector leadership. It will also present an opportunity to critique established leadership theories in the specific context or situation of the IOT sector.

### **Research methods**

It is proposed that a questionnaire will be used to examine the existence of each of the classical and new/contemporary leadership theories (identified in Table 2 above) and their effectiveness in the IOT sector. This questionnaire will be based on some aspects of the MLQ developed by Bass and Avolio (Bass, 1985). The MLQ has undergone several revisions based on the experience of its use in various studies (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003). The MLQ has been validated and was deemed suitable for a study of leadership in public and private colleges in Pakistan (Bodla and Nawaz, 2010). The current version, the MLQ (Form 5X) contains forty five items of which thirty six represent the nine leadership factors and nine items which assess three leadership outcome scales.

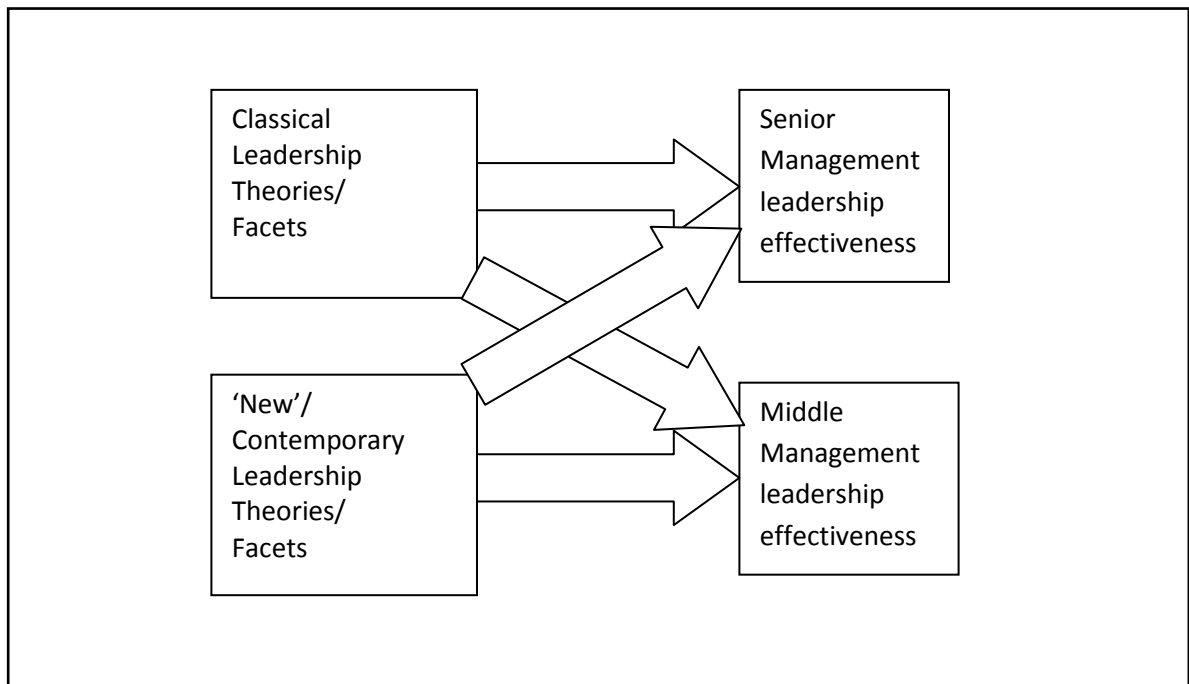
The thirty nine factors are based on facets associated with transformational; transactional and passive/avoidant leadership. The three outcome scales are: extra effort; effectiveness and satisfaction. It is suggested that the MLQ will not address all the leadership styles which form the basis of the current study.

Also, it is not intended to address passive/avoidant leadership unless it emerges from the findings. The only outcome scale in the MLQ that is relevant to the current study is effectiveness. On this basis, a questionnaire will have to be designed which will establish the existence of the leadership facets (see Table 2 above) and also to seek perceptions of their effectiveness.

### Conceptual framework

The diagram outlined in Figure 3 below illustrates the proposed conceptual model for this study. The research question emerging is: *‘What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology and which are perceived to be important by academic staff?’*

**Figure 3: Proposed conceptual model for evaluation of leadership facets and their perceived importance in IOTs**



It is suggested that a questionnaire will be used to identify which leadership facets exist among senior and/or middle managers in the IOT sector and their perceived effectiveness. They have been grouped into the two broad groups of classical and ‘new’/contemporary theories that were critiqued in the earlier part of this paper. It is possible that there may be a wide range of findings in the current study, including for instance that:

- Similar leadership facets exist among both senior and middle managers
- Different leadership facets exist among both senior and middle managers

Consequently, it has been decided to present a number of subsidiary research questions linked to the main research question. Each of these questions will be framed as an open question to reflect the themes that emerged from the literature. The three proposed questions for the current study are:

- *What are the leadership facets that exist among senior managers in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?*
- *What are the leadership facets that exist among middle managers in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?*
- *How do academics define leadership effectiveness for middle and senior managers?*

### **Conclusions**

Leadership is a subject which has been prolifically researched. However, it can be argued that significantly more research is required in the public sector arena. In particular it is asserted that it is timely to study leadership facets and their effectiveness in the HE and more specifically the IOT sector. The evolution of leadership theories has been traced from the ‘Great man’ style of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century right up to the positive leadership theories of transformation and charismatic in the 1980s and 1990s. This paper has then focused on leaderships facets in public and HE sectors. The selection of the IOT sector as a population of choice has been justified on the basis of the scale and the pace of continuous change that is now evident in the sector.

The critique of leadership facets has demonstrated that leadership exists as a distributed activity in organisations rather than being vested in senior executives alone. Leadership effectiveness is also examined and while a single definition has not been established, a wide range of factors which contribute to leadership effectiveness have been identified.

A number of leadership models are explored before the conceptual framework for this study is developed and illustrated. This conceptual framework is accompanied by three open ended subsidiary research questions which are designed to test the main research question: '*What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology and which are perceived to be important by academic staff?*' A questionnaire based on the MLQ has been chosen as the appropriate research method for this current study.

This research will make an original contribution to both the existing mainstream body of literature on leadership as well as developing a new stream dedicated to leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland. Another potential outcome is the development of insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes for senior and middle managers in the sector. Finally, it is suggested that the findings and recommendations from the study will provide invaluable guidance to existing and future leaders/leadership practices in IOTs.

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**Preface between Paper 1 (Conceptual Paper) and Paper 2 (Research Methodology)**

## **Preface between Paper 1 (Conceptual Paper) and Paper 2 (Research Methodology)**

### **Introduction**

Following feedback from the examiners of paper 2, the researcher was advised to consider:

1. Developing a ‘newish’ conceptualisation of HE leadership in the Irish context by drawing on the UK study and extending the ideas presented.
2. If the IOT sector is unclear as to what leadership styles/ competencies are required
3. What informed the research question
4. The ‘so what?’ aspect of the research
5. Is Mintzberg’s ‘leader/manager’ debate relevant/ important? These terms are used interchangeably. Correct – consider Covey who does not differentiate between them.
6. With reference to Leadership Foundation UK, do they have instruments? The examiners suggested that you could come out with an instrument via testing this empirically. You will still need to understand other approaches, but then you take a model and test it (by either a reductionist approach where you develop the model first and then test it or by a deterministic route where you test an existing model) – be clear as to the focus/ core aim and objectives in context.
7. Consider whether leadership effectiveness policy impact refers to the government or are they the IOTs contextualisation of government policy.

### **Researcher’s responses**

As outlined in paper 1, this study was one of the first into leadership in the HE sector in Ireland and in particular in the IOT sector. Consequently, it can be inferred that the facets envisaged for effective leadership in the sector are both unknown and ill defined. This study seeks to extend the work of Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) into an Irish context and to determine if similar leadership facets are important and effective in the IOT sector in Ireland.

The researcher is aware and open to the possibilities that some of the leadership facets identified in the UK study may not emerge or be as important in the IOT sector. Also, additional leadership facets may be established in the Irish study which could contribute to a new model and/or survey instrument which in itself could be an important contribution to theory.

The researcher also reflected on the examiners' comments about dependent variables but following consultation with his supervisor decided not to follow this route but to expand the research question into three sub-research questions: two covering the existence of leadership facets at both Head of School and Department level as perceived by academic staff and one question asking academic staff to define leadership effectiveness at those levels

In terms of the impact of the study, it is proposed by the researcher that it would add to the existing body of literature on mainstream leadership as well as developing a specific stream on effective leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland. In terms of contribution to practice, it is suggested that the study's findings would lead to insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes in IOTs in Ireland for existing and future Heads of School and Department.

The debate on the similarity/differences between management and leadership is one that has raged for many years and will most likely continue to do so for many decades into the future. The researcher is of the view that this debate will not be resolved in this study but contributions can be made to theory and practice through its findings. The researcher welcomes and accepts the advice of using Covey's and indeed other key academic writers to expand and contribute to this ongoing debate.



Some of Covey's key (1992) views can be outlined as follows:

- While managers must focus on the bottom line, leaders must look to the top for clear vision and direction
- Leadership deals with the direction, management deals with speed
- Leadership focuses on the top line, management focuses on the bottom line
- Leadership derives its power from values and correct principles. Management organises resources to serve selected objectives to produce the bottom line
- Of course management and leadership are not mutually exclusive; in fact it might be said that leadership is the highest component of leadership.

The research conducted by Professor Alan Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) was based on an extensive literature review and interviews with leadership researchers. When contacted by the researcher, Professor Bryman stated that he was unaware of any quantitative studies in the area of effective leadership facets. An extensive literature review also supported this view. In paper 2, the research philosophy underlying the study is developed and selected. Firstly, the choice and justification of a deductive approach is explained. Then a discussion on positivist and subjectivist approaches is outlined before a decision is made to pursue a positivist or quantitative method for the study.

The final element of feedback relating to determination of leadership effectiveness by government policy or its interpretation is one that is under review throughout the thesis and will be addressed fully in the final section which deals with discussion, conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

## **Section2: Paper 2 Research Methodology**

# **Research Methodology for an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of School and Department levels in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland**

*Neil O' Sullivan, DBA Student at Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)*

*Supervised by Dr Alma McCarthy, NUI Galway*

*Submitted on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2013*

## **Abstract**

*The research question for this study is: 'What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) and which are perceived to be important by academic staff?' It will be one of the first research studies into leadership in Higher Education Institutions in Ireland and more particularly the IOT sector in Ireland. This paper will focus on the primary research stage of this study. It will be demonstrated that this study will lend itself to a positivistic philosophical stance based on a deductive approach which in turn determines that a quantitative measurement instrument should be used. It has been decided to employ a web-based survey for this study. The focus of the survey will be to explore the extent and importance of effective leadership facets at both Head of School and Department level as identified in a study of leadership in the UK in 2007. The survey will be conducted in five IOTs in Ireland amongst academic staff only. All academic staff in these Institutes will receive a copy of the survey. Over 1,800 academic staff are employed in the five Institutes chosen for the sample and it is hoped to obtain completed responses from 320 of these staff which would reflect a suitable sample size for the given population. Access will be gained by engaging firstly with the Presidents, Human Resource Managers and union officers in each Institute. Ethical approval will be sought for the study and will be based on informed consent and guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality. Data will be analysed using SPSS and the presentation of findings will be the subject of a future paper.*

*Keywords: Leadership facets, Effectiveness, Positivistic, Web-based survey, Ethics.*

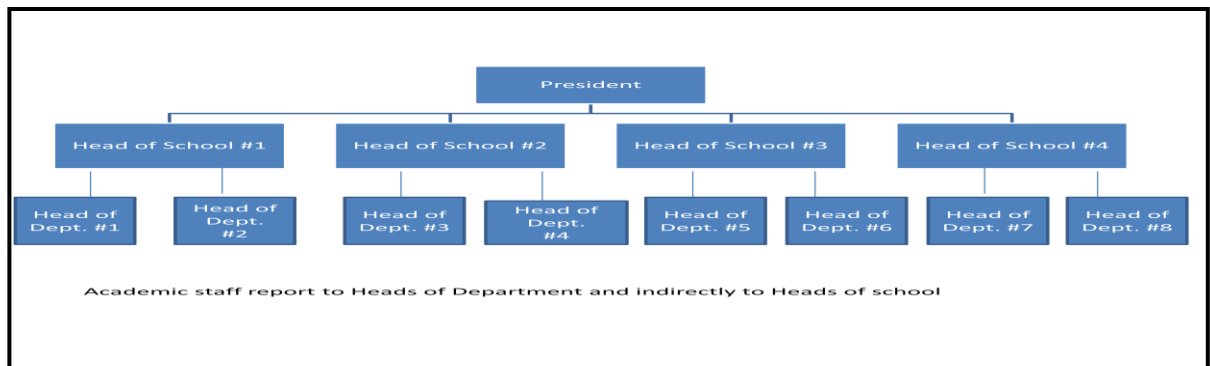
## Introduction

In the conceptual paper submitted to the doctoral colloquium in December, 2012 the main academic literature focusing on leadership was identified and discussed. It was found that while there was a significant volume of literature on leadership in the private sector but that research specific to the public sector is far less prolific. The research question for this study is: *'What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) and which are perceived to be important by academic staff?'* This research questions is subdivided into three questions namely:

- *What are the leadership facets that exist among senior academic managers (i.e. Heads of School) in the Institute of Technology sector as perceived by academic staff?*
- *What are the leadership facets that exist among middle level academic managers (i.e. Heads of Department) in the Institute of Technology sector as perceived by academic staff?*
- *How do academics define leadership effectiveness for middle and senior managers?*

The following diagram illustrates the typical academic management structure in an Institute of Technology (IOT).

**Figure 1: Typical IOT academic management structure**



These questions pose a number of challenges for the researcher and indeed the study. Firstly, it will be necessary to identify existing leadership facets at both Head of School (HOS) and HOD levels in IOTs.

These will then be mapped against those identified in the literature review in the earlier conceptual paper. It may emerge that these facets are similar or different at both levels. A critical element of the primary research will be to ask academic staff to select those facets that are effective at either or both management levels. It is anticipated that the instrument used in this study, namely, a web-based survey will need to contain matrix type sections. These sections will focus on both the extent and relative importance of effective leadership at both HOS and HOD levels in IOTs. This paper begins with a discussion of the philosophical issues which will ultimately decide the methodology and indeed the specific method that will be employed in this study. This opening section determines that a deductive approach leading to a positivist/objectivist stance is best suited to the study.

This position is reached following an analysis of the key features as espoused by a number of authors (Burrell and Morgan 1979; Saunders *et al.* 2000 and Sekaran and Bougie 2010). The second section of the paper will address the selection of the preferred research technique/method. It commences with a brief overview of quantitative and qualitative methods and then proceeds with a proposal to use a web-based survey as this is best suited to a deductive/positivist/objectivist approach.

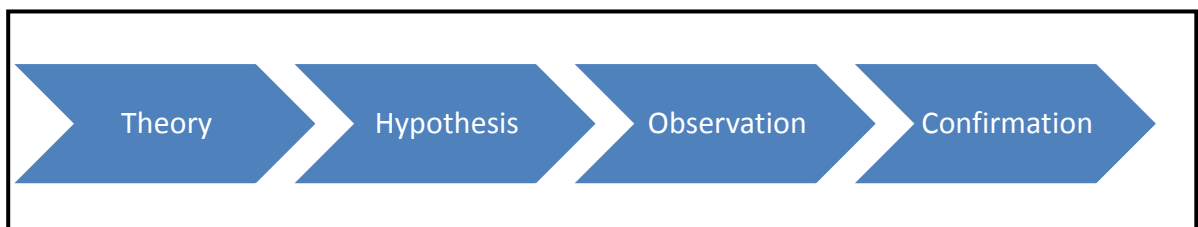
This section is followed by a review of the overall research design (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). It helps place the primary research in the context of the overall study and seeks to ensure that the various elements such as the purpose of the study; unit of analysis; sampling design; study setting and data collection are all aligned with each other. The critical issues of the reliability and validity of the study are then considered and means of assuring both are identified from the literature and will be employed in the survey design and implementation. Survey features follows these sections and receives significant attention in the paper. Specific actions such as pre-contacting senior managers and union officers in participating institutes to facilitate access are identified. Types of questions that may be contained in the web-based survey are also illustrated in this section. The benefits of pre-testing; sequencing of questions and measurement scales are also discussed.

The specific features and strategies associated with web-based surveys are also covered in some detail. A key section of the paper addresses the subject of ethics. The researcher is aware of the need to obtain ethical approval to survey staff in his own IOT. An application was made in March 2013 to ensure that approval can be discussed and hopefully obtained at the meeting of the Ethics Committee meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2013. The constant challenge to achieve high completion and return rates is also addressed in the paper. This links closely to the section on survey features and design as getting these right assists response and completion rates. Sample size and composition are also discussed in the context of the entire IOT sector and more specifically the five IOTs selected to be part of the study. Particular attention is given to the reduction and elimination of typical errors that may occur. A brief introduction to data analysis which will be the subject of another paper is also included. The conclusions of the paper are then stated before an extensive bibliography is attached. The paper now begins with an overview of the research philosophy.

### Research philosophy

This section of the paper will feature a discussion on the philosophical positioning of the study. The research question for this study is: *'What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology and which are perceived to be important by academic staff?'* It is argued that all research must begin with a discussion on its philosophical stance as this determines the major elements of the research (Adcroft and Willis, 2008). This view is supported by Trow's (1957), cited by Bryman (1984), advice that *'the problem under investigation properly dictates the methods of investigation'*. This study, in the view of the researcher, requires a deductive approach. This approach is illustrated in Figure 2 below:

**Figure 2: Deductive Approach (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010)**



The rationale for the selection of a deductive approach is that the proposed study is predicated on leadership theories derived from academic literary sources which correspond with the starting point of deductive approaches. Secondly, while the present study is not underpinned by hypotheses, a number of subsidiary questions derived from the main research question have been established which lend themselves to the model outlined in Figure 2 above. It is intended using a large scale web-based survey to measure these objectives and finally to confirm or otherwise their adherence to the underlying theory. Consequently, the research problem requires a positivist stance. A deductive research method entails the development of a conceptual and theoretical structure prior to its testing through empirical observation (Gill and Johnson, 2002). According to Saunders *et al.* (2000), deduction emphasises:

**Table 1- Features of deductive approach**

Scientific principles
Moving from theory to data
The need to explain casual relationships between variables
The collection of quantitative data
The application of controls to ensure validity of data
The operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition

The deductive approach lends itself to quantitative methodology which in turn has been labelled as a broadly positivist or empiricist approach. Positivist approaches are based on the researcher viewing events from the outside (Bryman, 1984).

Easterby-Smith *et al.* (2008) share this view seeing positivism as the social world existing externally and that its properties should be measured through objective methods, rather than being inferred subjectively through sensation, reflection or intuition. Remenyi *et al.* (1998), cited by Saunders *et al.* (2000), provide further support arguing that with the positivist approach, the researcher is independent of, and neither affects, nor is affected by the subject of the research.

This approach lends itself to the current study as it the intention of the researcher to conduct a large scale web-based survey amongst academic staff in five IOTs. In conducting such a survey, the researcher will remain at ‘arm’s length’ from the participants thus ensuring objectivity and impartiality. In the next section of the paper, the proposed research techniques/methods will be discussed and selected.

### **Research techniques/methods**

This section of the paper will concentrate on the selection and justification of the appropriate methodology and methods for this research study. Following on from the philosophical positioning of the research study in the previous section, it is now intended to begin with a discussion on quantitative and qualitative approaches and then review and critique the various methods before selecting, justifying and describing the preferred method. It has been demonstrated that the philosophical stance for this research, namely a positivist/deductive approach, strongly supports the use of quantitative methods. However, the following table illustrates some of the key features of both qualitative and quantitative approaches and also the significant differences between them both.

**Table 2: Features of quantitative and qualitative methods**

Positivist (Quantitative)	Phenomenological/Hermeneutic Paradigm (Qualitative)
<b>Researcher looks for causality and fundamental laws</b>	<b>Researcher tries to understand what is happening</b>
Researcher concentrates on description and explanation	Researcher concentrates on understanding and interpretation
<b>Researcher should focus on facts</b>	<b>Researcher should focus on meanings</b>
Well defined, narrow studies	Narrow as well as total studies (holistic view)
<b>Researcher reduces phenomena to simplest elements</b>	<b>Researcher looks at totality of each Situation</b>
Thought is governed by explicitly stated theories and hypotheses	Researcher’s attention is less focused and is allowed to ‘float’ more widely

(Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2001; Gummesson, 2000).



Linking these to the earlier philosophical perspectives, it is suggested that the research study will need to engage mainly positivist or quantitative methods. However, Conger and Kanungo (1998) stated that qualitative studies on leadership are relatively rare but added that they should be the methodology of choice for topics as contextually rich as leadership. Clearly, a dilemma is already beginning to emerge with tensions between the choice of quantitative and qualitative methods for this research study. Bass (1985) initiated research around Burn's ideas on charismatic and transformational leadership. He developed what is now known as the MLQ. The MLQ measures both transactional and transformational leadership but it is mainly concerned with the latter (Northouse, 2001).

Kouzes and Posner (1987), cited by Antonakis *et al.* (2004), asked managers to write detailed memoirs of their best positive leadership experiences. From these memoirs emerged questions about leadership behaviour which in turn were used to create the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The Ohio State and Michigan University studies from the 1940s used a Leadership Behaviour Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) to analyse the following behavioural dimensions: communication leadership (management of attention); credible leadership (management of trust); caring leadership (management of respect) and creative leadership (risk taking). They also identified three personal characteristics: confident leadership ('self-efficacy' or 'internal control'); follower centred leadership and visionary leadership. A study entitled *Leadership in the Irish Civil Service* (McCarthy *et al.*, 2011) used the Leadership Code 360<sup>0</sup> instrument (Ulrich *et al.*, 2008). This instrument was designed to measure leadership domains and competencies. The use of narratives/life stories as means of measuring influences on leadership facets can also be considered.

A semi-structured interview guide, including life history prompts, could be used as a means of refining and developing these life stories into individual case studies of IOT academic leaders/managers (Turner and Mavin, 2007). In the early 1980s, Warren Bennis conducted in-depth interviews with 90 CEOs of private and public organisations.

It is proposed that this study is of a descriptive nature. It is not envisaged that there are an explicit set of hypotheses but that there will be a large number of surveys completed by employees and these will be analysed for patterns in the data collected. Remenyi *et al.* (1998), cited by Holden and Lynch (2004), support this view by stating that in-depth surveys are considered to be mainly of the interpretivist tradition while large scale surveys are strictly positivistic with some room for interpretation. The survey method is usually associated with the deductive approach. It allows for the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way. It is considered to be authoritative by people in general (Saunders *et al.*,2000). Some disadvantages include the time required to design the survey and also that the data collected may not be as wide ranging as those collected by qualitative research methods. However, it has been decided to employ a large scale web-based survey in order to test the leadership facets that emerged from Bryman's study (LFHE, 2007; 2009). The next section of this paper will focus on the overall research design.

### **Research design**

As stated earlier, this study can be classified as being of a descriptive nature. Evidence will be sought of effective leadership at HOS and HOD levels as perceived by academic staff in five IOTs. Quantitative data in terms of frequencies, or mean and standard deviations, become necessary for such studies (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). That is, it seeks to delineate the important variables associated with the research problem. In addition, in such studies the extent of interference by the researcher is minimal. This study is also considered to exist in a non-contrived setting (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010).

In particular, it will seek to establish if the facets of effective leadership established in a previous study in the UK by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) exist in the IOT sector in Ireland. However, the current study will extend the previous study by seeking to establish by empirical research the extent to which such leadership facets and perhaps others exist in the IOT sector. It will also ask academic staff to determine the relative importance of these effective facets at both HOS and HOD levels. These effective facets are contained in table 3 below.

**Table 3 –Effective leadership facets (LFHE, 2007; 2009)**

<b>Effective leadership facets</b>	
Providing strategic direction	
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	
Having personal integrity	
Having credibility to act as a role model	
Facilitating participation in decision-making; consultation	
Providing communication about developments	
Representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf	
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the dept.	
Protecting staff autonomy	

As stated previously, it is envisaged that the web-based survey will consist of questions on the extent and importance of effective leadership facets at both HOS and HOD levels in IOTs. The questions will be based on variables relating to the effective leadership facets identified in Table 3 above. The design, format and layout of this survey will be discussed in more detail in a later section of this paper.

### **Reliability and validity**

There are four potential sources of errors from the use of surveys. These are *sampling error* (deliberate exclusion of certain members of the population); *non-coverage error* (some members of the population are not covered by the sampling frame); *non-response error* (some members of the sample population do not respond to the survey questions) and *measurement error* (discrepancy between underlying, unobserved variables such as opinions or facets and the observed survey responses) (Groves 1989, cited by Dillman 1991). It is important that the sample selected for the survey is carefully chosen to ensure that these errors are avoided. The sampling frame and selection are described in detail in a later section of this paper.

However, it is important to state at this juncture that it is planned to issue web-based surveys *via* the Human Resource Managers (HRMs) to all academic staff in five IOTs. To encourage a high response rate, follow-ups and incentives will be used so as to minimise the likelihood of any of the errors identified above occurring.

There are four main types of surveys, namely, *factual* (mostly associated with opinion polls and market-research); *inferential* (aimed at establishing relationships between variables and concepts); *exploratory* (developing a universal set of principles which are measurable and generalisable in any context) and *descriptive* (initial inquiry in an area or focused on organisational learning) (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). It is argued that study falls in the category of a *descriptive survey*. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure the external validity of this approach. The accuracy and stability of the survey can be resolved by pre-testing the survey before it is used in the research study. This in turn can ensure that the results from the study in the five IOTs can be generalised to the entire IOT sector. However, one must caution against any wider claims of generalisation such as stating that the results may be applicable to the University or indeed the wider public sectors in Ireland or beyond.

*Validity* is about whether the findings are really about what they appear to be about. It is a test of how well an instrument that is developed measures the particular concept it is intended to measure (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). Threats to *validity* include history/timing of the research; testing (expected outcomes for participants); instrumentation (following instructions from managers); mortality ('drop outs'); maturation (influence of other events) and ambiguity about causal direction (Dillman 2000; Salant and Dillman, 1994).

*Internal validity* can be determined by assuring that every eligible person should have an equal, non-zero chance of being included; using dependable instruments and ensuring that loss of data is minimised by following up on non/incomplete responses (Fink, 1995). It is hoped to achieve this by using HRMs in each of the participating IOTs as a contact point for distributing the survey to all academic staff.

*Generalisability* is sometimes referred to as *external validity* – are results generalisable to the wider population or other populations? Validity of surveys is generally assured by pre-testing. It is intended to pre-test the survey with staff in the researcher's own Institute. *External validity* is also verified by assuring that the patterns observed from the sample data will hold true in other settings and contexts (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008).

*Reliability* is a test of how consistently an instrument measures whatever concept it is measuring. *Reliability* can be assessed by posing the following question (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 1991:41, cited by Saunders *et al.* 2000): '*Will the measure yield the same results on different occasions?*' Testing for *reliability* can be enhanced by testing and re-testing as many times as necessary; examining internal consistency using *Cronbach's alpha* and using alternative forms of questions i.e. check questions – a number of questions in different forms asking the same things.

However, both *validity* and *reliability* can be enhanced by careful design of individual questions; clear layout of the survey form; lucid explanation of the purpose of the survey and pre-testing. In the next section of the paper the features and design of the survey will be discussed.

### **Survey features and design**

This study falls into the category of a descriptive survey in that it seeks to identify the extent and importance of effective leadership facets in IOTs at both HOS and HOD levels as perceived by academic staff. The concept of 'goodness of measure' must be adhered to in the instrument design. This means that the instrument developed to measure a particular concept is indeed accurately measuring the variable, and that, in fact it is measuring the concept that it was set out to measure (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010).

There are a number of issues which must be considered when designing the survey instrument:

- *The unit of analysis:* In this study, individual academic staff members within IOTs will fulfil this role and will form the basis for collation of data which will subsequently be analysed.
- *Whether it is planned to develop a universal theory or to confine the findings to local knowledge. In other words is it envisaged to be specific or generalisable?* It is proposed that this study will generalisable within the IOT sector but will not extend to the university or public sector generally.
- *Is it intended to concentrate on theory or data first?* In this study it is planned to commence with leadership theories particularly in relation to effective leadership in HEIs at both HOS and HOD levels.
- *Reductionism versus holism:* Relativist traditions find it hard to explain why the observed patterns are there. In this study, it is hoped to establish the elements of effective leadership that may exist at both HOS and HOD levels in IOTs.
- *Verification or falsification:* This classical dilemma must also be addressed. The example often cited in such circumstances is that of a study of swans. The following statements illustrate the issues involved. “All swans are white”; “all swans have white or black feathers”; “all swans are large birds”.

The anticipated outcome of the study is that facets of effective leadership at both HOS and HOD levels in IOTs can be established and ranked in importance in so far as they match those identified by Bryman in his study (LFHE, 2007; 2009). It is also critically important that the study makes a contribution to theory.

The survey design must be such that it links existing theory to questions and the potential answers to the extension or adaption of existing theory. As already stated, the study is predicated on Bryman’s Report (LFHE, 2007; 2009) which identified a wide range of effective leadership facets at both institutional and departmental levels in UK Universities. These facets will be the starting point for this study.

Findings may include that the same facets exist in IOTs in Ireland and/or that other facets will emerge from the survey. All such findings, it is argued will make a positive contribution to theory. Cognisance must also be taken of the context including the political context in which this research is taking place. Tense and divisive talks on terms and conditions of employment in the public sector have concluded in late February 2013 between the Government and public sector unions. Most public sector unions have voted in April, 2013 to reject the Government's proposals. In a worst case scenario, academic staff may refuse to co-operate with the researcher. However, such threats can be overcome by the experience of the researcher (Easterby-Smith *et al*, 2008). He has almost twenty years experience as a HRM in the IOT sector and is familiar with negotiating with unions especially the academic staff union, the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI). It is suggested that he is trusted by the union both locally and nationally and such trust will act as leverage to gaining access to academic staff members in WIT and other IOTs.

It is planned to write to national and local TUI officers; IOT Presidents and HRMs in order to maximise participation and response rates. Easterby-Smith *et al*. (2008) support this tactic stating that such advance communication should highlight that: the project has potential relevance and benefit to the organisation; the time and resources requested are minimal; the project appears not to be politically sensitive and the individuals concerned, and their institutions have good reputations.

In this study, the instrument to be used will be a web-based survey. A survey is a pre-formulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers, usually within rather closely defined alternatives. Surveys are deemed to be an efficient data collection mechanism when the researcher knows exactly what is required and how to measure the variables of interest (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010; deVaus 1996, cited by Saunders *et al*. 2000).

It has been decided to use an on-line, self-administered survey. Such a selection allows for minimal researcher involvement; reduction of bias and an efficient and low cost distribution.

The use of a web-based survey will maximise the reach of the instrument. It also offers great control because most users read and respond to their own mail on personal computer (Witmer *et al.* 1999, cited by Saunders *et al.* 2000).

The researcher has given a significant amount of consideration to means of providing rewards. Dillman (2000) suggests: showing positive regard; saying thank you; asking for advice; supporting group norms; giving tangible rewards; making the survey interesting; giving social validation and informing respondents that opportunities to respond are scarce. The researcher has decided to support a local charity based in the South East of Ireland called *Becky's Beat*. This charity was set up in 2011 by a former member of staff in WIT to create awareness of Sudden Cardiac Arrest in school-aged children and adolescents, and to highlight the need for defibrillators. The researcher is committed to making a small contribution to *Becky's Beat* for each completed survey returned.

### **Web-based surveys**

The internet is being increasingly selected as a means of surveying the public (Couper (2000, cited by Kaplowitz *et al.* 2004). Time and costs savings are deemed to be the main strengths of this method. In some cases a mixed mode i.e. paper and web surveys has been suggested to minimise non-response. However, it has also been shown that response rates for mail surveys may not translate to web surveys. Table 4 below illustrates two sets of proposals for the successful operation of web-based surveys.



**Table 4: Strategies for conducting web-based surveys**

<b>Witmer <i>et al.</i> (1999) cited by Saunders <i>et al.</i> (2000)</b>	<b>Dillman (2000)</b>
Contact recipients by e-mail and advise them to expect a survey	Utilise a multiple contact strategy much like that used for regular mail surveys
E-mail the survey with a covering letter	Keep the cover letter brief to enable respondents to get to the first question without having to scroll down the page
E-mail the first follow up one week after e-mailing out the survey to all recipients. This should thank early respondents and remind non-respondents to answer (include a copy of the survey)	Personalise all e-mail contacts so that none are part of a mass mailing that reveals either multiple recipient addresses or a listserv origin.  Inform the respondents of alternative ways to respond, such as printing and sending back their response
E-mail the second follow up to people who have not responded after three weeks. This should include another covering letter and a copy of the survey. The covering letter should be reworded to further emphasise the importance of completing the survey	Limit the column width of the survey to about 70 characters in order to decrease the likelihood of wrap-around text
A third follow-up can also be used if time allows or your response rate is low	Begin with an interesting but simple-to-answer question
	Include a replacement survey with the reminder message
	Ask Respondents to place Xs inside brackets to indicate their answers
	Consider limiting scale lengths and making other accommodations to the limitations of e-mail to facilitate mixed-mode comparisons when response comparisons with other modes will be made

The advantages of e-mail for surveying are enticing. It offers the possibility of very rapid surveying, an attribute well documented by past research (Bachmann *et al.* 1996; Kittleson 1995; Mehta and Sivadas 1995; Sproull 1986, cited by Schaefer and Dillman 1998). The next section of this paper will address the critical issue of ethics.

## Ethics

Any time you ask people to participate in a survey, it is your responsibility to respect both their privacy and the voluntary nature of their involvement. If you ignore this obligation, you violate respondents' trust in you and in surveyors that follow (Salant and Dillman, 1994). This statement is one by which every researcher should abide. The key inferences that can be drawn from this statement are that one should not coerce any person to take part in your research and that the anonymity and confidentiality of those that do participate is paramount.

Choosing a web-based survey will ensure that such issues are fully respected. Wells (1994:284), cited by Saunders *et al.* (2000), defines *ethics* 'in terms of a code of behaviour appropriate to academics and the conduct of research'. Surveys have been chosen over interviews to maximise trust as the researcher is a HRM in the IOT sector and participants may be concerned that comments expressed in interviews could adversely affect their future careers.

Ethical surveys mean that you encourage people to respond but do not pressure them in an offensive way. Saunders *et al.* (2000) for example have developed a checklist of requirements for informed consent which they recommend is given to both organisational 'gatekeepers' and intended participants. These requirements include giving information about the nature of the research; the requirements of taking part; the implications of taking part; participants' rights and most importantly how their answers/data will be used and reported. The same authors have also extended their advice to the overall research process.

In particular, they have also highlighted the need for researchers to behave properly and objectively; not to deceive participants; not to subject participants to questions that create stress or discomfort and to respect the right of participants to withdraw fully or partially from the process. Salant and Dillman (1994) proposed the following distinctions between lack of consent; implied and informed consent which is illustrated in Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Forms of Consent, (Salant and Dillman, 1994)**

Lack of consent	Implied consent	Informed consent
Participant lacks knowledge  Researcher uses deception to collect data	Participant does not fully understand his/her rights  Researcher implies consent about use of data from fact of access or return of survey	Participant consent given freely and based on full information about participation rights and use of data

Table 5 clearly illustrates that the best approach that can be employed is that of informed consent. As mentioned earlier, the researcher is a HRM in one of the IOTs that will participate in the study. It is critical that honesty and trust are established and maintained throughout the study. For this reason, informed consent must be the overriding principle on which the research is based.

Another key requirement of the study is the need to obtain ethical approval for the study. WIT operates a research ethics committee and the researcher has applied for ethical approval for the study. Other participating IOTs will also be offered a copy of WIT's approval. It is also planned to write to the President, HRM and TUI Branch Secretary in each participating IOT to inform them of the nature and purpose of the research and to invite their support for the study.

### **Maximising completion and return rates**

Dillman (1991) stresses the importance of maximising response rates by giving ample notice; using a financial incentive; using personalised correspondence; follow-ups; reminders and giving assurances on anonymity and confidentiality. Dillman (1991) also proposes the use of the Total Design Method (TDM) to increase the chances of a higher response rate.

This method is underpinned by a theoretical framework which espouses the idea that survey recipients' are most likely to respond if they expect that the perceived benefits of doing so will outweigh the perceived costs of responding. Confidentiality and anonymity have been shown to be important in terms of gaining access to organisations and individuals (Saunders *et al.*, 2000). It has been stated earlier that pre-testing is a critical step in survey design and indeed implementation. Dillman (2000) suggests the following steps should be including in a pre-testing situation:

- Review by knowledgeable colleagues and analysts
- A small pilot study
- A final check, did I do something silly?

Multiple contacts have been shown to be more effective than any other technique for increasing response to surveys by mail (Dillman 1991; Linskey 1975; Scott 1961; cited by Dillman 2000). It is argued that multiple contacts will also work successfully for web-based surveys.

Five further elements for achieving high response rates are identified (Dillman, 2000):

- Respondent friendly survey
- Four contacts by first class mail, with an additional 'special' contact
- Return envelopes with real first class stamps
- Personalisation of correspondence
- Token pre-paid financial incentives

While these elements relate to mail surveys, it is suggested that some of them, particularly the 'respondent friendly survey'; 'personalisation of correspondence' and 'token pre-paid financial incentives' would also greatly enhance response rates for web-based surveys. As stated earlier, it is planned to make a donation to *Becky's Beat* charity for every returned completed survey. It is also planned to use colleague HRMs as the point of contact in each institute for the distribution of the web-based surveys.

In terms of web-based surveys, it is important to be cognisant of colours; layout; appearance on screen etc. (Dillman, 2000). Web survey responses can be increased by numerous contacts (Kaplowitz *et al.*, 2004). An advanced mail notification also enhances response rate. Age may be a key factor in response rates to web-based surveys. It can be inferred that younger staff, say in their 30s, may be more likely to respond to web-based surveys. Personalised e-mail cover letters; follow up reminders; pre-notification of the intent to survey and simpler formats all enhance response rates (Solomon, 2001).

Wide disparities in internet access exist among ethnic and socioeconomic groups (Selwyn and Robson 1998, cited by Solomon 2001). Internet access is extremely available and coverage bias is likely to be less of concern among students and faculty within the USA, Canada and Western Europe (Solomon, 2001). Cook *et al.* (2000), cited by Solomon (2001), found that follow-up contacts with non-respondents, personalised contacts, and contacting sampled people prior to sending out the survey were the dominating factors in high response rates.

Barriers to completing the surveys include: the first question; complex question grid; being asked to supply one's e-mail address (Jeavons 1998, cited by Solomon 2001). The length of the survey will affect the response rate (deVaus 1996, cited by Saunders *et al.* 2000). The next section will address the issue of sampling and its importance in the research process.

### **Sampling**

The sample size and composition will be reflective of the size of the IOT sector and the total number of academic staff therein. The sector consists of fourteen autonomous institutes. There is a total of 4,517 academic staff in the sector (HEA, 2013). It has been decided to conduct the survey in five IOTs, namely, Waterford, Cork, Tralee, Limerick and Carlow. The total number of academic staff in these IOTs is 1,767 (HEA, 2013). It is proposed to issue surveys to all academic staff in these five IOTs. It is hoped to record a response rate of 320 approximately which would be representative of this population based on tables for determining sample sizes (Dillman, 2000; Krejcie and Morgan, 1970; Sekaran and Bougie, 2010).

As outlined earlier, web-based surveys designed on SurveyMonkey will be sent to the HRM in each IOT who will forward them to academic staff. Anonymity and confidentiality will be protected by the use of SurveyMonkey which will allow staff to self-select and return their responses on-line without being identifiable by the researcher. In addition, the researcher will seek ethical approval from WIT and indeed the other participating Institutes as required. This ethical approval will also require assurances of confidentiality; anonymity and informed consent as minimum pre-requisites for the study.

It is not anticipated at this stage that length of service; gender or age of respondents are controlling variables but such information will be sought and checked during the data analysis stage. If anomalies are detected arising from these variables, it may require a further survey based on restricted or complex probability sampling in order to assure the validity and reliability of the findings. Dillman (2000) and Salant and Dillman (1994) offer the following information on surveying errors which have been mentioned earlier in this paper. This researcher has identified how these errors can be overcome in the current study.

*Coverage error:* occurs when the list or frame from which the sample is drawn does not include all elements of the population that researchers wish to study. *Working closely with his HRM colleagues, the researcher will ensure that all members of academic staff will be included in the sample to ensure the reliability and validity of the data and the findings.*

*Sampling error:* occurs when researchers survey only a subset or sample of all people in the population instead of conducting a census. *As with coverage above, the researcher will ensure that all academic staff in five IOTs will be surveyed thus reducing if not eliminating any probable chance that the sample only represents a subset of the population.*

*Measurement error:* occurs when a respondent's answer to a given question is inaccurate, imprecise, or cannot be compared in any useful way to other respondents' answers. *The survey design will receive careful attention in order to make the instrument attractive to the recipient; easy to complete and lacking in complexity.*

*Non-response error:* occurs when a significant number of people in the survey sample do not respond to the survey and are different from those who do in a way that is important to the study. *A small financial incentive outlined above as a contribution to Becky's Beat will be made for each completed survey returned. The researcher is confident that this will encourage a good response rate. Other tactics will include a good introduction letter, informed consent and reminders sent to the people chosen in the sample.*

Next the issue of access to participating organisations and staff will be considered. The climate in the IOT sector is difficult with reducing budgets; a new national agreement that may feature reduced salaries; reduced annual leave and associated terms and conditions of employment. For this study to succeed it must carefully adhere to the recommendations (Saunders *et al.*, 2000) below. They list the following strategies to gain access to participants/organisations:

- *Allowing sufficient time: It is planned to contact institutes in May, 2013 and to issue the surveys by the end of September, 2013.*
- *Using existing contacts and developing new ones: It has already been stated that contact will be made with HRMs; Presidents and TUI officers in each IOT.*
- *Providing a clear account of purpose and type of access required: Full details of the scope of the research and the proposed use of the data sought will be explained before the study commences.*
- *Overcoming organisational concerns about the granting of the access: Reassurances about confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent will be confirmed both verbally and in writing before surveys are distributed.*
- *Identifying possible benefits to the organisation in granting you access: Participating organisations will be offered a copy of the results. This should be extremely helpful to them in identifying leadership development opportunities and challenges.*
- *Using suitable language: Every consideration will be given to ensure that honesty and simplicity are the dominant features of the language used at all stages of the process.*

- Facilitating ease of reply when requesting access: *The researcher will offer multiple means of reply in the form of land and mobile phone numbers; e-mail address and personal visits to each institute.*
- Developing your access on an incremental basis: *It is planned to achieve this by contacting the IOT Presidents firstly; then the HRMs and TUI officers and finally the academic staff themselves.*
- Establishing your credibility with intended participants: *As a HRM, the researcher is known by his colleagues in all other IOTs. In addition he is known by Presidents and union officers. He will use these contacts as a conduit to establishing credibility with academic staff in the five IOTs.*

In the next section of this paper a brief summary of the proposed data analysis will be presented. This will be the subject of a separate paper so the following section will constitute the intended future actions that will be undertaken.

### **Data analysis**

As stated earlier, it is planned to use a web-based survey in this study designed on SurveyMonkey. This survey will be based on the leadership effectiveness facets listed in Table 3. Each of the facets will lead a number of questions. The subject matter of these questions will be drawn from the academic literature. SurveyMonkey has a facility to link to SPSS and so data can be input easily from completed surveys to SPSS which will facilitate analysis and presentation.

This analysis will use *inter alia* Cronbach's alpha to determine reliability and 't' tests to examine sameness and differences in responses particularly in terms of the relative importance of effective leadership facets. This will be a critical area of analysis as it will not be sufficient to determine the existence of effective leadership facets alone. It will be just as important to determine which of these are perceived by academic staff to be the most important.



## Conclusion

The research question for this study is: *'What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology and which are perceived to be important by academic staff?'* It will be one of the first research studies into leadership in HEIs in Ireland and more particularly the IOT sector. The sector consists of 14 Institutes, employs over 8,200 staff, provides education to over 65,000 full-time and almost 20,000 part-time students and had a budget in 2013 of €394m (HEA, 2013). This scale of the sector clearly demonstrates a need for effective leadership especially in times of great changes and diminishing resources. The Department of Education and Skills (DOES) in 2011 published the *National Strategy for Higher Education* ('Hunt Report') to 2030 setting out its vision for the sector. Consequently, this research study will contribute greatly to the understanding and enhancement of effective leadership in the IOT sector.

The research design for this study has been carefully developed and selected following a literature review. The philosophical perspectives and research techniques are interrelated. The deductive/positivist approach has been selected over the inductive/subjectivist approach because it is deemed important to start from a theoretical base and then test this theory in practical settings and seek to confirm or otherwise the existence of effective leadership facets in the IOT sector. Also, it will be interesting and extremely worthwhile to determine effective leadership facets at both HOS and HOD levels in the sector and how these compare or contrast with those identified by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009). The importance of careful and correct survey design has been addressed in this paper. However, these issues must be combined with ethics and in particular, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity concerns. It is argued that such issues have received significant attention in this paper. The survey will be web-based using SurveyMonkey and will link to the data analysis tool SPSS.

Amongst the many proposed benefits expected to arise from this study are an enhancement of the existing body of literature on leadership; development of a specific research stream on effective leadership facets in the IOT sector in Ireland and insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes in IOTs in Ireland for existing and future leaders in IOTs.

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**Preface between Paper 2 (Research Methodology) and Paper 3 (Survey Instrument Design)**

## Preface between Paper 2 (Research Methodology) and Paper 3 (Survey Instrument Design)

### Introduction

Following feedback from the examiners of paper 2, the researcher was advised to consider:

- a. Refining the research question
- b. Making the proposed contributions more explicit
- c. Providing a diagrammatic representation of the research stages
- d. Justifying the 'exploratory' stance
- e. More carefully the application of the quantitative method to the current study
- f. Clarifying the terms 'facets' & 'factors'
- g. The instruments to be used and their *Cronbach's alpha*
- h. Testing the overall model of leadership using structured equation modelling (SEM) or partial least-squares (PLS)
- i. The justification of the selection of the five identified Institutes of Technology (IOTs) to be used as the sample base
- j. The possibility of asking participants to fill out the survey face-to-face, for example at a conference
- k. If there was potential to generalise to universities considering this is a university-based instrument?
- l. The (full) implications of anonymity (college, school, discipline, etc.)
- m. If there was value in collecting demographic data (respondent &/or leader)
- n. Providing a rationale for sample of HODs as leaders
- o. Defining 'academic' staff (consider different contracts, levels etc.)
- p. How he would know the management level (HOD, HOS)?
- q. If there is a risk of non-standard (high) response rate from own institute and if this will impact on the results given that individual institute response rates will not be known
- r. Consider access (it may not be feasible) and alternative means of gathering data as a contingency plan
- s. If a September rollout was the optimum date?
- t. The impact of current economic impact on participants (e.g. Croke Park 2, etc.)
- u. The balance between incentive to participate and anonymity.

### Researcher's responses

The research question in Paper 2 was '*What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) and which are perceived to be important by academic staff?*' This was divided into three sub-questions as follows:

- *What are the leadership facets that exist among senior academic managers (i.e. Heads of School) in the Institute of Technology sector as perceived by academic staff?*
- *What are the leadership facets that exist among middle level academic managers (i.e. Heads of Department) in the Institute of Technology sector as perceived by academic staff?*
- *How do academics define leadership effectiveness for middle and senior managers?*

This question and sub-questions are refined further in paper 4.

Paper 2 stated that the expected contributions from the study would include: '*an enhancement of the existing body of literature on leadership; development of a specific research stream on effective leadership facets in the IOT sector in Ireland and insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes in IOTs in Ireland for existing and future leaders in Institutes of Technology*'. It is accepted that these contributions need to be more explicit.

In Paper 3, this was extended to state: '*It is hoped that this research will make an original contribution to both the existing mainstream body of literature on leadership as well as developing a new stream dedicated to leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland. Another potential outcome is the development of insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes for senior and middle managers in the sector. It is suggested that the findings and recommendations from the study will provide guidance to existing and future leaders/leadership practices in Institutes of Technology. Finally, as the findings will emanate from academic staff across the IOT sector, it should assist those charged with recruiting, training and developing people at Head of School and Department levels.*

*In particular, it may help to identify those that possess the requisite leadership behavioural facets that will contribute to effective leadership at those levels and consequentially identify the training development needs of those in post and/or who aspire to serve at those levels in the IOT sector in the future’.*

It is further recognised that additional work is needed on this topic to identify tangible theoretical and practice based contributions arising from this study.

Following reflection on the need to include a diagrammatical representation of the research stages, it was decided to include this in Section 1, *‘Introduction and DBA Research Overview’*. It is proposed that this will aid readers of the thesis gain an early appreciation of the research process and link this throughout the various sections of the thesis.

The consideration of the exploratory or other nature of this study has been constantly reviewed throughout this thesis. Paper 2 has been revised to identify the study as a descriptive study.

It was decided to heed the examiners’ advice and to conduct a quantitative study using a self-designed, on-line questionnaire with three questions on both the importance and existence of each effective leadership facet. In addition, questions were posed on the overall effectiveness of leadership at HOD level; distinctiveness of leadership in the HE sector and the existence (or otherwise) of other effective leadership facets. The use of an online questionnaire facilitated the selection and the participation of a large number of academic staff which would not have been possible using qualitative methods. The *Cronbach’s alpha* and correlations have also been calculated using SPSS. All these issues are covered in Paper 4 *‘Findings from an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of Department level in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland’*.

This use of SEM and PLS was considered by the researcher and his supervisor but it was decided that these tests/models were not suited to the current study as there is not a conceptual framework or set of hypotheses underpinning the study.



This selection of five IOTs as the sample base for the study was also considered by the researcher and his supervisor following this request and other feedback received from the national HRM group. It was decided to extend the survey to all fourteen IOTs. However, three chose not to participate due to differing management structures in one IOT and opposition from HODs/management in two other IOTs.

It was decided not to pursue the suggestion of asking participants to complete face-to-face surveys as the subject matter of the research is quite sensitive and the researcher is a HRM in one of the IOTs and so face-to-face surveys would most likely result in a poor response rate and concerns about anonymity and confidentiality.

It was decided that the findings would be only generalisable at HOD level in the IOT sector. The University sector has different organisational structures and also the term of 'Head of Department' has a different meaning in that sector. However, it may be possible on completion of this study to design further survey instruments which may be usable in studies at other management grades in the IOT and/or University sector.

As stated above, the subject matter of this study was highly sensitive and so anonymity and confidentiality was paramount. The ethics committee in WIT was insistent on guarantees on both issues before granting ethical approval for the study. For example, the researcher gave a guarantee that he would disable the feature in SurveyMonkey that allowed IP addresses of participants and their institutions to be recorded. In addition, no questions were asked that would identify the IOT, School or specific subject discipline of participants. Questions were asked on Department size and subject domain but subjects were grouped generically, for example; *'Business/Education'*.

The final questionnaire contained four questions on HOD characteristics and seven questions on respondent characteristics. This provided valuable data in the findings paper and also allowed for analysis of difference between group responses by gender; age; length of service; size of department and subject domain.

HODs are the direct line managers for academic staff. Academic staff report directly to HODs in IOTs and they are responsible *inter alia* for timetabling; course development; staff management; resource management and related duties. A typical job description is attached as Appendix 1.

For the purposes of this study, academic staff was; defined as those holding one of the following grades: Asst. Lecturer; Lecturer Career Grade; Lecturer 1; Lecturer 2; Structured Lecturer 2 and Senior Lecturer 1 (Teaching). All these grades report directly to HODs. Researchers and similar graded staff were excluded as they frequently did not report to HODs and so their inclusion may have skewed the findings of the study.

Both management grades, HOS and HOD are very recognisable and defined in the IOT sector. With the exception of one IOT, all academic staff report to HODs and through them to HOSs throughout the sector.

It was recognised by the researcher and his supervisor that there was indeed a risk of a disproportionate response from his own IOT. However, anonymity and confidentiality as stated previously were paramount to the study. Consequently, it was decided to send pre-access letters to all IOT Presidents; HODs; Union Officers and HRMs.

It was also decided to distribute all questionnaires *via* HRMs with a link to SurveyMonkey so that participants could self-select and be assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The overall response was 327 completed questionnaires.

No discernible patterns of skewed responses were detected so the research can express a high level of confidence that his own IOT's responses did not affect the overall response patterns. In terms of gaining access to the IOTs, great care was taken in advance of distributing the questionnaire to ensure that all parties were comfortable with the proposed study. All principal stakeholders were notified in advance of the nature, content and purpose of the study. Queries and questions were answered and all were informed that ethical approval for the study had been obtained from the WIT Ethics Committee. As eleven of the fourteen IOTs agreed to participate and the reasons stated by the non-participating IOTs were reasonable and understandable, no contingency plan was enacted.

The researcher decided to review the rollout date in light of two issues: firstly, the extremely busy period that occurs at the beginning of the academic year and secondly, the uncertainty over the TUI's position on the Haddington Road Agreement (HRA). Ultimately, the questionnaire was distributed in November, 2013. This was a much more suitable time as staff were well settled into the academic year and also the TUI had accepted the HRA thus leading to a much calmer industrial relations environment.

As stated above, the HRA was accepted by the TUI. This agreement replaced the so called 'Croke Park 2' proposals which were rejected the TUI and other unions. While there many terms of the HRA which were offensive to academic staff such as pay cuts; increased working hours; reduced overtime *premia* and reduced holidays, overall the agreement was presented and accepted as the lesser of many evils.

The importance of anonymity and indeed confidentiality has been stated on a numerous occasions in earlier responses. Simply put, the incentive, a donation to *Becky's Beat* (a charity fundraising to supply defibrillators to schools, clubs, etc.) was not linked to individual's identity and was made as a global donation to the charity based on the overall number of responses received.

## **Paper 3 Survey Instrument Design**

# Survey Instrument Design for an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland

*Neil O' Sullivan, DBA Student at Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)*

*Supervised by Dr Alma McCarthy, NUI Galway*

*Submitted on 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2013*

## **Abstract**

*The research question for this study is: 'What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland at Head of School and Head of Department level and which are perceived by academic staff to be important?' The study will be conducted in all fourteen Institutes of Technology in Ireland amongst academic staff only. The questionnaire has been modified and enhanced through a pre-testing process with academic staff and consultation with HR Managers in the sector. All research sub-questions have been linked to the academic literature and the specific questions in the survey instrument. These questions will focus predominantly on the existence or otherwise of effective leadership behavioural factors; the importance of these factors; the identification of other possible effective leadership facets and the overall effectiveness of leadership at Head of School and Head of Department levels. Access to each institute will be sought by engaging with key stakeholders both internally and external to the institutes. Cover letters will accompany each questionnaire to assure participants of anonymity, confidentiality and voluntary participation. Heads of School and Heads of Department in each institute will also be informed of the nature of the study so as to alleviate any concerns they may have about the research. Data collected will be analysed using SPSS and the findings will be the subject of a future paper.*

*Keywords: Effective Leadership, Pre-testing, Questionnaire, Anonymity; Voluntary Participation.*

## Introduction

This is the third paper submitted as part of a working paper series which will form the basis of a thesis to be submitted in June, 2014 for the award of Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) from Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). Paper 1 (December, 2012) focused on the Conceptual framework and context underlying the research study while Paper 2 (May, 2013) covered Philosophy and Literary reflections. Arising from feedback received on these papers at the respective Doctoral *colloquia*, some changes and refinements to the research question(s); literature sources; questionnaire and sampling methods have been introduced. These are detailed throughout the current paper. The main research question is: *‘What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland at Head of School and Head of Department level and which are perceived by academic staff to be important?’* In paper 2, it was decided to pursue a deductive approach on the basis that the study commences from a theoretical base (leadership theories) and proceeds to research questions, observation (*via* questionnaire) and finally confirmation (or otherwise) of the underlying theories (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). While this model often contains hypotheses, it is considered acceptable to use research questions instead (Muijs, 2004). Deductive approaches lend themselves to quantitative methods (Gill and Johnson, 2002). Quantitative research can be described as: *‘An approach to research that emphasises the importance of quantification in the collection of data and in the analysis of data. It is strongly influenced by a natural science model of the research process’* (Bryman and Cramer, 2011:358). This definition matches very closely the approach being proposed for this study. In this paper the evolution of the survey instrument, namely an online, self-administered questionnaire will be illustrated. The study engages with the eleven effective leadership behavioural facets which were identified as existing at both faculty and Institutional level, in Bryman’s reports (LFHE, 2007; 2009). These have been employed as the key guiding themes in the questionnaire to examine their relevance in the Irish IOT sector.

In addition, a wide range of questions based on each of these eleven facets will be identified and linked in turn to the underlying academic literature. Appendix 2 demonstrates the linkage of the themes to the literature.

The plan for the execution of the questionnaire include the pre-testing of the instrument; issuing access request letters to key stakeholders; designing the questionnaire on SurveyMonkey and the distribution and collection of the questionnaire will all be described in this paper. The final version of the questionnaire is attached at Appendix 5.

Overall, the study can be classified as non-experimental research as it will not be possible to control the many internal and external influences on participants (Muijs, 2004). This study will seek to establish whether the effective leadership factors identified by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) exist in the IOT sector in Ireland. However, this current study will strive to extend the previous study by seeking to establish the extent to which such leadership factors and possibly others exist in the IOT sector. It will also ask academic staff to determine the relative importance of these effectiveness facets at both HOS and HOD levels. These leadership facets are listed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Effective leadership facets (LFHE, 2007; 2009)**

Effective leadership facets
Providing strategic direction
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader
Having personal integrity
Having credibility to act as a role model
Facilitating participation in decision-making; consultation
Providing communication about developments
Representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its Behalf
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the Department
Protecting academic staff autonomy

These facets will form the basis of a web-based questionnaire consisting of questions on the extent and importance of effective leadership facets at both HOS and HOD levels in IOTs. The questions will be based on variables relating to the facets identified in Table 1 above. The design, format and layout of this survey will be discussed in more detail in subsequent sections of this paper.

The main research question has been identified in an earlier part of this introduction section as *'What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland at Head of School and Head of Department level and which are perceived by academic staff to be important?'* It is also important to re-state the research sub-questions which form the basis of this study. This research question is subdivided into four distinct sub-questions as outlined in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: Research sub-questions**

<p><i>Which leadership facets are most important for the Head of School role in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?</i></p>
<p><i>Which leadership facets are most important for the Head of Department role in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?</i></p>
<p><i>To what extent do Heads of School demonstrate effective leadership facets in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?</i></p>
<p><i>To what extent do Heads of Department demonstrate effective leadership facets in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?</i></p>

As part of the development of the questionnaire, a draft version was sent to five academic staff members in WIT. These five staff members were purposively chosen because of their own involvement in post-graduate research activities both as supervisors and students.



They were each asked to complete the questionnaire and also to comment on its length; design; omissions; additions and any other issues they felt were pertinent. Four of these staff responded to the request. Their feedback has proved to be a major source of assistance to the researcher in refining the questionnaire and ensuring that it meets as far as is possible, the requirements of the research study. The researcher has made a number of changes to the questionnaire based on this feedback and these are discussed in a later section of this paper. The researcher also made a presentation to his HRM colleagues in the IOT sector and the feedback from these practitioners was also very helpful in the final design of the questionnaire. The paper now continues with a discussion on the questionnaire design; pre-testing; sampling; response rates; reliability, validity and generalisability of the findings of the study.

### **Questionnaire design**

As outlined above, the eleven effective leadership facets identified in Bryman's studies (LFHE, 2007; 2009) form the basis of the questionnaire for this study. Appendix 2 illustrates these themes and the underlying specific questions areas based on an extensive literature review. Each of the eleven guiding themes is supported and referenced by numerous literature sources which enable the formation of relevant questions to test the existence/relevance of the particular effective leadership behaviour in the IOT sector at both HOS and HOD levels. As can be seen from the Tables in Appendix 2, the questions for each effective leadership behaviour were developed following an extensive literature review which identified the key components which enabled the framing of appropriate questions (Frazer and Lawley, 2000). It was also decided to combine the questions on effective leadership at HOS and HOD level into single questions to reduce the overall length of the questionnaire and to facilitate ease of completion. This is consistent with the views that questionnaires should be kept as short as possible (Fink and Kosecoff, 1998). Furthermore it was decided to use a Likert type scale of five options for most of the questions. Likert scales are particularly suitable for establishing respondents' views on a range of topics without having to resort to unstructured open-ended questions (Alreck and Settle, 1995).

In the original version of the questionnaire, the options given to respondents were to answer: *'always'*; *'frequently'*; *'sometimes'* and *'never'* in relation to questions on the extent of specific effective leadership facets. It was originally decided not to use an *'unsure'* or *'don't know'* option in the response categories afforded to participants. However, feedback received at the pre-test stage proposed the inclusion of these options. While Appendix 2 contains the full list of leadership facets; underlying themes and literature sources, it is considered appropriate at this point to illustrate two examples of the instrument development in order to assist the reader understand the thought processes involved.

Firstly, the effective leadership behaviour of *Providing strategic direction* is examined. This is linked to key themes in the literature as follows: *Implementing vision* (Benoit and Graham, 2005); *Developing long-term department goals* (Carroll and Gmelch, 1994); *Acting as facilitator* (Stark *et al.*, 2002) and *Establishing priorities* (Birnbaum, 1988; Middlehurst, 1993). A second effective leadership behaviour is that of *Creating a structure to support the strategic direction*. This in turn is linked to the themes of *Creating an environment or context* (Knight and Holen, 1985; Creswell *et al.*, 1990; Bryman, 2009); *Broad participation; Active management* (Lorange, 1988); *Resources and information* (Creswell and Brown, 1992) and *Adjusting workloads and schedules* (Creswell and Brown, 1992). These two examples illustrate the linkages between the leadership facets, key themes and the literature. They also demonstrate the emergence of the questions in the survey instrument from the literature, linked to the research questions which should improve the validity of the survey instrument (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). Also, it will help ensure that the instrument is context specific and so will measure what it is intended to measure, thus further enhancing the validity of the questionnaire (Muijs, 2004). As already mentioned, a comprehensive document is contained in Appendix 2 which shows each of the eleven effective leadership facets; the key themes related to each of these facets; the underlying literature sources and the links to the specific questions in the survey instrument.

Each of the questions in the survey also links back to the research questions identified in the introduction section above. In summary, this document supports the argument that the questions were not just randomly created by the researcher but evolved through a rigorous and detailed literature review which linked the effective leadership facets to the underlying themes and subsequently to the individual questions which are contained in the final version of the questionnaire. Muijs (2004) has identified a range of important factors that should be heeded in designing questionnaires. These are illustrated in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Questionnaire design tips**

<b>Questionnaire Design Tips (Muijs, 2004)</b>	<b>How these are captured in current study</b>
Keep it brief: A thirty minute completion time and a length of eight A4 pages are proposed.	<i>Those who pre-tested the questionnaire said that it took them thirty minutes or less to complete. The document is thirteen pages long but may reduce in size on SurveyMonkey</i>
Keep the questions clear and simple	<i>The questionnaire has been through several iterations. Both the questions and the answer options have been simplified with definitions of terms added where necessary</i>
Include questions on respondent characteristics if necessary for the study	<i>A number of questions have been included on age, gender, length of service and academic discipline. However, they are at the beginning of the questionnaire and it is recommended that they appear at the end of the questionnaire so as not to annoy respondents</i>
Include a 'don't know' option to facilitate respondents who do not have views or responses on particular issues	<i>This was also raised by some of the pre-test respondents. It has been decided to include a 'don't know' or 'unsure' option</i>
Avoid double negatives in questionnaires	<i>The questionnaire has been proofread for such errors.</i>
Ask only one question in any item	<i>Most questions contain a 'double' answer in that participants are asked to respond to one question but for both HOS and HOD levels. The researcher, his supervisor and indeed the pre-test respondents see no difficulty in this as the alternative is to double the number of questions thus making the questionnaire unwieldy</i>
The questionnaire should be culturally sensitive	<i>Great care has been taken in the development of the questionnaire to ensure that there is no offensive and/or discriminatory language/ terms therein</i>

The first version of the questionnaire contained sixty-three questions of which three related to respondent characteristics (age; gender and length of service); Fifty-five require answers based on a Likert scale specifically related to the eleven effective leadership facets and their underlying themes; and the remaining five questions which relate to respondents views on other effective leadership facets; others involved in leadership and general questions on leadership.

The opening three questions were simple nominal (gender; academic discipline) and ratio (age; length of service) based questions. It was considered important to record and collect such data as it was possible that some or all of these three characteristics may lead to differences in responses to the other questions. For example, it may emerge that female staff perceive effective leadership in a different way from their male colleagues or that the length of service of academic staff may determine a different view of effective leadership. Indeed, it may also important to note if there is any significant trends in the numbers of males and females responding to the survey.

The next fifty-five questions were divided into eleven distinct sections based on the effective leadership facets. Each section contained a number of separate questions based on the underlying themes. Each question requires respondents to quantify their opinion of the extent that their HOS and HOD perform various effective leadership facets. For example, in Table 4 below, question six is based on the effective leadership behaviour *Providing strategic direction*.

**Table 4: Sample question**

<i>‘Are long term development goals proposed by your’:</i>				
<b>Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Not sure/ Don’t know</b>
<b>Head of School</b>				
<b>Head of Department</b>				

The section of the questionnaire on *Providing strategic direction* contained four questions relating to this effective leadership behaviour and is similar to the other ten sections dealing with the remaining effective leadership facets. The questions in each section are drawn from a comprehensive literature review based on a wide range of previous research studies in the HE sector (LFHE, 2007; 2009). For example, *Establishing priorities* (Middlehurst 1993; Birnbaum 1998; cited by LFHE 2007; 2009). Consequently, it is suggested that the questions were both theoretically and contextually relevant to this study.

The final section of the questionnaire contained five open-ended questions. The researcher made the decision to include these questions on the basis that it was perceived that academic staff would welcome the opportunity to express their own views on effective leadership in IOTs; it would allow them to highlight relevant issues that were not already covered in the questionnaire; it may highlight differences between UK and Irish effective leadership factors and would facilitate the identification of further research areas.

#### **Pre-testing of survey instrument**

As mentioned in an earlier section, the researcher decided to pre-test the survey instrument by sending it to five academic staff in WIT. They were asked to complete it and also to comment on its length, design, complexity, omissions and related issues. These features are considered important by researchers (Frazer and Lawley, 2000; Muijs, 2004). Four respondents duly completed the instrument and returned it with comments. This section will now address the comments and feedback received. For purposes of anonymity and confidentiality, the four respondents are known as A, B, C and D. Table 5 below contains a summary of their responses.

**Table 5: Pre-test feedback**

Respondent	Comments
A (Male, School of Business)	<p>Took 30 minutes to complete</p> <p>Definition of terms needed</p> <p>Queried use of term ‘<i>Always</i>’ for activities that may only occur once every few years</p> <p>Highlighted possible effect of resource constraints on effective leadership</p> <p>Illustrated personal views of respondents on some topics such as whether or not their HOD/HOS is a key player in the Institute</p>
B (Female, School of Humanities)	<p>Took 22 minutes to complete</p> <p>Suggested including ‘<i>don’t know</i>’ in answer options</p> <p>Highlighted need to define key terms</p> <p>Queried the need to include question on Performance Management</p> <p>Argued for inclusion of questions on characteristics of HOSs/HODs</p>
C (Male, School of Science)	<p>Stressed the need for integration of questionnaire with SPSS</p> <p>Suggested the inclusion of questions on demographics of HOSs/HODs</p> <p>Indicated that a questionnaire of about 50 questions on 12 pages would be optimal</p> <p>Proposed that a deadline of two weeks be set for the return of completed questionnaires</p> <p>Argued for inclusion of ‘<i>don’t know</i>’ option</p> <p>Suggested changing options of ‘<i>Always</i>’; ‘<i>Frequently</i>’; ‘<i>Sometimes</i>’ and ‘<i>Never</i>’ to ‘<i>Strongly Disagree</i>’; ‘<i>Disagree</i>’; ‘<i>No opinion/Not sure</i>’; ‘<i>Agree</i>’ and ‘<i>Strongly agree</i>’.</p> <p>Highlighted need to define terms of some items like strategic plans</p>
D (Male, School of Engineering)	<p>Asked to see research questions to ensure that they linked to questions in questionnaire</p> <p>Expressed concerns that some of the research questions were not addressed by questionnaire</p> <p>Suggested changing the option of ‘<i>Sometimes</i>’ to ‘<i>Occasionally</i>’</p>

Respondent	Comments
D (Male, School of Engineering)	<p>Suggested including options of 'Not at all'; 'Relevant'; 'Very Relevant' and 'Critical' for questions relating to relevance of various effective leadership facets</p> <p>Queried if there were connections between resource constraints and effective leadership</p>

Responding to this feedback, it was decided to reframe the questionnaire so that each section contained at least one question on the existence or otherwise of a particular leadership behaviour, and another question on the perception of importance or otherwise of that leadership behaviour. In this way it is suggested that the research sub-questions are addressed thus ensuring that the research study measures what it intends to measure (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). An example of the revision of the questionnaire is outlined in Table 6 below. The first question listed (Q8) is from the original questionnaire and the latter 2 questions (Q1 and Q2) represent the changes to the questionnaire based on Respondent D's and indeed the other three respondents' comments.

**Table 6: Changes to questionnaire**

Q8. <i>Does your Head of School/Department establish priorities for action in your School/Department?</i>				
	<b>Always</b>	<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Never</b>
<b>Head of School</b>				
<b>Head of Department</b>				
Q1. <i>How important to effective leadership at the level of Head of School/Department is the provision of direction (e.g. establishing priorities)?</i>				
	<b>Critical</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Not at all</b>
				<b>Not Sure/ Don't Know</b>
<b>Head of School</b>				
<b>Head of Department</b>				

Q2. *Does your Head of School/Department provide direction in his/her day to day role?*

**Always**

**Frequently**

**Occasionally**

**Never**

**Not Sure/**

**Don't Know**

**Head of School**

**Head of Department**

The researcher is a member of the national HRM group in the IOT sector. He made a presentation to them on his proposed study. At the end of the presentation he invited questions and comments and received some very helpful feedback. This included extending the survey to all academic staff in every Institute. The most encouraging aspect of the feedback was the very positive response from those present to the study itself. They all thought that it was an exciting, new and beneficial study and were keen to see the results. The researcher also accepted their suggestion of extending the survey to academic staff in all IOTs. This complies with the concept of external validity (Black, 2005) and ensures that each member of the population has an equal chance of participating.

As mentioned in an earlier paper, the researcher submitted an application to the WIT Research Ethics Committee as it is intended to include WIT academic staff in the study. In April 2013 the researcher met with the committee and received a positive response/approval subject to some minor conditions.

The principal requirements were to furnish the final version of the cover letter and questionnaire before commencing the study; expanding the cover letter to emphasise that the questionnaire is part of a research study and does not form part of the role of HR Manager in WIT; that participants will be assured of anonymity and confidentiality; that individual IOTs will not be identifiable; that assurances on the anonymity aspect of using SurveyMonkey will be guaranteed and that HOSs and HODs in WIT be informed of the study as a matter of courtesy.



In earlier papers, it was proposed to select five IOTs as the sample base for the study. While the researcher believes that such a sample can be justified, it is argued that a better option is to include the entire sector. The use of SurveyMonkey and SPSS will greatly facilitate this approach.

The questionnaire as outlined earlier consisted of three distinct sections. The opening section featured questions which examine perceptions of the eleven effective leadership facets at both HOS and HOD levels and also examines whether such facets are evident and to what extent in their own HOS and HOD. This section consisted of forty four questions. The second section of the questionnaire contained eight questions which ask respondents to identify the overall effectiveness of their HOS/HOD; other effective leadership facets; the distinctiveness of leadership in HE or otherwise; the effect of regulatory and resource constraints on leadership and the identification of other academic leaders in the sector. The final section consisted of four questions on respondent characteristics including gender; age; length of service and academic discipline and three questions on the characteristics of HOSs and HODSs.

The researcher has endeavoured to incorporate as much of the feedback received from staff, HRM colleagues and the WIT Research Ethics committee as possible. This is evidenced by the changes in the content and format of the questionnaire (as illustrated by Tables 5 and 6) and a widening of the sample base to include all academic staff in each of the fourteen IOTs. Some questions required re-phrasing to make them more understandable and relevant. The researcher has also taken very seriously the views of the WIT Ethics Committee. It was decided to inform Presidents of each IOT; national and local union officers and HRMs so that they would be fully informed of the context of the study. In addition, the support of such key personnel is considered critical to the success of the study as it is expected that they would act as advocates for the study. The researcher also decided based on feedback received to include his contact details on the cover letter accompanying the questionnaire. It is believed that this would serve a number of purposes. Firstly, it should serve as an incentive to participants to contact him if they had any queries or concerns about the study.

Secondly, while it should not affect the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents (as it will not be possible to link contact details with the final completed and returned survey) it would identify the researcher and hopefully reassure them of the *bona fides* of the researcher.

In the course of developing the questionnaire, the researcher became aware that two of the participating IOTs, had different academic organisational structures to the other twelve IOTs. In most IOTs, academic staff report directly to HODs and through them to HOSs. However, in one IOT there are two main faculties, which in turn comprise numerous academic departments. In another IOT there are four colleges which are made up of a number of schools. These differences pose some issues for the questionnaire which could be resolved by amending the nomenclature of the posts in the questionnaires sent to the two named IOTs. However, the WIT Ethics Committee requested that it would not be possible to break down responses by institute. Having reflected on this matter, the researcher has proposed the following solutions. It has been decided to create three links on SurveyMonkey. One link will be exclusive to the first IOT; one will be solely for the other IOT and the third link will be available to all other IOTs.

However, as requested by the WIT Ethics Committee, the final presentation of findings will not identify results by IOT. This commitment will also be stated explicitly in the access and cover letters accompanying the questionnaires. Table 7 below illustrates the revised construction of the questionnaire linking the four research questions and the underlying literature themes.

**Table 7: Linkages in Questionnaire**

Research Question(s)	Leadership Effectiveness Behaviour
<p><i>Which leadership facets are most important for the Head of School role in the IOT sector?</i></p> <p><i>Which leadership facets are most important for the Head of Department role in the IOT sector?</i></p>	<p>Providing strategic direction; Creating a structure to support the strategic direction; Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment;</p> <p>Establishing trustworthiness;</p> <p>Personal integrity; Credibility to act as a role model; Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation; Providing communications about developments;</p> <p>Representing the Department/School to advance its cause; Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the Department/School; Protecting academic staff autonomy</p>
<p><i>To what extent do Heads of School demonstrate effective leadership facets in the IOT sector?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent do Heads of Department demonstrate effective leadership facets in the IOT sector?</i></p>	<p>As above</p>

### Sampling

Initially, the researcher considered surveying academic staff in five IOTs. This tactic was considered because of the convenience and geographically proximity of a cluster of IOTs in the Munster/South Leinster area. However, based on feedback, it has been decided to survey all academic staff in the fourteen IOTs. This can be classified as a census (Muijs, 2004). However, it is extremely unlikely, based on response rates to mail/internet surveys that all academic staff will respond to the questionnaire. Using SurveyMonkey and SPSS will enable a quick and low cost survey to be conducted in all IOTs.

There are virtually no incremental costs in adding more IOTs/ potential respondents to the study. Including all IOTs in the sample would also support the concept of simple random sampling where everybody in the chosen population has the exact same chance of being included in the sample (Black, 2005). As all academic staff in every IOT will be invited to participate, this requirement will be fulfilled. It has been decided to use an online, self-selected and administered questionnaire as it is expected that this will generate a large volume of relevant data which should address the research questions of this study.

### **Response rates**

The questionnaire will be published on SurveyMonkey and will be sent to each HRM *via* e-mail for onward distribution to academic staff with a link to the survey. Respondents will return the questionnaire directly *via* the SurveyMonkey website. Muijs (2004) notes a significant growth in online and e-mail questionnaires. He highlights one note of caution, which is the low rate of penetration of such surveys. He suggests that such methods sometimes only appeal to young, wealthy and technically astute respondents. In the view of the researcher, most academic staff are regular users of e-mail and the internet and so will not be daunted by such an instrument. While it cannot be stated that all academic staff are young and wealthy, they are all obliged (by IOT staff selection procedures) to be educated to at least degree level and many of them possess post-graduate qualifications up to and including doctoral level. Consequently, it is inferred that many staff will be interested in participating in the study as it is commonplace for academic staff either to supervise or engage in such studies themselves. The inclusion of the incentive of a charity donation on their behalf may also increase response rates. Also, there are over 4,500 academic staff in the IOT sector (HEA, 2013). If 10% of them respond to the questionnaire, there will be almost 500 responses which would be a highly credible amount of data from which to draw inferences. Table 8 below illustrates a number of factors that affect response rates (Frazer and Lawley, 2000; Muijs, 2004).

**Table 8: Response rate factors (Frazer and Lawley, 2000; Muijs, 2004)**

Factors affecting response rates	<i>How this is addressed in current study</i>
Keeping the questionnaire short (30 minutes maximum)	<i>Those participating in the pre-test said that it took them a maximum of 30 minutes</i>
Promise and provide feedback to respondents who complete and return questionnaires	<i>This commitment is on the letter accompanying the questionnaire</i>
Provide a reward/incentive for completion	<i>A small donation will be made to Becky's Beat for each completed questionnaire returned</i>
Follow-up phone calls and visits to participants	<i>The researcher's contact details are provided with each questionnaire to allow them contact him directly with queries and points of clarification. It is planned to follow up with all potential respondents via e-mail.</i>
<p>Allow respondents to complete the questionnaire either through the mail, on the web or by e-mail</p> <p>Allow respondents to complete the questionnaire either through the mail, on the web or by e-mail</p>	<p><i>As the questionnaire is web-based it can only be answered via the SurveyMonkey website.</i></p> <p><i>However, it should be easier for staff to do so rather than respond via e-mail or by printing off the completed questionnaire and posting it to the researcher</i></p>
The credibility of the researcher. Institutions of higher education and government bodies tend to have high credibility ratings	<i>As the researcher is based in an IOT and may be known to some of the respondents, this should enhance the prospects of a good response rate</i>

### **Reliability, validity and generalisability**

Paper 2 contained a section on reliability and validity. However, the researcher believes that it is important to revisit these topics in this paper. The rationale for this decision is that there is now a finalised survey instrument in the form of a questionnaire and so it is possible to make more positive statements about reliability and validity. In the previous paper the types of errors that can occur in surveys were identified and described. These included *sampling errors; non-coverage errors; non-response errors* and *measurement errors* (Dillman, 1991). It is proposed that the first two errors can be significantly eliminated by the inclusion of all academic staff in every IOT. *Non-response error* can also be substantially eliminated by the widening of the sampling frame. In addition, the pre-access contacts and information coupled with reminders and the incentive of a donation to charity should also contribute to a sufficient response rate.

*Measurement error* is also likely to be reduced by the careful design and revision of the questionnaire coupled with the pre-testing of the instrument. As mentioned in paper 2, threats to *validity* include the history/timing of the research; ‘drop outs’ and the influence of other events. It is planned to minimise the influence of these factors by issuing the questionnaires in late September/early October, 2013 when academic staff are settled back into the academic year. Also, the researcher will await the outcome of the ballot by academic staff on the ‘Haddington Road’ (Public Service pay and working conditions) Agreement. A negative response to the ballot could signal a period of industrial unrest which would not be conducive to academic staff engaging with this study in a positive frame of mind.

Also, the inclusion of all IOTs should negate the influence of ‘drop outs’. It may not be possible to remove the potential negative influence of pay cuts and increased working hours on academic staff. However, by promising and delivering copies of the study results to participants; making a donation to charity and highlighting the positive aspects of the research it can be inferred that such negative influences may be minimised. *Construct validity* can be assured by the careful design of the questionnaire; its pre-testing and subsequent modifications which should make it appropriate for the study (Fink and Kosecoff, 2004).

*Reliability* can be described as a test of consistency (Saunders *et al.*, 2000). Ideally, this should be measured by testing the same theory at different times and with different groups to see if there are consistencies in the answers. It is not possible within the time constraints of this study to test and re-test with different groups. However, as the sampling frame has now been extended to include academic staff in all IOTs, it is expected that it will be possible to illustrate levels of consistency in the responses from a much bigger response rate than originally envisaged.

*Generalisability* relates to the concept that findings arising from the sample can be generalised to a bigger or wider population group (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008). As outlined in an earlier paper (paper 2), it can be stated that the findings can be generalised to the entire IOT sector but only for effective leadership at HOS and HOD levels.

No claims can be made in respect of generalisability of effective leadership say at presidential or functional levels. Also, it cannot be claimed that the findings can extend generalisability to the university or wider public sectors. Any such claims would have to be the subject of further research in those sectors.

### **Primary Research**

This current paper (paper 3) is concerned with the research method; questionnaire design; pre-testing and sampling. The next paper (paper 4) will present the findings from the study and this will be submitted in February, 2014. It is intended to distribute questionnaires to participants in this study in late September/early October, 2013. It has been decided to conduct electronic distribution and collection of the questionnaires *via* e-mail and SurveyMonkey. Participants will be incentivised by way of a small donation to charity in order to maximise the opportunity of reasonable response rate. This stage of the research will require a lot of attention as low or incomplete response rates will adversely affect the study findings, discussion and ultimately the conclusions and recommendations of the study. It should also be noted that the final version of the questionnaire and the cover letters was re-submitted to the WIT Research Ethics committee in September, 2013 for approval.

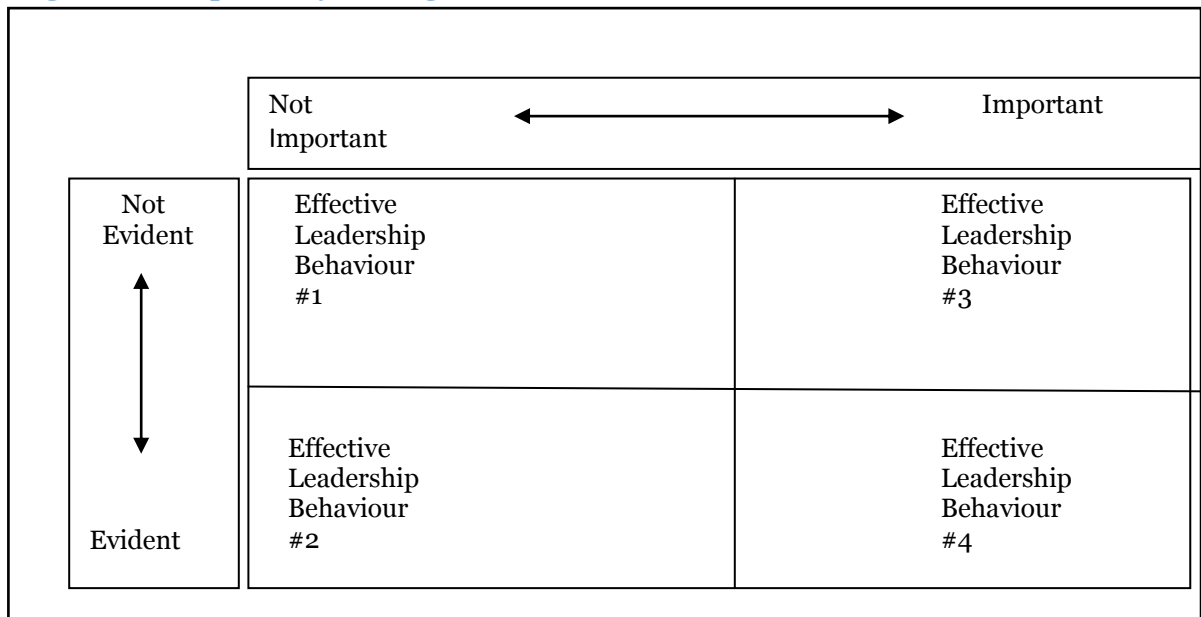
### **Conclusions**

This paper has led to the development of the survey instrument, namely, an online self-administered questionnaire. This has been achieved by the pre-testing of the original questionnaire amongst a small number of academic staff in WIT. In addition the views of HRMs throughout the IOT sector were also sought and heeded. This work also entailed the revision of the research question and associated sub-questions. Also, linkages between these research questions, the underlying academic literature and the questions in the final questionnaire have been illustrated. The sampling frame for the study has now been expanded from five IOTs to the entire sector which consists of fourteen IOTs. This has been justified on the basis of the validity and reliability of the data that will be collected. Provisions have been made to address organisational structural differences in some of the IOTs without comprising the anonymity of the individual staff or Institutes involved.

Participants have also been assured of confidentiality and HOSs and HODs will be informed of the nature of the study which is a non-personalised view of effective leadership at their level.

The design of the survey is also cognisant of the need to ensure validity, reliability and generalisability. Definitions and clarifications have been added for clarity and questions have been re-phrased to ensure that they match the relevant research sub-question(s). Also, a number of specific measures including keeping the questionnaire short have been considered in order to maximise response rates. The timing of the study is also under consideration so as not to be affected by too many external factors such as industrial action. The questionnaire will be designed and distributed *via* SurveyMonkey in order to minimise cost and to maximise the level and speed of distribution. The findings will be analysed to provide a two-dimensional matrix highlighting whether leadership factors are important on one axis and the extent to which they are currently demonstrated by HOSs or HODs on the other axis as set out in Figure 1 below. This *schema* will be useful as one approach to interpret the findings as well as using descriptive and analytical statistics tests in SPSS to interrogate the data.

**Figure 1: Sample study findings**





This diagram seeks to illustrate the potential contribution of this study to both theory and practice. It is expected that this research will make an original contribution to both the existing mainstream body of literature on leadership as well as developing a new stream dedicated to leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland. Another potential outcome is the development of insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes for senior and middle managers in the sector. It is suggested that the findings and recommendations from the study will provide guidance to existing and future leaders/leadership practices in IOTs.

Finally, as the findings will emanate from academic staff across the IOT sector, it should assist those charged with recruiting, training and developing people at HOS and HOD levels. In particular, it may help to identify those that possess the requisite leadership behavioural factors that will contribute to effective leadership at those levels and consequentially identify the training development needs of those in post and/or who aspire to serve at those levels in the IOT sector in the future.

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**Preface between Paper 3 (Survey Instrument Design) and Paper 4 (Findings Paper)**

## **Preface between Paper 3 (Survey Instrument Design) and Paper 4 (Findings)**

### **Introduction**

Following feedback from the examiners of paper 3, the researcher was advised to consider:

- a. The response format before distributing it. A more ‘conventional’ likert-type ‘agree/disagree’ scale could be more beneficial with respect to construct validation and model testing.
- b. It may also be of value to put a small number in reverse score/ positive statement.
- c. Whether to pilot the questionnaire through a full cycle of distribution, collection and analysis.
- d. What he was planning to do with the data? (i.e. the ultimate contribution to theory/practice)
- e. In more detail the basis for the decision to focus on both HOD and HOS and the literature that you used in supporting that decision
- f. Including some more detail on the feedback received from his presentation to the HR group
- g. The full nature of the departments that are being targeted for the research. For example, some might be very large entities and others much smaller, others might be focused on strategic programmes and developments while some others may have a strong internal focus. Others might have an undergraduate focus while still more might have a postgraduate remit.
- h. Affirming support from key stakeholder groups in the administration of the survey
- i. If there are response rates available on IOT surveys.
- j. Why you intend to use the HR managers to help distribute the surveys. While a reasonable approach, it is still open to bias.
- k. You may wish to consider a dependent/outcome variable (e.g. organisational commitment), otherwise, you may struggle answering the ‘So what’?
- l. The timing of the primary research

### Researcher's responses

The researcher accepted the examiners' advice on the use of a more traditional Likert type scale for responses to the questionnaire. The original '*critical*'; '*important*'; '*somewhat important*'; '*not at all*' and '*not sure/don't know*' response options were replaced with '*strongly agree*'; '*agree*'; '*don't know*'; '*disagree*' and '*strongly disagree*'. He also included ten negatively worded questions in the questionnaire, for example, '*The creation of a sense of community is **not** important for effective leadership at Head of Department level*'. However, as Paper 4 will illustrate this led to some distortion in answering patterns and also adversely affected the *Cronbach's alpha* values for these variables.

It was decided to pre-test the instrument with a small number of academic staff in the researcher's own IOT. Also, feedback from the researcher's classmates at the doctoral *colloquium* for Paper 3 also provided invaluable feedback which helped him refine the questionnaire and ensure it would capture the information it set out to capture.

As stated in other prefaces, the issue of the use of the findings/data in terms of theoretical and practice contribution has been a constant theme throughout this thesis. The researcher is determined that the findings will add to mainstream leadership theory; add a specific stream on leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland; contribute insights for training and development initiatives for HODs in the IOT sector in Ireland and also assist those charged with recruiting HODs. These themes are developed in far greater detail in the conclusions and recommendations section.

The LFHE study (2007; 2009) focused on leadership at both institutional and departmental level. Consequently, it was proposed to focus on leadership at both HOS and HOD level in the IOT sector as Bryman's study determined that there were a common set of effective leadership facets at both levels in UK HEIs. However, feedback received from the *colloquium* suggested that the proposed questionnaire as designed was confusing in that it required participants to alternate between questions on HOS and HOD throughout the document. It was suggested that this would be disorientating for participants in the study and so could adversely affect the results/findings of the study.



The researcher revised the questionnaire based on this feedback, separating the questions on HOS and HOD into two distinct sections. However, this now resulted in a questionnaire containing in excess of 150 questions!

In the researcher's opinion, this would militate against participation by academic staff; lead to low response rates and encourage part-completion and omissions. Consequently, the researcher consulted with his supervisor and other course team members and decided to study leadership at HOD level only. This decision was justified on the basis (as set out previously in Section 1, Introduction & DBA Research Overview) that the role of middle managers in the facilitation of change is becoming increasingly important (McGurk, 2009). It is proposed that their 'midway' position in organisations enables them to interpret and frame strategic objectives for front-line staff (Balogun 2003; Huy 2002; Mayer and Smith 2007; cited by McGurk 2009). McGurk (2009) argues that the middle manager role requires both management and leadership skills and knowledge. Borins (2002) states that middle management can exert significant influence on governmental reform and innovation. It has been demonstrated earlier (Section 1, Introduction & DBA Research Overview) that HODs perform a key role in the leadership of IOTs at middle management level. They lead and manage academic departments at the behest of Heads of School and they manage a multidisciplinary team of academic staff. As stated earlier, they can act as translators of strategic objectives into meaningful actions for frontline academic staff. It is suggested that change management initiatives can start with or be stopped by these key managers. While it is clear that senior academic and functional managers have major roles in the development of strategic plans and priorities for IOTs, the delivery and implementation of these plans cannot occur without the significant involvement of HODs.

This reduced the questionnaire to 81 questions including those on respondent and HOD characteristics. It also allowed for the inclusion of a small but focused number of qualitative questions allowing respondents to express their views on topics such as the distinctiveness (or otherwise) of leadership in the HE sector and other possible effective leadership facets.

The HRM group provided a range of opinions to the researcher following his presentation to them. One key recommendation was that the study should be carried out amongst academic staff in all IOTs rather than just a sample of five IOTs. As it was planned to use SurveyMonkey to conduct the study, there was virtually no additional cost or time implications in agreeing to this suggestion. Additionally, accepting this proposal should lead to increased response rates and richer data, so it was decided to accept this suggestion. The group also said that the researcher should advise Presidents, union officers and HODs of the nature and extent of the proposed study.

It was decided to conduct the study amongst all IOTs in the sector. There are 14 IOTs in the sector which vary greatly in size in terms of student numbers; staff and in particular academic staff numbers and school and department sizes. It was decided to include a question on department size in the questionnaire which would enable the researcher to examine whether or not answering patterns were affected by department size.

Given that the researcher is a HRM in one of the IOTs, the highly unionised nature of the sector and the sensitivity of the research subject it was decided to write to key stakeholders to seek access to their IOTs in advance of conducting the study. Each President; HRM; HOD and union officer (*via* the national Asst. Secretary of the TUI) was contacted by letter advising of the nature and content of the study.

Assurances were given on anonymity and confidentiality. In addition, a copy of the WIT ethical approval was provided to each IOT. Three IOTs chose not to participate in the study. One IOT stated that they had a different structure to the other IOTs, while two other IOTs said that their HODs had concerns about the nature of the study. The researcher sought information response rates to similar type surveys in the IOT sector. However, he was unable to establish any norms in this regard. It is repeated that this was one of the first studies of leadership in the HE and indeed the IOT sector in Ireland and so it was not possible to establish any benchmarks.

Each HR manager was then sent an e-mail with further information on the study and a link to the questionnaire on SurveyMonkey. Consequently, the researcher did not have access or seek access to e-mail addresses of academic staff in the various IOTs thus maintaining an ‘arm’s-length’ relationship with participants and also ensuring confidentiality and anonymity.

Also, the HRMs who distributed the e-mail to their respective academic staff groups did not know who did or did not decide to participate in the study as academic staff self-selected using the SurveyMonkey link. Consequently, it is proposed that any potential bias was eliminated by these arrangements.

The use of a dependent variable for the study has been raised in the feedback. The researcher and his supervisor have given this suggestion significant consideration and it has been decided that the study’s impact can be determined without the use of a dependent variable. However, it is argued that effective leadership is in essence a dependent variable and the eleven leadership facets may be considered to be independent variables. These eleven facets have been explored from the dual perspective of their importance and existence at HOD level in the IOT sector. The contribution of the study to the academic field can be stated as making an original contribution to mainstream, HE and IOT sector leadership theory. In terms of contribution to practice, the study will provide insights and recommendations for leadership development initiatives for HODs and also assist those charged with recruiting HODs.

Paper 3 indicated that the issuing and collection of questionnaires would occur in late September/early October 2013. These dates were reviewed and amended in light of the need to revise the questionnaire; obtain final overall ethical approval; enable academic staff settle into the new academic year and to allow time for the conclusion of negotiations and voting on the Haddington Road Agreement. The questionnaires were subsequently issued on the 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2013, reminders on the 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2013 and the receipt of completed questionnaires ceased on 20th December, 2013. Analysis of data commenced in January, 2014 and was finalised in February 2014 when Paper 4 containing the findings from the study was submitted for examination.

## **Section 2: Paper 4, Findings Paper**

# **Findings from an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of Department level in the Institute of Technology (IOT) Sector in Ireland**

*Neil O' Sullivan, DBA Student, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)*

*Supervised by Dr Alma McCarthy, NUI Galway*

*Submitted on 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2014*

## ***Abstract***

*The research question for this study is: 'What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland at Head of Department (HOD) level and which are perceived by academic staff to be important?' The study was conducted in eleven IOTs in Ireland amongst academic staff. The total number of responses received was 327 from a population of 3,155, equating to a response rate of 10.4%. The total number of HODs in the participating IOTs was 126. Access to each IOT was gained by engaging with key stakeholders who were both internal and external to the IOTs. Cover letters accompanied each questionnaire to assure participants of anonymity, confidentiality and voluntary participation. The questionnaire was distributed by e-mail to HRMs in each participating IOT. Participants were then asked to respond directly using the SurveyMonkey link in the e-mail. Presidents, HODs and union representatives in each IOT were also informed of the nature of the study so as to alleviate any concerns they may have about the research. Data collected was analysed using SPSS. Tests such as Cronbach's alpha; frequencies; descriptives; crosstabs; comparison of mean; paired t-tests; correlations; exploratory factor and parametric analyses were used to test the data. The findings indicate that there is strong support for the importance of all eleven leadership facets as set out in the LFHE model for HOD leadership effectiveness. However, the extent to which HODs display these leadership facets tends to be more moderately supported. Some evidence of negative perceptions of leadership facets at HOD level was detected and there were also reports of additional leadership facets that could form the basis of further research studies.*

*Keywords: Effective leadership, Importance; Existence; SPSS tests; Additional leadership facets.*

## Introduction

This is the fourth paper submitted as part of a working paper series that formed the basis of a thesis submitted in June 2014 for the award of DBA in WIT. Paper 1 (December, 2012) focused on the conceptual framework and context underlying the research study; Paper 2 (May, 2013) covered philosophy and literary reflections and Paper 3 (October, 2013) detailed the development of the chosen method, namely a questionnaire which was to be sent to all academic staff in the IOT sector in Ireland. In Papers 1, 2 and 3 it was proposed to explore effective leadership facets at both HOS and HOD levels. The survey instrument, in the form of a questionnaire featured questions asking respondents to comment on both the existence and importance of these effective leadership facets at both HOS and HOD levels.

At the doctoral *colloquium* in October, 2013, feedback indicated that this interspersing of questions on both HOSs and HODs was confusing and could lead to incomplete or inaccurate responses. Also, when the final questionnaire was designed it exceeded 150 questions which would also deter high participation and completion rates. Consequently, it was decided to focus on exploring effective leadership facets at HOD level only. This decision was taken following a period of consultation and reflection involving the researcher, the research supervisor, course team and others. HODs fulfil a key role in the leadership of IOTs. They are responsible *inter alia* for the management of staff; resources; timetables; course development and many other significant activities. A copy of the job description for the HOD post is attached at Appendix 1. The main research question has now been changed to the following: ‘*What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland at Head of Department (HOD) level and which are perceived by academic staff to be important?*’ Final ethical approval was obtained on the basis of the changes from the WIT Ethics committee (see attached Appendix 3). It is also important to re-state the research sub-questions which form the basis of this study.

This research question is subdivided into two distinct sub-questions as outlined in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Research sub-questions**

<p><i>Which leadership facets are most important for the Head of Department role in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?</i></p> <p><i>To what extent do Heads of Department demonstrate effective leadership facets in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?</i></p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

A total of 327 (10.4%) questionnaires were completed and returned *via* the SurveyMonkey website link. In accordance with the ethical approval received, anonymity and confidentiality were assured and it is not possible in the presented results to identify individual respondents or indeed their employing IOTs. Access was sought to all fourteen IOTs to conduct the research study. Eleven IOTs agreed to participate in the study with three IOTs declining to participate for a variety of reasons. These reasons included a different management structure; concerns of HODs about the study and other management concerns. The total number of academic staff in the IOT sector is 4,518 (HEA, 2013) and the number in the participating sample was 3,155 (HEA, 2013). The total number of HODs in the participating IOTs was 126. This latter figure was confirmed to the researcher by the HRMs in the respective IOTs.

The principal findings were that there were significantly higher levels of support for the importance of each of the eleven effective leadership facets which were tested as part of this study. It is worth restating that these effective leadership facets were identified by Bryman in his reports (LFHE, 2007; 2009). However, the findings also reveal that there are considerably lower levels of support for the existence and indeed the extent of practice of these desirable effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector in Ireland. Further findings indicated some perceptions of poor/ineffective leadership at HOD level and participants also identified some additional effective leadership facets which would require examination as part of future studies.

The study also found strong support for the distinctiveness of leadership in HE and comments from respondents on this topic make for interesting reading. Respondents also identified a range of other managers/staff that they perceived as demonstrating effective leadership facets. These included HOSs; academic staff; course leaders; administrators and other managers. The paper now continues with a discussion on the pre-access process; queries raised by IOTs and individuals; analysing the data and the presentation of findings.

### **Pre-access process**

Pre-access letters were issued to the Presidents and HRMs of each of the fourteen IOTs. Each letter outlined the details of the study and was accompanied by a copy of the questionnaire. The HRMs were given a further letter to issue to HODs informing them of the nature of the study and assuring them that that it was neither designed nor intended to be critical of them in any way. In addition, a similar letter was issued to the national Assistant Secretary of the TUI asking him to notify branch secretaries in each IOT. Copies of these letters are provided in Appendix 4.

The pre-access letters were issued in mid November, 2013. These were followed by the distribution of the questionnaire *via* HRMs in late November, 2013. Each HRM was asked to forward an e-mail to all academic staff which contained a link to the questionnaire on SurveyMonkey and a letter explaining the purpose of the study. Participants were invited to complete the questionnaire and submit it *via* SurveyMonkey through the link provided. This was to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher neither sought nor was granted access to e-mail addresses of academic staff in other IOTs. Each HRM was asked to send the e-mail to all academic staff in his/her IOT. In addition, academic staff determined on a purely voluntary basis whether they would participate in the survey or not.

If they chose to participate, then they completed the questionnaire and submitted it on-line directly to the SurveyMonkey website. Thus, neither the HRMs nor the researcher could identify any individual participant. Indeed, the researcher could not even identify the employing IOT of participants. As mentioned earlier, three IOTs indicated that they did not wish to take part in the research study.



One IOT indicated that their HODs were uncomfortable with the study, while another IOT said that they had just recently introduced a different academic management structure and they felt that this might skew the results of the study. A final IOT said that management had concerns about issuing the questionnaire to academic staff.

A reminder e-mail was issued to all participating IOTs in early December 2013. It was decided not to issue a second reminder to IOTs as it may have caused annoyance and upset to staff.

### Questionnaire

The eleven effective leadership facets identified in Bryman's studies (LFHE, 2007; 2009) form the basis of the questionnaire for this study. Appendix 5 contains the final version of the questionnaire. Each of the effective leadership facets was assigned a separate section in the questionnaire. Each page contained six questions, three asking about the importance of an element of the effective leadership behaviour and three questions querying the evidence or extent to which the HOD displayed that leadership behaviour. It was decided to use a five point Likert type scale for this section of the questionnaire. As stated in an earlier paper, Likert scales are particularly suitable for establishing respondents' views on a range of topics without having to resort to unstructured open-ended questions (Alreck and Settle, 1995). The five answer options offered to respondents were: 1= '*strongly agree*'; 2= '*agree*'; 3 = '*don't know*'; 4= '*disagree*' and 5 = '*strongly disagree*'.

The questions were in the form of statements to which participants were asked for the level of agreement or disagreement. This section of the questionnaire comprised sixty six questions. These were followed by another fifteen questions. Of these four related to overall leadership effectiveness; four dealt with HOD characteristics (such as gender, age etc.) and seven dealt with respondent characteristics (such as gender, age etc.). Consequently, the overall questionnaire comprised eighty one questions.

### Response rates

The questionnaire was published on SurveyMonkey and was sent to each HR Manager *via* e-mail for onward distribution to academic staff with a link to the survey. Respondents completed the questionnaire online using the SurveyMonkey website. Some e-mails were received requesting copies of the findings. The researcher gave a commitment to forward a copy of the results on completion of the study.

As stated earlier, the questionnaire was distributed to academic staff in eleven IOTs *via* HRMs asking them to forward it to their academic staff. This provided for an ‘arm’s length’ relationship between the researcher and his target population. This was a key step to ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. Table 2 below indicates the pattern of responses. The first distribution yielded 192 responses. The accompanying e-mail/letter indicated that it would take less than 30 minutes to complete. Some staff in the researcher’s own Institute indicated that it was taking only about 15 minutes to complete.

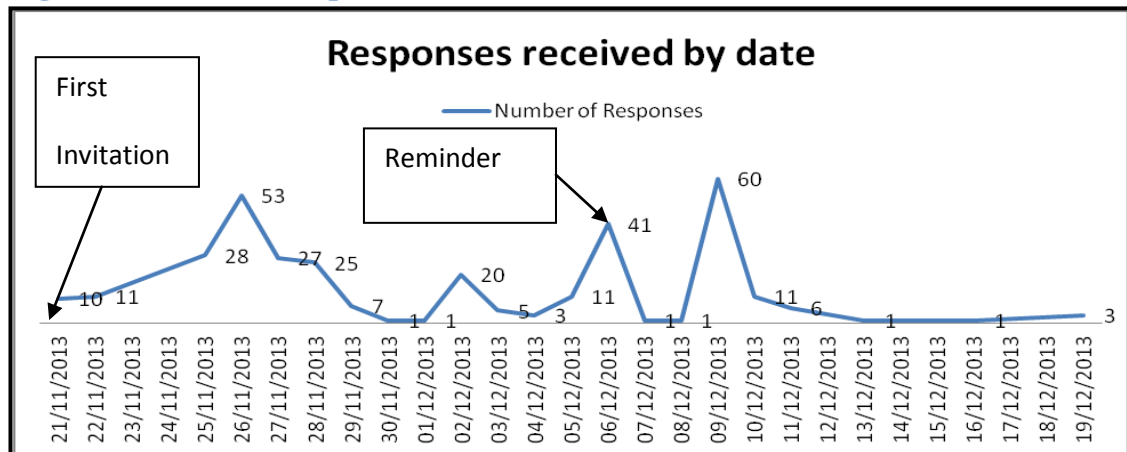
Consequently, the completion time was amended to 15 minutes on the reminder sent to all participating IOTs and this yielded a further 135 responses, bringing the total to 327 or 10.4% of the target population. It was decided to close the survey on Friday 20th December, 2013 as this coincided with the beginning of the Christmas leave period and the receipt of further responses after this date was considered unlikely. The reliability of the instrument will now be considered.

**Table 2: Details of Response Rates**

Date of issue	Responses received	% of population (3,155)
First invitation: 20 <sup>th</sup> November, 2013	192	6.1%
Second invitation/reminder: 6 <sup>th</sup> December, 2013	135	4.3%
Totals	327	10.4%

The daily response rates are also illustrated in Figure 1 below. The peaks in response rates appear to correspond directly with the issuing of the first and reminder e-mails to academic staff.

**Figure 1: Pattern of response rates**



### Internal Reliability of Instrument

Internal reliability of instruments is normally assured by calculating the *Cronbach's alpha* (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). It is expected that the result of such a calculation should equate to at least 0.70. The calculation for all eleven effective leadership behaviour scales is displayed in Table 3 below. There were six questions asked about each effective leadership behaviour; three related to the importance and three related to the existence of the leadership behaviour. The *Cronbach's alpha* was calculated separately for the importance and existence scales. It would appear that most previous studies in this area of leadership in HE were based on qualitative studies (LFHE, 2007; 2009). The LFHE study was based on an extensive literature review and interviews with leadership researchers. The author of the report, Professor Alan Bryman indicated to the researcher that he was unaware of any quantitative studies in this area. In addition, an extensive literature review has not identified any studies of leadership at any level in the Irish HE sector. Consequently, it is proposed that this is one of the first studies of its kind into leadership in HEIs in the Irish context. The questionnaire has been modelled on the eleven effective leadership facets identified by Bryman (LFHE 2007; 2009).

**Table 3: Cronbach's alpha values**

Effective leadership behaviour	Importance	Existence
Providing strategic direction	0.44	0.85
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	0.75	0.86
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	0.60	0.82
Establishing trustworthiness as a Leader	0.84	0.91
Having personal integrity	0.60	0.80
Having credibility as a role model	0.64	0.87
Facilitating participation in decision making and consultation	0.72	0.84
Providing communications about developments	0.85	0.89
Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf	0.77	0.91
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department	0.54	0.74
Protecting academic staff autonomy	0.75	0.82

It can be seen from Table 3 above that the *Cronbach's Alpha* values for the 'existence' scales all fall within the accepted range, with a lower value of 0.74 ranging upwards to 0.91 (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). This result is not surprising as it was anticipated that respondents would broadly agree on whether or not the effective leadership existed or not at HOD level in their respective IOTs. The nature of the questions asked to verify these findings queried whether or not respondents believed that facets such as *credibility as role model* and *personal integrity* existed. For the 'importance' scales, the *alphas* range from 0.44 to 0.85.

It is acknowledged that the *Cronbach's Alpha* values for the scales numbered 1,3,5,6, and 10 in Table 1 above are all  $< .70$ . Four of these contained negatively worded questions, (with the exception of *'having credibility as a role model'*). For example, *'providing strategic direction'* contained the following question: *'Establishing long-term development goals (e.g. course development; student numbers) is **not** (emphasis added) important for effective leadership at head of department level'*. It is suggested that the answering patterns for these negatively worded questions were somewhat distorted and so affected the *alpha* values for these variables and consequently the scales. A negative question was not asked in relation to the *importance* of *'having credibility as a role model'*.

However, the *alpha* value for this scale is 0.64, which is close to the 0.70 value espoused in the literature for reliability. In the case of the other four scales, namely, *'providing strategic direction'*; *'fostering a supportive and collaborative environment'*; *'having personal integrity'* and *'respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department'*, it was decided to delete the variables which contained the answers to the negative questions and to recalculate the *alpha* values on the remaining two variables. Consequently, only two variables are included for each of those four scales. It is suggested that it was always likely that there would be a greater spread of responses across the Likert scale options on the importance of the various facets. This was due to the distinct possibility that there would be greater differences in the opinions of academic staff as the importance or otherwise of the various facets. This, it is inferred, has led to a reduction in the *alpha* values for five of the eleven importance facets as outlined above. It is acknowledged that some modifications might be needed if the questionnaire is to be used again in future studies, to eliminate these minor deficiencies.

### **Demographics and characteristics of sample**

Table 4 below illustrates that of those who answered the questions on gender and nationality, 46.5% (152) were female and 36.4% (119) were male. 17.1% (56) chose not to disclose their gender. Of the 327 respondents, 77.7% (254) were Irish, while only 5.2% (17) were other nationalities. Consequently, it was decided not to split the responses into three categories for reporting purposes as the total 'Non-Irish' respondent group was very small in number.

Once again, 17.1% (56) respondents decided not to reveal their ethnic origin. Also, in this section of the paper, the effects of the respondents' characteristics (gender, nationality, age range, length of service, subject domain and size of department) are examined to see if there are any discernible differences in answering patterns between groups based on these respondent characteristics.

**Table 4: Gender/nationality of respondents**

Gender	Irish	Other Nationalities	Non-respondents	Totals
Female	144	8		152
Male	110	9		119
Non-respondents			56	56
Totals	254	17	56	327

The length of service of the respondents is illustrated in Figure 2 below. 51.7% (169) of respondents have been in post for more than eleven years. Indeed, the largest cohort of respondents, 27.2% (89), had service ranging from eleven to fifteen years. 17.1% (56) chose not to declare their length of service.

**Figure 2: Length of service of respondents**

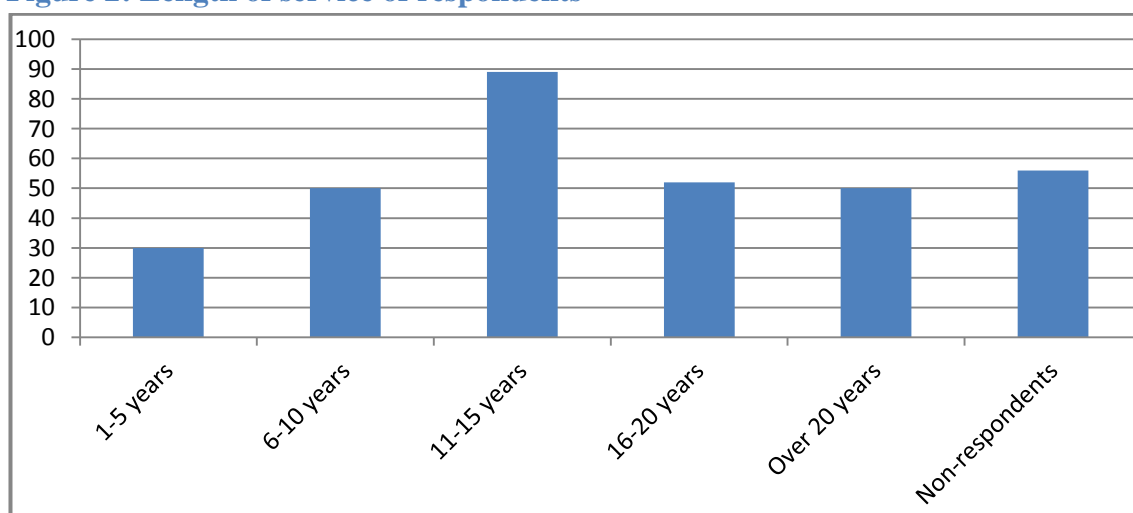
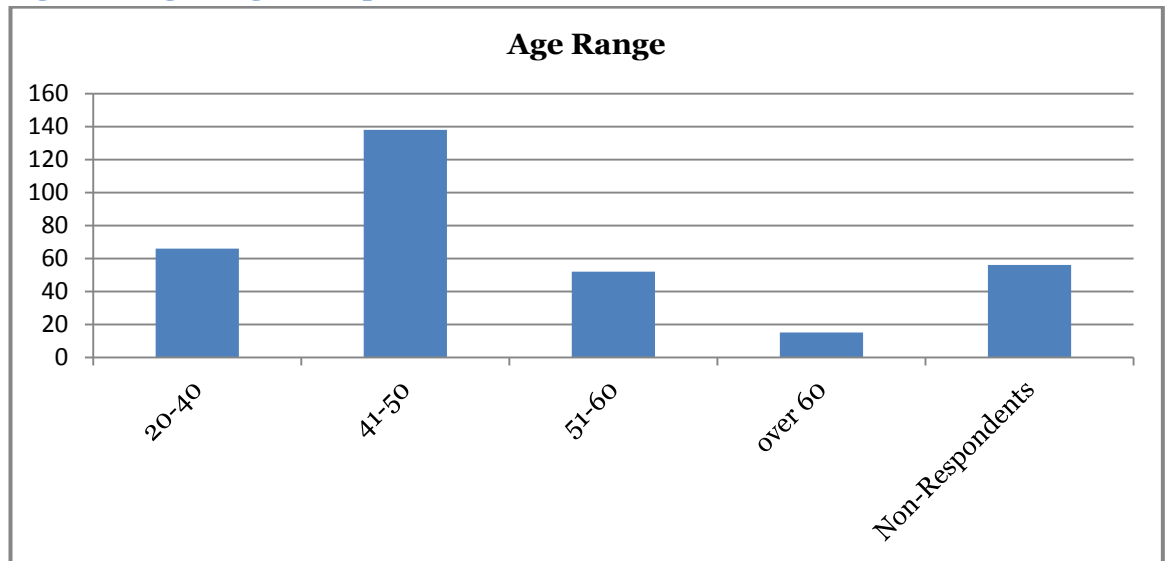


Figure 3 below illustrates the age ranges of respondents. 42.2% (138) stated their age range to be between forty one and fifty. In fact, 62.7% (205) of all respondents are over forty one years of age.

This suggests that many academic staff only commenced employment in the IOT sector following completion of degree and post-graduate qualifications or else have gained experience in business/industry prior to moving to the sector. 17.1% (56) declined to disclose their age range. The age range also demonstrates a potential succession/skills planning challenge for IOTs in the next ten years or so, as many of these staff will retire from their posts in that timeframe.

**Figure 3: Age range of respondents**



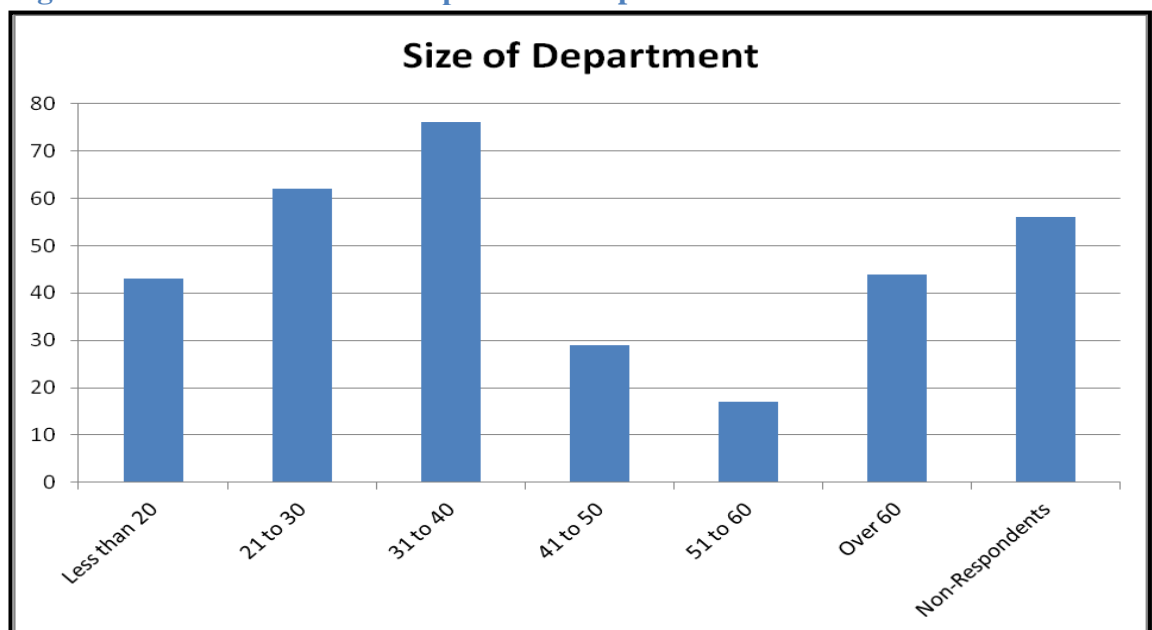
Respondents were also asked to identify their main teaching subject domain. Table 5 below shows four prominent discipline areas, namely, Business/Education: 23.9% (78); Humanities/Social Sciences: 17.7% (58); Science/Computing: 16.2% (53) and Engineering: 16.5% (54). The number of respondents in the Health Sciences area is much lower at 8.6% (28), reflecting perhaps its relative newness as a discipline in the IOT sector. Once again, 17.1% (56) did not answer this question.

**Table 5: Subject domain of respondents**

Subject Domain	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Business/Education	78	23.9	23.9
Humanities/Social Sciences	58	17.7	41.6
Science/Computing	53	16.2	57.8
Health Sciences	28	8.6	66.4
Engineering	54	16.5	82.9
Non-respondents	56	17.1	100.00
Totals	327	100.0	100.00

Figure 4 below encapsulates the size range of departments in which respondents work. 28% of respondents (76) work in departments ranging from thirty and forty staff. A further 22.9% (62) staff work in departments that contain between twenty one and thirty staff. By contrast, relatively fewer staff, 6.3% (17) work in departments with a range of fifty one to sixty staff or in departments in the range of 41-50 at 10.7% (29). 17.1% (56) of respondents chose not to identify the size of their academic departments. Of some concern is the fact that 16% (44) of staff work in departments employing over sixty staff. It is suggested that the span of control in such departments would make them extremely difficult to manage and lead.

**Figure 4: Number of staff in respondents' departments**





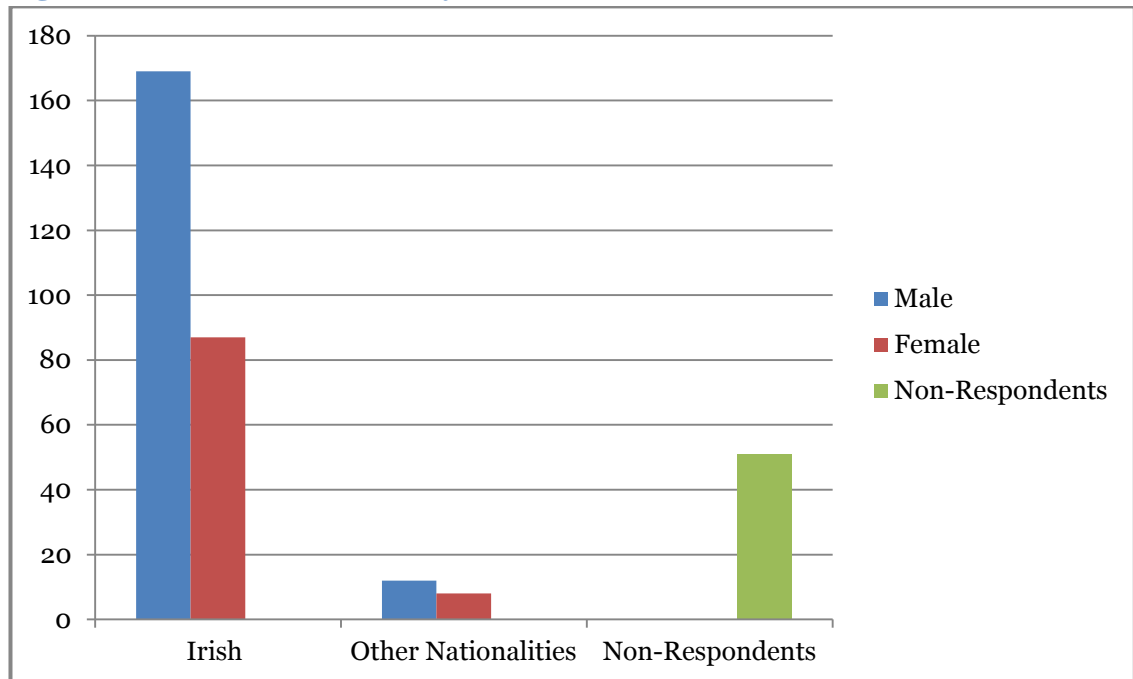
The characteristics of HODs who were the subject of this study are now analysed. Table 6 below shows the estimated age and length of service of HODs as perceived by respondents. Some 39.4% (129) of HODs are perceived to be in the forty one to fifty age range with a further 26.6% (87) deemed to fall into the fifty one to sixty age group. Interestingly, only 0.3% (1) is perceived to be in the twenty to thirty age range. In terms of years' experience in the role of HOD, 35.2% (115) have less than five years while 37.9% (124) have between six and ten years' service in the role. Only 11.3% (37) of HODs had greater than eleven years' service. 15.6% (51) of the respondents did not address this question.

**Table 6: Age range/length of service of HODs**

Length of service of Head of Department (estimate)	Age of Head of Department (estimate)					Non- respondents	Total
	20- 30	31-40	41-50	51-60	over 60		
1-5 years	1	19	66	25	4		115
6-10 years	0	2	51	50	21		124
11-15 years	0	0	11	9	4		24
16-20 years	0	0	1	2	1		4
Over 20 years	0	0	0	1	8		9
Non- respondents						51	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>327</b>

Figure 5 below illustrates both the gender and nationality of HODs as determined by respondents to the survey. The vast majority of HODs were male, 55.4% (181), with female HODs only accounting for 29.0% (95) of those identified by respondents. Similar to the profile of respondents, Irish HODs were prominent, representing 78.3% (256) with 'Non-Irish'/other nationalities totalling 6.1% (20) with a solitary non-European 0.3% making up the balance. In both sets of responses, 15.6% (51) of respondents declined to specify an answer.

**Figure 5: Gender and nationality of HODs**



#### **Effects of demographics on answer patterns**

In an earlier section of this paper, the demographics of the respondents were illustrated. Six characteristics of the sample population were demonstrated, namely, gender; nationality; length of service; age; subject domain and size of their academic departments. In this section of the paper, the effects (if any) of these characteristics are examined to see if there are any discernible differences in answering patterns between groups based on these respondent characteristics. Firstly, the skewness of the data is examined. Table 7 below illustrates the skewness of the data set collected on of the scales containing the importance of the eleven effective leadership facets.

**Table 7: Skewness of behaviour scales**

Behaviour scale	Importance		Existence	
	Skewness	Std. Error of skewness	Skewness	Std. Error of skewness
Providing strategic direction	-.152	.135	.202	.135
Creating structure to support the strategic direction	1.935	.139	.162	.139
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	-.179	.140	.355	.140
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	1.752	.141	.326	.141
Having personal integrity	-.383	.143	.398	.143
Having credibility as a role model	1.047	.144	.299	.144
Facilitating participation in decision making and consultation	-.314	.145	.396	.145
Providing communications about developments	1.122	.146	.311	.146
Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf	1.167	.146	.523	.146
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values	-.261	.146	.756	.146

Behaviour scale	Skewness	Std. Error of skewness	Skewness	Std. Error of skewness
through a vision for the department				
Protecting academic staff autonomy	.936	.146	.547	.146

It can be seen that in terms of the importance of the effective leadership facets, five of the scales lie outside the normal expected range skewness of plus one to minus one. These five plus '*protecting academic staff autonomy*' also have ratios greater than 1:3 for the standard error of skewness to skewness. However, In terms of the existence of all of the effective leadership facets, it can be seen from Table 7 above that the skewness of the data is all less than one, denoting no abnormal skewness. In addition, with the exception of the final three scales, all skewness is less than three times the standard error of skewness. In fact, two of these three exceptions are just slightly over the expected 1:3 ratio, so it can be stated that there is no abnormal skewness in this particular set of data.

Firstly, the effect of the gender of respondents is examined. In terms of those who responded to the questionnaire, 56% (152) were female and 44% (119) were male. 17.1% (56) of the original sample group did not reveal their gender.

It was decided to examine the responses to all the questions on the importance and existence of effective leadership facets with respect to gender. Firstly, a decision was needed on whether to use parametric or non-parametric tests. The use of Likert scales in questions would suggest non-parametric tests as there is not a normal distribution of data (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). However, it has also been argued that parametric tests can be used with ordinal variables as the tests apply to numbers rather than what the numbers signify (Lord 1953, cited by Bryman and Cramer 2011). It is also argued that parametric tests are well suited to sample sizes > 30. There were 327 completed questionnaires received, so the current study fulfils this requirement.

The file containing these two independent groups was analysed using a parametric test known as an *independent sample t-test* (Pallant, 2010). According to Bryman and Cramer (2011), if the *Levene's* test is not significant (i.e.  $p$  value  $>.05$ ), then the variances are equal. By contrast, if the  $p$  value is  $<.05$ , then the variances for both groups are not the same. An independent-samples  $t$ -test was conducted to compare the scores for males and females across all questions covering effective leadership facets. There was no significant difference in scores for males ( $M = 1.36-3.00$ ,  $SD = .42-1.16$ ) and females ( $M = 1.52-3.02$ ,  $SD = .45-1.26$ );  $t(269) = -.15-1.82$ . All  $p$  values were  $>.05$ , with the exception of  $p = .012$  for the scale of the importance of '*protecting academic staff autonomy*'. Consequently, it can be stated that there is very limited evidence of any discernible variances in answering patterns based on gender. Next the responses based on nationality are assessed. There were three distinct ethnic groups in the sample group, Irish 93.7% (254 respondents); Non-Irish European 5.2% (14 respondents) and Non-Europeans 1.1% (3 respondents). 17.1% (56 respondents) of the original sample did not declare their nationality. It was decided to amalgamate all '*Non-Irish*' respondents into one '*Other nationalities*' group as the numbers of these respondents were quite small. A one-way ANOVA test was conducted to explore the impact of ethnic group on effective leadership facets. There was no statistically significant difference at the  $p <.05$  level in the scores for the two ethnic groups.

The responses based on length of service are now considered. There were five distinct service groups in the sample, 1-5 years: 11% (30 respondents); 6-10 years: 18.5% (50 respondents); 11-15 years: 32.8% (89 respondents); 16-20 years: 19.2% (52 respondents) and over 20 years: 18.5% (50 respondents). 17.1% (56 respondents) of the original sample did not disclose their length of service. The file containing these five groups was also analysed using the ANOVA one-way test. Using this test, four scales returned statistically significant differences between groups with  $p$  values of  $<.05$ . These were:

The existence of '*providing strategic direction*':  $p$  value of .001. Difference between group of staff with 16-20 years' service and all other staff service groups.

The existence of '*establishing trustworthiness as a leader*':  $p$  value of .018. Difference between group of staff with 16-20 years' service and the staff group with 1-5 years' service.

The existence of '*having personal integrity*':  $p$  value of .036. Difference between group of staff with 16-20 years' service and the staff group with 1-5 years' service.

The existence of '*providing communications about developments*':  $p$  value of .018. Difference between group of staff with 16-20 years' service and the staff group with 1-5 years' service.

Post hoc tests also confirmed these four differences along with three additional differences.

Firstly, the scale covering the existence of '*creating a structure to support the strategic direction*', the mean score for the group with length of service ranging from 16-20 years was significantly different at the  $p < .05$  level from the group with length of service ranging from 1-5 years.

However, the one way ANOVA test indicated that the  $p$  value for this scale was .052 which is just marginally higher than the recommended  $> .05$  norm. The importance of '*respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department*' demonstrates that the mean score for the group with length of service ranging from 6-10 years was significantly different at the  $p < .05$  level from the group with length of service ranging from 1-5 years.

Finally, the scale for the importance of '*protecting academic staff autonomy*' shows that the mean score for the group with length of service over 20 years was significantly different at the  $p < .05$  level from the group with length of service ranging from 1-5 years.

Based on the results, staff with 16-20 years' service have significantly different views on existence of four effective leadership facets and the importance of two effective leadership facets. It is suggested that this cohort (16-20 years' service) has extensive experience in their respective IOTs and so may have considerably stronger views than those with less service, especially those with 1-5 years' service whose main focus may be establishing themselves as academics in their own rights rather than concentrating on effective leadership by their HODs.

The fourth area which is examined is that of response patterns based on age ranges. Five distinct age ranges were illustrated in the study, namely, 20-30 years of age: 1.1% (3 respondents); 31-40 years of age: 23.3% (63 respondents); 41-50 years of age: 50.9% (138 respondents); 51-60 years of age: 19.2% (52 respondents) and over 60 years of age: 5.5% (15 respondents). 17.1% (56 respondents) of the original sample did not disclose their age range. As only three respondents were in the 20-30 age group, it was decided to amalgamate them with the 31-40 age group and the file now containing the four groups was analysed using the ANOVA one-way test. No scales returned statistically significant differences between groups with  $p$  values of  $< .05$ . Based on these results, it can be stated that there is no significant evidence of differences between groups based on age range.

The penultimate area which was examined was that of response patterns based on subject domain. Five distinct subject domains were used in the study, namely, Business/Education: 23.9% (78 respondents); Humanities/Social Sciences: 17.7% (58 respondents); Science/Computing: 16.2% (53 respondents); Health Sciences: 8.6% (28 respondents) and Engineering: 16.5% (54 respondents). 17.1% (56 respondents) of the original sample did not disclose their subject domain. The file containing these five groups was also analysed using the ANOVA one-way test.

Nine of the existence scales, with the exception of '*facilitating participation in decision making and consultation*' and '*respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department*' returned highly statistically significant  $p$  values  $< .05$ . Six of these had  $p$  values = .000; 2 had  $p$  values of .001 and 1 had a  $p$  value of .002. These values infer a significant difference between groups on these scales.

Table 8 below illustrates the different answering patterns based on the subject domain of respondents. These differences are listed by effective leadership behaviour and demonstrating how responses from staff in each subject domain differed from each other.

**Table 8: Between group differences based on subject domain (X or X1 v Y or Y1 denotes differences)**

Existence Scale	Business /Education	Humanities/ Social Sciences	Science/ Computing	Health Sciences	Engineering
Providing strategic direction	X	Y X1		Y1	Y Y1
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	X	Y		Y	Y
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	X	Y		Y	Y
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	X	Y		Y	Y
Having personal integrity	X	Y	Y	Y	
Having credibility as a role model	X	Y		Y	Y
Providing communications about developments	X	Y		Y	Y
Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf	X	Y		Y	Y
Protecting academic staff autonomy	X	Y		Y	Y



It is evident from Table 8 above that the differences are almost entirely between the Business/Education group and Humanities/Social Sciences, Engineering and Health Sciences groups. In the absence of follow-up questions to respondents on these differences, it is not possible to state the reasons for these differences. However, it is inferred that Business/Education academic staff may have a greater academic interest in leadership than those in other subject domains that has led to the response differences. Based on these results, it can be stated that there is highly significant evidence of variances in answering patterns based on the subject domain of the respondent.

The final area which was examined was that of response patterns based on the department size of the respondents. Six distinct size ranges were queried in the study, namely, less than 20 staff: 13.1% (43 respondents); 21-30 staff: 19.0% (62 respondents); 31-40 staff: 23.2% (76 respondents); 41-50 staff: 8.9% (29 respondents); 51-60 staff: 5.2% (17 respondents) and over 60 staff: 13.5% (44 respondents). 17.1% (56 respondents) of the original sample did not disclose their department size. The file containing these six groups was analysed using the ANOVA one-way test. Eight scales returned statistically significant differences between groups with  $p$  values of  $< .05$ . Table 9 below illustrates the different answer patterns based on the department size of respondents. These differences are listed by effective leadership behaviour and demonstrating how responses from staff in each department size differed from each other.

**Table 9: Between group differences based on department size (X v Y denotes differences)**

Scale	<20 staff	21-30 Staff	31-40 Staff	41-50 Staff	51- 60 Staff	>60 Staff
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction (existence)		X			Y	
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader (existence)	Y	X	X1		Y Y1	
Having personal integrity	Y	X			Y	

Scale	<20 staff	21-30 Staff	31-40 Staff	41-50 Staff	51- 60 Staff	>60 Staff
(existence)						
Having credibility as a role model (importance)	X					Y
Having credibility as a role model (existence)	Y	X			Y	
Providing communications about developments (existence)		X			Y	Y
Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf (existence)	Y	X	X1		Y Y1	Y
Protecting academic staff autonomy (existence)		Y	Y		X	

It would appear from these results that academic staff in departments with between 21-30 staff have significantly different perceptions of effective leadership from their colleagues in departments of other sizes. Ideally, these perceptions would be evaluated by follow-up questions.

However, in the absence of such questions, it is possible to infer perhaps that departments of the range of 21-30 staff are optimal in size and afford staff reasonable access to their HODs and thus may lead to positive views of leadership. Based on the results in Table 9, it can be stated that there is highly significant evidence of variances in answering patterns based on the department size of respondents. This indicates an area that requires examination in a future study.

### **Importance and existence of effective leadership facets**

As stated previously, the questionnaire asked participants questions on both the importance and existence of eleven effective leadership facets at the level of HOD in the IOT sector in Ireland. These effective leadership facets were identified by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009).

Firstly, the perceived importance of the eleven effective leadership facets is examined. The findings are illustrated in Table 10 below. In each question, respondents were asked to select one of five possible answers based on a Likert scale. The five possible answers and their corresponding values were:

*'strongly agree' = 1*

*'agree' = 2*

*'don't know' = 3*

*'disagree' = 4*

*'strongly disagree' = 5*

In the following table, the mean scores and standard deviations are illustrated. Inferences are then drawn on the meaning of the results in terms of the perceived importance of the effective leadership facets.

**Table 10: Mean scores for importance of each effective leadership behaviour** (1=*strongly agree*; 2= *agree*; 3= *don't know*; 4= *disagree*; 5 = *strongly disagree*)

Effective leadership behaviour	Mean importance	Standard deviation
Providing strategic direction	2.43	.534
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	1.58	.571
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	2.32	.543
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	1.44	.518
Having personal integrity	2.34	.596
Having credibility to act as a role model	1.65	.569
Facilitating participation in decision-making; consultation	2.27	.627
Providing communication about developments	1.56	.508
Representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf	1.55	.564
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department	2.33	.687
Protecting academic staff autonomy	1.67	.585

A review of the mean scores outlined in Table 10 above shows that support for the importance of the eleven effective leadership facets ranges from 1.44 (between *strongly agree* and *agree*) to 2.43 (between *agree* and *don't know*). Briefly looking at the most and least important effective leadership facets, the following results can be seen.

The most important facets are: (i.e. mean < 2.00, between 'strongly agree' and 'agree')

1. *'Establishing trustworthiness as a leader'*: mean score of 1.44
2. *'Representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf'*: mean score of 1.55
3. *'Providing communications about developments'*: mean score of 1.56
4. *'Creating a structure to support the strategic direction'*: mean score of 1.58
5. *'Having credibility to act as a role model'*: mean score of 1.65
6. *'Protecting staff autonomy'*: mean score of 1.67

The least important facets are: (i.e. mean > 2.00, between 'agree' and 'don't know')

1. *'Providing strategic direction'*: mean score of 2.43
2. *'Having personal integrity'*: mean score of 2.34
3. *'Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department'*: mean score of 2.33
4. *'Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment'*: mean score of 2.32
5. *'Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation'*: mean score of 2.27

It is important to state that the least important effective leadership facets all contained negatively worded questions which it is believed may have adversely affected their support rates.

Attention is now turned to the levels of support for the existence of these eleven effective leadership facets. Table 11 below illustrates the mean scores and standard deviations. The meaning of the results in terms of the perceived existence of the effective leadership facets is then interpreted.

**Table 11: Mean scores for existence of each effective leadership behaviour** (1=*strongly agree*; 2= *agree*; 3= *don't know*; 4= *disagree*; 5 = *strongly disagree*)

Effective leadership behaviour	Mean existence	Standard deviation
Providing strategic direction	3.00	.603
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	2.92	1.112
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	3.00	.617
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	2.76	1.202
Having personal integrity	2.85	.604
Having credibility to act as a role model	2.78	1.116
Facilitating participation in decision-making; consultation	2.83	.609
Providing communication about developments	2.83	1.117
Representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf	2.67	1.135
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department	2.98	.598
Protecting academic staff autonomy	2.52	.910

Looking at these results, it can be seen that the mean scores supporting the existence of the eleven effective leadership facets range from 2.52 to 3.00, i.e. between *agree* and *don't know*.

Using the same criteria as that for the importance of the eleven effective leadership facets, it can be inferred that there is at best, very moderate support for the existence of all the leadership facets. This is in stark contrast with the perceived importance of these facets by the same respondents. This suggests a significant gap between theory and practice. It also infers the need for leadership development for HODs to address this gap.

In the next section, the correlations between the eleven variables for both importance and existence will be illustrated and discussed.

### Correlations

Firstly, the correlations between the scales based on their importance are examined. Looking at the data in Table 12 below, it can be seen that there are a number of scales which have strong positive correlations with each other. These are:

*Establishing trust and having credibility (.615) and providing communications (.673)*

*Having credibility and providing communications (.615)*

*Providing communications and representing the department (.654) and protecting academic staff autonomy (.664)*

*Representing the department and protecting academic staff autonomy (.613)*

All other correlations, although positive, are  $< .60$ . It was decided to accept correlations of  $>$  or  $=$  to  $.60$  as representing a strong correlation. Thus, it can be inferred that these five scales display strong positive correlations and so it can be suggested that they form a particular sub-group of important effective leadership facets in the IOT sector in Ireland. It can also be noted that there are not strong inter-correlations between the other importance scales. This may be a reflection on the differing views of academic staff of which leadership facets are important and those that are less important at HOD level and may be related to the difference in item scoring provided by respondents as evident in the lower *alpha* ratings for some of the importance scales as discussed above.

<b>Table 12: Importance Correlations</b>	Providing direction	Creating structure	Fostering support	Establishing trust	Having personal integrity	Having credibility	Facilitating participation	Providing communications	Representing department	Respecting existing culture	Protecting autonomy
Providing strategic direction	1										
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	.242**	1									
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	.318**	.266**	1								
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	.237**	.581**	.342**	1							
Having personal integrity	.245**	.257**	.324**	.339**	1						
Having credibility as a role model	.254**	.427**	.285**	<b>.615**</b>	.297**	1					
Facilitating participation in decision making and consultation	.120*	.254**	.276**	.408**	.431**	.326**	1				
Providing communications about developments	.250**	.525**	.305**	<b>.673**</b>	.320**	<b>.655**</b>	.421**	1			
Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf	.183**	.506**	.270**	.507**	.260**	.553**	.320**	<b>.654**</b>	1		
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department	.172**	.307**	.283**	.378**	.322**	.410**	.291**	.336**	.335**	1	
Protecting academic staff autonomy	.261**	.416**	.291**	.545**	.271**	.540**	.382**	<b>.664**</b>	<b>.613**</b>	.389**	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).											
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).											



Next the correlations between the scales based on their existence are examined. In Table 13 below, a stronger pattern of relationships emerges.

*Providing direction* has positive correlations with *creating structure* (.660), *establishing trust* (.648), *providing communications* (.650) and *representing the department* (.631).

*Creating structure* has positive correlations with *providing direction* (.660), *establishing trust* (.757), *having credibility* (.788), *providing communications* (.788), *representing the department* (.752) and *protecting autonomy* (.650).

*Fostering support* has positive correlations with *establishing trust* (.603), *having credibility* (.612) and *providing communications* (.602).

*Establishing trust* has positive correlations with *providing direction* (.648), *creating structure* (.757), *fostering support* (.603), *having personal integrity* (.623), *having credibility* (.836), *facilitating participation* (.624), *providing communications* (.790), *representing the department* (.763) and *protecting academic staff autonomy* (.725).

*Having personal integrity* has positive correlations with *establishing trust* (.623), *having credibility* (.653) and *providing communications* (.613).

*Having credibility* has positive correlations with *providing direction* (.690), *creating structure* (.788), *fostering support* (.612), *establishing trust* (.836), *having personal integrity* (.653), *providing communications* (.827), *representing the department* (.789) and *protecting academic staff autonomy* (.697).

*Facilitating participation* has positive correlations with *establishing trust* (.624)

*Providing communications* has positive correlations with *providing direction* (.650), *creating structure* (.788), *fostering support* (.602), *establishing trust* (.790), *having personal integrity* (.613), *having credibility* (.827), *representing the department* (.768) and *protecting academic staff autonomy* (.700).

*Representing the department* has positive correlations with *providing direction* (.631), *creating structure* (.752), *establishing trust* (.763), *having credibility* (.789), *providing communications* (.768) and *protecting academic staff autonomy* (.656).

*Protecting academic staff autonomy* has positive correlations with *creating structure* (.650), *establishing trust* (.725), *having credibility* (.697), *providing communications* (.700) and *representing the department* (.656).

Establishing trust has strong positive correlations with nine other effective leadership facets (as outlined above). It can be inferred from these relationships that they are strongly interrelated and so form a credible group of effective leadership facets that exist in the IOT sector. By contrast, it is suggested that '*respecting existing culture while seeking to instil new values through a vision for the department*' does not have strong correlations with the '*establishing trust*' or indeed any of the other nine effective leadership facets.

It can also be interpreted from table 13 below that there are strong inter-correlations amongst almost all of the existence scales (with the exception of *respecting existing culture while seeking to instil new values through a vision for the department*). These high inter-correlations are related to the higher *alpha* scores for each of the importance scales as discussed above.

The strong inter-correlations amongst almost all of the existence scales and the less evident inter-correlations amongst the importance scales is also illustrated in figure 7 on page 201. This figure presents the findings from paired sample *t* tests using the responses on both the importance and existence of each of the eleven leadership facets.

**Table 13: Correlations between existence variables**

Scale	Providing direction	Creating structure	Fostering support	Establishing trust	Having personal integrity	Having credibility	Facilitating participation	Providing communications	Representing department	Respecting existing culture	Protecting autonomy
Providing strategic direction	1										
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	<b>.660**</b>	1									
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	.489**	.566**	1								
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	<b>.648**</b>	<b>.757**</b>	<b>.603**</b>	1							
Having personal integrity	.522**	.553**	.427**	.623**	1						
Having credibility as a role model	<b>.690**</b>	<b>.788**</b>	<b>.612**</b>	<b>.836**</b>	<b>.653**</b>	1					
Facilitating participation in decision making and consultation	.468**	.574**	.426**	<b>.624**</b>	.532**	.579**	1				
Providing communications about developments	<b>.650**</b>	<b>.788**</b>	<b>.602**</b>	<b>.790**</b>	<b>.613**</b>	<b>.827**</b>	.587**	1			
Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf	<b>.631**</b>	<b>.752**</b>	.513**	<b>.763**</b>	.551**	<b>.789**</b>	.597**	<b>.768**</b>	1		
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department	.449**	.487**	.401**	.556**	.420**	.554**	.465**	.522**	.554**	1	
Protecting academic staff autonomy	.501**	<b>.650**</b>	.494**	<b>.725**</b>	.523**	<b>.697**</b>	.556**	<b>.700**</b>	<b>.656**</b>	.535**	1

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### Exploratory factor analysis

It was decided to conduct further analysis of the relationship between the different scales by carrying out exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Table 14 below illustrates the groupings of related scales in terms of their importance.

**Table 14: Rotated factor matrix of scales in terms of their importance**

Rotated Factor Matrix <sup>a</sup>	Factor		
	1	2	3
Providing communications about developments	.844		
Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf	.706		
Protecting academic staff autonomy	.688		
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	.656		
Having credibility as a role model	.655		
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	.534		
Facilitating participation in decision making and consultation		.711	
Having personal integrity		.526	
Providing strategic direction			.510
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment			.449
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department			
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.			
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.			
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.			

It can be seen from Table 14 that six of the scales form a distinct sub-group. Interestingly, they are a mixture of both ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ facets. For instance, ‘*providing communications about developments*’ and ‘*protecting academic staff autonomy*’ are intermingled with ‘*creating a structure to support the strategic direction*’. In addition, two further sub-groups of two scales each also emerge under EFA. Finally, it is noted that one scale, namely, ‘*respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department*’ does not appear to have an affiliation with the other ten scales. Turning now to the relationship between the scales in terms of their existence, the following pattern emerges.

Table 15 below demonstrates two strong sub-groups of eight scales each. Interestingly, once again, *'respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department'* stands on its own, disconnected from the other ten scales. It is also important to highlight that the two sub-groups of eight scales contain six common scales.

**Table 15: Rotated factor matrix of scales in terms of their existence**

Rotated Factor Matrix <sup>a</sup>	Factor		
	1	2	3
Providing communications about developments	.719	.421	
Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf	.704	.449	
Protecting academic staff autonomy	.679	.478	
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	.629		
Having credibility as a role model	.611	.527	
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	.605	.564	
Facilitating participation in decision making and consultation	.524		
Having personal integrity	.411	.664	
Providing strategic direction		.512	
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment		.503	
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department			.649
Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.			
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.			
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.			

These findings, in terms of both the importance and existence of the effective leadership behaviour scales, appear to be consistent with those presented in the correlation Tables. In particular, in terms of their importance, EFA illustrated that six of the scales had strong relationships while correlations indicated that five of the scales were related.

Five of these scales were common between the two tests with *'creating a structure to support the strategic direction'* being the scale that did not emerge from the correlations test. In terms of the consistency of findings between correlations and EFA for the existence of the eleven scales, the following picture emerges.

One group of eight related scales and another group of nine facets emerge from the correlations, while two groups of eight related scales emerge from EFA. The scale *'respecting existing culture while seeking to instil new values through a vision for the department'* is common to both the correlations and EFA in that it appears not to have relationships with the other nine effective leadership facets.

### **Overall effectiveness of leadership**

After completing questions on the importance and existence of the eleven effective leadership facets, respondents were then asked a question on the overall effectiveness of leadership at HOD level. In this section, findings on the overall effectiveness of leadership will be illustrated. Table 16 below demonstrates the answers to the question/statement: *'My head of department is effective in his/her day to day role'*. Once again, respondents were asked to select one option from a Likert scale ranging from:

1 = *'strongly agree'*

2 = *'agree'*

3 = *'don't know'*

4 = *'disagree'*

5 = *'strongly disagree'*

As can be seen from Table 16 below, the responses were quite mixed with a mean score of 2.78 emerging. This equates to an overall response between the *'agree'* and *'don't know'* options but much closer to the *'don't know'* option. In terms of a *'strongly agree/agree'* response rate, the Figure is 51.3% which indicates a moderate level of support for the general effectiveness of HODs as perceived by academic staff. Interestingly, this result strongly supports the findings on the existence of the eleven effective leadership facets which are illustrated in the previous section and range from 2.52 to 3.00 with an average mean score of 2.82.

It is suggested that there may be a number of factors impacting on the moderate support rates for leadership effectiveness at HOD level. These may be in both the internal and external environments in which they operate.

For example, it is possible that academic staff may have unrealistic expectations of the role of HODs or else that their role may be ill-defined. A further issue may be the lack of resources necessary to effect changes or developments in departments. However, these are beyond the scope of this study.

**Table 16: Responses to question that ‘My head of department is effective in his/her day to day role’**

Response	Percent %	Cumulative Percent %
strongly agree	23.1	23.1
Agree	28.2	51.3
don't know	10.8	62.1
Disagree	23.8	85.9
strongly disagree	14.1	100.0
<b>mean score</b>		<b>2.78</b>

#### **Expansion of existing leadership facets**

Respondents were also asked to comment on whether or not additional effective leadership facets existed at HOD level in their IOTs. 46.2% of respondents perceived that there were additional effective leadership facets not covered by the study, while 53.8% believed that no further facets were evident. Interestingly, 128 respondents then went on to identify these other effective leadership facets. On closer examination, it can be seen that many of these additional facets are directly or very closely related to the eleven effective leadership facets covered by the questionnaire.

For example, there were 34 references to facets that mirror *‘having credibility to act as a role model’*; *‘having personal integrity’* like facets attracted 24 references; there were 15 references to *‘providing communication about developments’*; 12 references to facets similar to *‘establishing trustworthiness as a leader’* and facets linked to *‘representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf’* attracted 10 responses.

These particular findings point to the wider definitions of the variables associated with each of the effective leadership facets and may contribute to the expansion and modification of survey instruments for further studies in this area. A full list of the number of references and sample responses for each of the existing and effective leadership facets is contained in Table 17 below.

**Table 17: Responses on additional effective leadership facets (in order of most cited)**

Effective leadership behaviour	Number of references	Sample responses
Having Credibility to act as a role model	34	<i>'Most effective leaders look like leaders, talk like leaders, walk like leaders and act like leaders. Less effective leaders I have encountered display only some or none of these traits'.</i>  <i>'Be an active researcher him/herself. Be of a high academic and administrative standard so as to have the respect of peers'.</i>
Having personal integrity	24	<i>'Heads of department should maintain a grounded relationship with staff and foster a bottom up not top down direction of communication'.</i>  <i>'Honesty, walk the walk, practice what you preach, openness'.</i>
Providing communication about developments	15	<i>'Ability to communicate what is happening at executive board level'.</i>  <i>'Communications is a key skill that I feel, in the day to day running of a dept., should be a very high priority which I feel is not used effectively. We do not receive communication from our head of dept. relating to the day to day running of the Dept'.</i>
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	12	<i>'Treating staff with respect and communicating in a timely manner i.e. Don't ignore staff questions or issues'.</i>  <i>'Talk to staff. Explain reasons why you do things. Have staff meetings. Read staff profiles before assigning modules. Try to understand that you cannot keep changing modules on staff'.</i>
Representing the department to advance its cause(s)	10	<i>'The head of department needs to identify with industry and be aware of their needs. This leads to the development of courses that result in 'employable' learners'.</i>



Effective leadership behaviour	Number of references	Sample responses
Representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf	10	<p><i>'Heads of Department need to be able to represent the views of the department and the staff without top-down decision making over-riding all processes'.</i></p> <p><i>'Challenge the rigour and validity of institutional policy where it undermines academic/educational values and goals. Challenge the channelling of resources towards administration and so called prestige projects that have not been subject to rigorous analysis appropriate for an educational setting. Ensure resources follow the student in the context of international students. Apply similar rigour to management processes as is applied to academic quality'.</i></p>
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction	9	<p><i>'To create the context within which the service professionals provide the service'.</i></p> <p><i>'Being willing to invest time in facilitating a democratic exchange of views BETWEEN members of a department'.</i></p>
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	9	<p><i>'Be aware of the role of the lecturer, in an ever changing educational environment. Treat people as individuals and not as the collective'.</i></p> <p><i>'To be unfixed and yet progressive. Unfixed because you need to work with, obtain performance from and support a wide mix of staff/faculty'.</i></p> <p><i>Progressive in that you need to push the place forward to follow what society/economy need from us.'</i></p>
Providing strategic direction	8	<p><i>'Ability to prioritise, the courage to challenge and have difficult conversations'.</i></p> <p><i>'Competency regarding the implementation of change is imperative to effective leadership and management'.</i></p>

Effective leadership behaviour	Number of references	Sample responses
Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation	6	<p><i>‘Willingness to allow staff to get on with ideas and support them. They are professionals and want to do the best for their students’.</i></p> <p><i>‘I think it is vital that heads of department who do not share the same cognate disciplines as those in their department are open to listening to academic staff about how the teaching, assessment and learning approaches work in the discipline’.</i></p> <p><i>‘Having an understanding of these approaches demonstrates respect to the traditions of the disciplines we teach and help to build rapport. When changes have to be made, I believe that staff will feel that the rationale for decisions come from a more informed place’.</i></p>
Protecting academic staff autonomy	6	<p><i>‘Their job should not be to tell me how to do my job as increasingly seems to be the case. Rather, it is to enable me to do my job’.</i></p> <p><i>‘Yes the encouragement of more cross departmental and cross disciplinary work and collaboration’.</i></p> <p><i>‘I feel this is lacking and also the fact that no time is afforded on timetables for staff or venues for them to meet with their colleagues to discuss their work, issues, support each other and develop joint assessments and work material and it prevents duplication of work and shares the talents and skills of staff’.</i></p>

Table 17 above summarises some of the key responses from those surveyed which are linked to the existing or established effective leadership facets. There were a total of 139 comments from 128 respondents on these effective leadership facets and a full schedule of these comments is provided in Appendix 6.

In the next section, a number of perceptions of poor/ineffective leadership facets are outlined. Some respondents availed of the opportunity of the open ended question on other effective leadership facets to level criticisms of the leadership of HODs and indeed management in general. These will now be outlined.

### **Perceptions of poor/ineffective leadership**

A number of comments were recorded which relate to facets and perceptions of ineffective leadership. The first theme relates to the distancing of HODs from academic staff and the suggestion that they are over-delegating work to them.

*‘Deliberate distancing by managerial culture between themselves and academic staff i.e. increasing absence of vertical integration in the institutional structure, leaving two separate horizontal cultures. Bureaucratic engagement only from above with a noticeable and increasing lack of hands-on, knowledgeable involvement. More of core daily business and organization is being devolved by management onto the heads of teaching staff’.*

The first part of the next statement was used in Table 17 above. However, the second part of the statement states what a leader is not and this is useful in itself.

*‘Most effective leaders look like leaders, talk like leaders, walk like leaders and act like leaders. Less effective leaders I have encountered display only some or none of these traits’.*

The next theme contains three statements which read almost as a plea for help. They bemoan the extent to which HODs have become increasingly involved in administration to the detriment of leadership.

While this view is likely to attract significant support, it is also worth noting that there is an increasing administrative burden being placed not only on HODs but on and all managers in present times. However, the sentiments expressed are worthy of attention from both leadership practitioners and researchers.

*'HOD should be free enough of operational logistics to be able to engage with proper academic leadership. Instead HOD role is largely taken up with resolving, in the short term, of operational matters only'.*

*'Understanding that we are all humans. Eliminate favouritism'.*

*'Manage people as having a human brain in their head, not act as an administrator'.*

The next theme relates to the need for HODs to have a working knowledge of teaching and research so that they can relate to the staff they lead. This is very similar to the effective leadership behaviour of *'having credibility as a role model'* but because there were so many specific comments on this issue it was decided to include them.

*'A manager who knows little about the intellectual content of the department is not a leader but merely a management stooge. He or she is not a respected colleague, but a time-server. If he or she doesn't read or think or teach or publish in the area why is he or she there? Such a person will not be respected, and suspicions of cronyism or nepotism will be rife'.*

*'My head of department has no research profile, no higher degree and no interest in encouraging/supporting those of us who would like to pursue a PhD for instance and is generally incompetent in this aspect of the role'.*

*'Many HODs are professional managers with no experience of lecturing. This results in a disconnect between HODs and Lecturers'.*

The final generic theme on leadership at HOD level relates to overall dissatisfaction and suspicion about how they operate.

*'Uninterested leaders are very damaging to core business'.*

*'Heads of department tend to simply be implementers of autocratic decisions arbitrarily dictated by the most senior management'.*

*'Being perceived as not just a 'yes' woman/man for senior management'.*

*'It is clear that many HODs do not have the basic organisational skills required to do their job. What is more evident is that those at higher management levels have failed to do anything to rectify that. Some departments have been poorly run for many years; luckily that does not apply to me'.*

*'The main question is not if my HOD is personally a strong leader, the issue is if the organisational structures in IOTs encourage leadership. There is a gap between HOD responsibilities and decision making opportunities'.*

The final two comments appear to relate specifically to individual difficulties between academic staff members and their HODs. While it is encouraging that there are only two such comments, it is worrying that such deep rooted distrust of leadership exists in these situations.

*'Our HOD won't be linked to any cause and we exist in a culture where he can't be held to account for failure or success. We are never promoted, we (academic staff) are used to functioning as mini HODs without pay or recognition. Our department is sinking due to a lack of so many of the points you make. We are in dire need of leadership and presence. Another aspect is lack of working relations at HOS and HOD level. This rupture is probably the most depressing aspect of our situation. But both operate as untouchables. It often feels like a slow rot under their watch. Those of us who put our heads above the parapet are so overworked and under-appreciated. When we say it's not on and we won't continue to be bullied in this fashion we are sent to "Coventry". I come from an industrial situation. I know the meaning of work. This is just terrible treatment of staff, plain and simple'.*

*'My Institute is an extremely toxic management culture in which it is difficult for HODs to operate effectively, especially in larger departments. The HOD simply reflects the general management culture. It is one of the worst places to work I have ever encountered in which staff are not valued'.*

What inferences can be drawn from these responses? Firstly, it will come as no great surprise that leadership is not always effective in the views of academic staff at HOD level in the IOT sector. However, the range of comments and responses highlight the difficult and arguably the impossible nature of the role of HOD in trying to be ‘all things to all men and women!’ Also, it is suggested that academic staff themselves may not have clearly defined views of the type of leadership they desire.

In particular, they may have an unrealistic or excessive expectation of what their HODs can actually achieve on their behalf. As stated in Section 1 and the later section on ‘*Distinctiveness of leadership in higher education*’, leadership in HE is distinctive and with academic staff operating as self-directed professionals. HODs have a difficult balancing act to keep them engaged. Also, academic staff are looking for their HODs to be less ‘managerial’ and act more as leaders. Whilst this is a very desirable outcome, the growing emphasis in recent years on the management of staff, finances, equipment and other physical resources has firmly placed the emphasis on these priorities.

#### **Additional effective leadership facets not included in the LFHE model**

As mentioned above, a number of additional effective leadership facets were identified from the responses received from academic staff. These can be grouped into a number of sub-categories. Firstly, there is the category of ‘*problem solving/conflict resolution*’. It is suggested that the following comments fall into this category.

*‘Thorough understanding of problem resolution processes’.*

*‘Problem solving skills’.*

*‘Decision making skills and interpersonal/conflict resolution skills are important in the environment that we operate in’.*

*‘Ability to effectively mediate’.*

These comments infer that there is a growing need to resolve interpersonal conflicts and difficulties between staff. External factors such as pay reductions, increased working hours and reduced leave entitlements have contributed to tensions within IOTs which can manifest themselves in the form of disputes between staff, and between staff and management. Other external factors which may be affected by these changes to working conditions include difficulties with meeting financial obligations and relationship difficulties which can also lead to disaffected staff. It is suggested that this additional effective leadership behaviour, namely, *'problem solving/conflict resolution'* is important at HOD level in the IOT sector.

A further section of responses relate to the need to manage underperformance of academic staff and apply disciplinary procedures where necessary.

*'Recognise and develop a protocol for ineffective staff'.*

*'Dealing with poor performance - there appears to be no sanctions/actions taken for poor teaching practices and lack of attendance at classes by academic staff'.*

*'Ultimately they need to have clear judgement and the ability to apply discipline where necessary without being swayed by emotional, erroneous arguments'.*

The problem of underperforming staff can be the proverbial 'elephant in the room'. It is suggested, that in every organisation there are a number of staff who do not work to the required level for a whole host of reasons including those outlined in the preceding paragraphs. This is an interesting finding. Academic staff unions have for years resisted performance management schemes on the basis that they argue that the work of academic staff cannot be measured in traditional ways. It is suggested that any scheme designed to measure performance of academic staff would need to be objective, transparent, equitable and acceptable to academic staff and their representatives. There is already an agreed disciplinary procedure, so the mechanism exists to sanction staff for underperformance. The gap that exists is for a system to measure performance and in particular to identify underperforming staff. Such a scheme will also need to be linked to welfare and staff support schemes as some performance issues will need to be resolved using these schemes.

Some respondents also stressed the need to focus on the needs of students. The researcher believes this to be a key point and thankfully it was one not lost in the overall completion of the study. This emphasis is illustrated in the following statements.

*'Effective communication with learners'.*

*'Questions so far focus on academic staff. Focus on the needs of students is also important'.*

These two responses highlight and identify an area which is beyond the scope of this study and may be the subject of a further research study. However, it can be inferred that the need to be *'student focused/centred'* is an emergent effective leadership behaviour from this study.

The remaining responses on additional effective leadership facets identified a range of mainly unrelated facets which academic staff deemed important. These included *'emotional intelligence'* (e.g., listening, empathy, awareness & self-awareness); *'enthusiasm'*; *'energy, youth, humour'*; *'strong character'*; *'charisma'* and the *'ability to take criticism where criticism is due, accept it and move on'*. Many of these facets can be linked to some of the more established leadership theories such as transformational and charismatic leadership. Each of these facets would require further studies in themselves and so too are beyond the scope of the study.

However, it is worth re-stating that 139 references from 128 respondents ultimately related to the original 11 identified effective leadership facets. Only 15 references emerged as being negative perceptions of effective leadership while there were 8 references to possible additional effective leadership facets. These findings provide plenty of food for thought and indeed create future research opportunities.

### **Distinctiveness of leadership in higher education**

66% of all respondents perceived that leadership in the HE sector was distinctive, while 34% of respondents saw no difference between leadership in HE and other employment sectors. In a subsequent question, participants were then asked to state why/why not such leadership was distinctive. A total of 182 respondents addressed this question.



A full list of responses is provided in Appendix 7. Over two thirds of respondents perceived that leadership in HE was distinctive and the sample responses reflect this strong response rate. This data obtained through an open ended question was analysed for key themes using content analysis. This method can be described as analysing the use of words and the recurrent patterns of certain words or phrases (Easterby-Smith *et al.* , 2008). The responses are listed by theme, in order of citation, and accompanied by some sample quotations from respondents.

**Table 18: Distinctiveness of leadership in higher education**

Theme	Number of citations	Sample responses	Distinctive Y/N
Different environment/culture	53	<p><i>'Because of the complex nature of higher education, i.e. provision of a valuable service with significant commercial and social implications for students, leadership styles have to accommodate this remit which is not so easy. Cost benefit trade-off is significant and not so simple to manage'.</i></p> <p><i>'A greater emphasis on the social role of an education provider in an economy. Other sectors would have a greater emphasis on the economic contribution of their department'.</i></p>	Y
Autonomous working	28	<p><i>'Leaders in higher education need to be able to understand what it takes to create and manage an autonomous team; while at the same time enabling individuals to excel at their particular specialism'.</i></p> <p><i>'Lecturing staff are like independent sole traders and it is often a challenge to get them to have a shared sense of purpose around the needs of students'.</i></p>	Y

Theme	Number of citations	Sample responses	Distinctive Y/N
Autonomous working	28	<i>Teaching/learning is a values-based social practice and getting a disparate group to coalesce around an agreed value system is another challenge</i> '.	Y
Limited authority	24	<p><i>'Structure of higher education and accountability very different from some sectors e.g. private sector, unions present an additional challenge. Resources are limited as with many other sectors and where negative answers are given here it may not be in the gift of the HOD to support academic staff through professional development, either financially or through the timetable</i>'.</p> <p><i>'At HOD level, no real decisive power, really an administrative role, not found in private industry</i>'.</p> <p><i>'There is no reward or reprimand for staff so there is loss of authority with respect to implementing change</i>'.</p>	Y
Same environment/culture	20	<p><i>'The principles are the same. Vision, expertise competency etc. A good leader should be able to lead a retail centre, factory or a college because the competencies are transferable</i>'.</p> <p><i>'A good leader will usually show a suite of very basic personal qualities and abilities that can be transferred to any area</i>'.</p>	N

Theme	Number of citations	Sample responses	Distinctive Y/N
Measurement of success/failure	19	<p><i>'Private industry is more effective and is better at allocating scarce resources. There is no way of dealing with an ineffective manager in the public sector... in the private sector an ineffective manager would be eliminated to another role or leave the company There is no follow up for missed targets in the public sector'.</i></p> <p><i>'In the private sector you would never get a department head who does not have any qualifications in the area, or even after a couple of years in the role does not understand the bigger picture'.</i></p> <p><i>'As long as one student does well, then we've done our job is not typical of successful businesses'.</i></p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Y</p>
Skill-set of managers	17	<p><i>'Heads of department are often promoted based on academic achievements rather than an ability to lead and manage. I believe this results in ineffective leadership. There is usually little or no training in HRM and communication'.</i></p> <p><i>'Most managers in education come from an academic background and have never actually studied a managerial course to know about leadership and motivation. They lack accountability and have a closed- shop, stifling debate'.</i></p>	Y
Motivation of staff	12	<p><i>'Public sector mentality of not motivating, encouraging, praising and developing staff. They sometimes don't think that's their role. Ends up being nobody's role as a result'.</i></p>	Y

Theme	Number of citations	Sample responses	Distinctive Y/N
Motivation of staff		<p><i>'Leadership in an academic environment is about motivating people that are probably as experienced/educated and intelligent as those in management positions'.</i></p> <p><i>'It is about creating a learning environment where staff members can develop themselves and work harmoniously with fellow staff members'.</i></p>	Y
Communications	5	<p><i>'All leadership requires good communication and organisation skills to facilitate delivery of a product/resource in the most acceptable way possible. Whether that product/resource makes a profit or not is irrelevant'.</i></p> <p><i>'As I have worked in many organisations both educational and commercial, I feel there are many similarities. You need to understand the job and then do the job, grow with the business, involve and motivate staff, not annoy them, get everyone working as a team for the good of the organization. Know the business and where it is going. If hard decisions need to be made explain them to EVERYONE not just the few dominant characters!'</i></p>	N

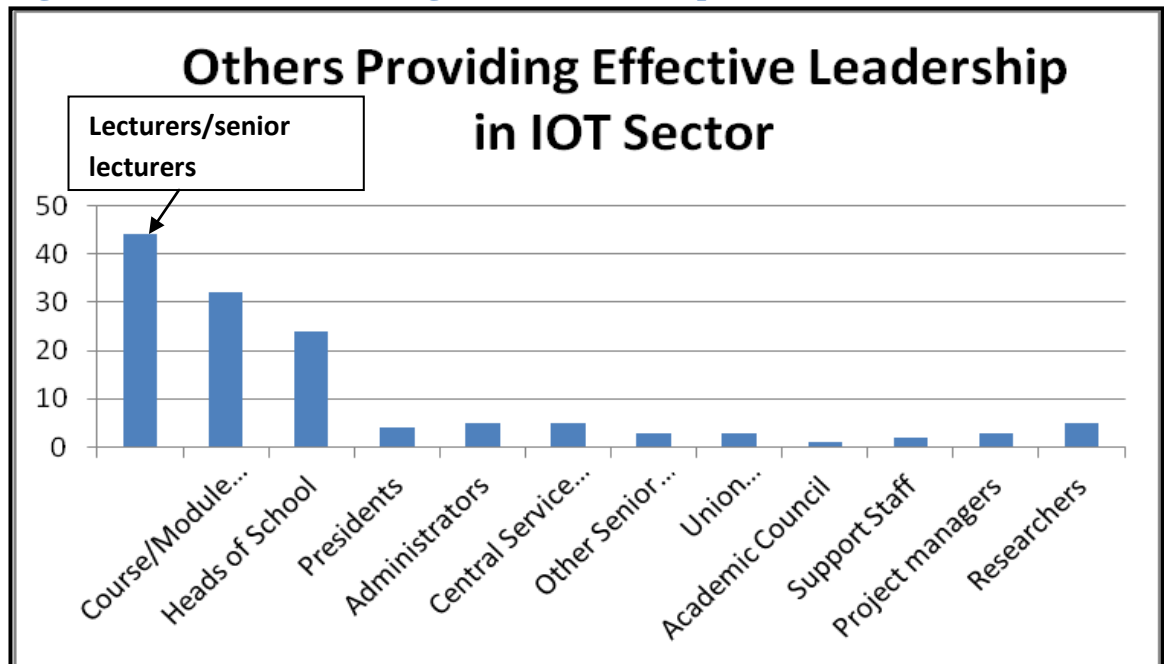
Respondents who claimed distinctiveness of leadership in the HE sector cited such issues as different environment/culture; limited authority; autonomous working of staff; difficulties of measuring success and failure and similar factors. Those that argued that there were no differences generally said that good leadership followed the same principles regardless of the employment sector. Good communication and organisation skills were highlighted as desirable leadership facets in all employment sectors. Vision, expertise and competency were also cited, as was the power to influence staff behaviour.

One particularly interesting response cited the existence of managers, products, customers and a dynamic marketplace as factors common to all employment sectors. These findings once again highlight the different perceptions that exist amongst academic staff. A significant minority (34%) believe that there was nothing distinctive about leadership in HE while 66% believe that it is distinctive. A further area of study that may emerge from this finding is the previous employment experience (if any) of IOT academic staff.

The questions that arise are: did academic staff work in the private sector previously? is this their first employment? and did academic staff work in the public sector previously? The answers to such questions could be extremely helpful in determining the basis of their answers on the distinctiveness of leadership in HE.

The responses to the question '*Do staff other than heads of department demonstrate effective leadership facets in Institutes of Technology?*' was that a significant majority of 80.5% said that staff other than HODs demonstrated effective leadership facets in IOTs, while only 19.5% said that they disagreed with this view. In a follow-up question, respondents were asked to identify those (other than HODs) that they believed demonstrated effective leadership facets in the IOT sector. Their responses are illustrated in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Others demonstrating effective leadership facets in the IOT Sector



As can be seen from this diagram, the largest group identified were lecturers/senior lecturers. This gives credence to the view of self-leadership which is mentioned frequently in the literature. However, a discussion on this facet of leadership is beyond the scope of this study and paper. The next two largest supported groups were those of course/module group leaders and HOSs.

It is interesting to note that of these three groups, only HOSs have formally defined hierarchical leadership roles while the other two groups lead through their own motivations. This is an interesting finding from the viewpoint of the HOD. Many respondents commented on how course leaders in particular carried out a wide range of duties on behalf of or instead of HODs. It can be inferred that academic staff recognise many different post holders as providing leadership in the IOT sector. This may have implications for organisational structures and re-structuring in the sector. It also presents an opportunity to IOT management to develop a model of leadership which would be tailored to the sector and would allow for the principles of shared/distributed leadership to evolve.

## Summary

This paper reports on a comprehensive quantitative study of effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector in Ireland. In particular, the study took eleven effective leadership facets identified by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) in the HE sector in the UK and sought to establish if these facets were important and indeed existent at HOD level in the IOT sector in Ireland. The principle findings were that all eleven effective leadership facets were deemed important at differing levels by academic staff for HODs in the IOT sector in Ireland. This view is confirmed by an average mean score for the importance of these effective leadership facets of 1.92. By contrast the average mean score is 2.83 for the existence/extent of the same effective leadership facets. These results infer that there is only moderate evidence that such effective leadership facets are practiced at HOD level in the IOT sector in Ireland. Correlation analysis on the importance and existence of the eleven effective leadership facets produced some very interesting findings.

In terms of the importance of the facets, four groups of three variables emerged with strong correlations and one group of five correlated facets also emerged. These findings were very similar to those determined by EFA. This suggests that further research is needed to confirm these groupings as specific to the IOT sector rather than the original eleven effective leadership facets identified by Bryman's study (LFHE 2007; 2009).

The correlations for the existence of the leadership facets match closely with the findings of Bryman's study (LFHE 2007; 2009). Ten of the eleven effective leadership facets (with the exception of '*respecting existing culture while seeking to instil new values through a vision for the department*') were found to demonstrate strong correlations. Once again, these findings were very close to those found by using EFA.

While the conclusions, limitations and recommendations are the subject of a further section of this thesis, it is possible to state at this point that a major leadership development programme for HODs is required to make them aware of this practice gap and more importantly how they need to address this deficiency.

Further key findings from the study relate to the overall effectiveness of HODs; additional effective leadership facets; perceptions of poor/ineffective leadership; distinctiveness of HE leadership and the identification of others demonstrating effective leadership facets in the sector.

The overall effectiveness of HODs was deemed to be broadly in line with the cumulative findings on the existence/extent of the individual effective leadership facets identified in this study. The overall mean score was 2.78. The researcher analysed a large amount of rich narrative data from respondents using content analysis relating to additional effective leadership facets. Much of data related to the eleven effective leadership facets identified by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009). However, some new elements were identified which will allow for a broadening of the definitions of these facets. In addition, a range of perceptions of poor/ineffective leadership emerged from the same data and these were subdivided into categories reflecting increasing 'managerialism', lack of experience/skills to perform the job, and some personal dissatisfaction with HODs by their staff.

An interesting set of findings also emerged on the distinctiveness or otherwise of leadership in the HE sector. Comments on both why and why not such leadership is distinctive were extremely interesting and again it is suggested that these could be used for leadership development programmes at HOD level.

The final area of the study focused on staff other than HODs who were demonstrating effective leadership facets in the IOT sector in Ireland. Those identified included HOSs; lecturers; course/module group leaders; administrators and other managers. This finding gives some credence to the idea of distributed or shared leadership which is evident in the academic literature.

It is suggested that while the study has achieved its objectives and has addressed the research question and the two research sub-questions, a range of limitations and areas for further research have also emerged and this will be addressed in a subsequent section of this thesis.

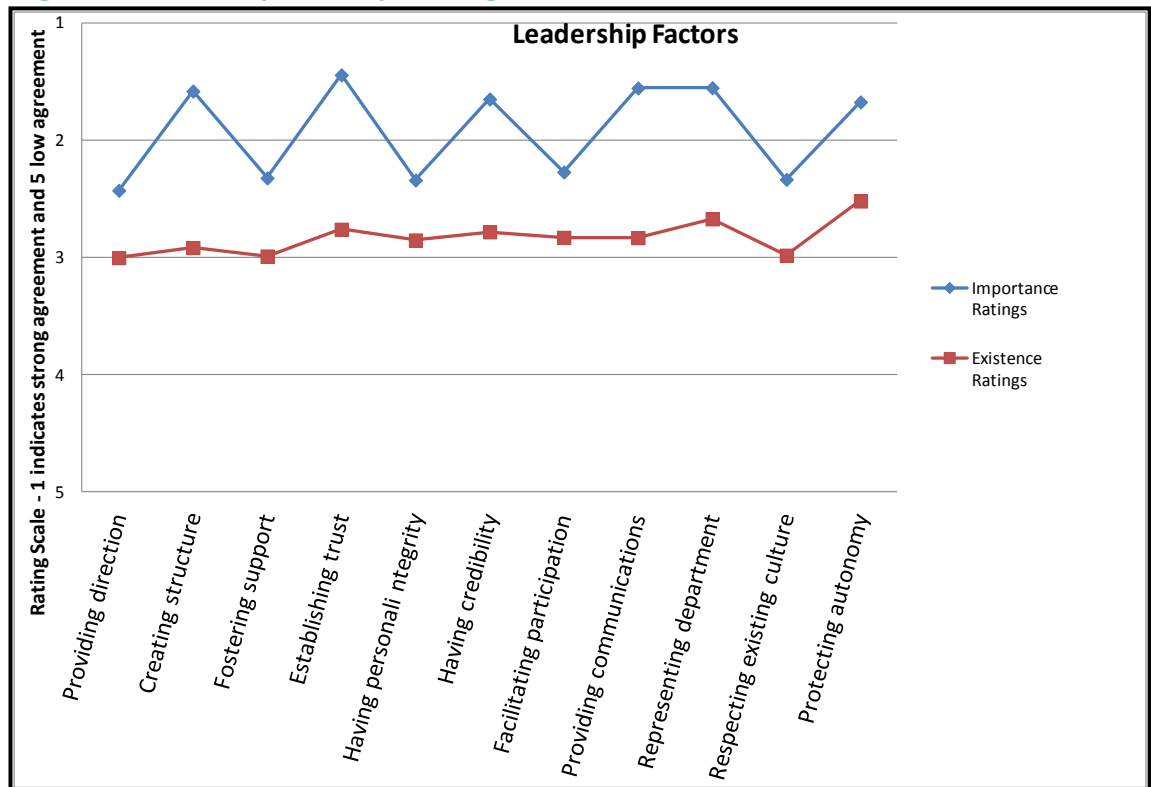


Based on Figure 7 below, it can be inferred that effective leadership facets 2, 4,6,8,9 and 11, namely, *'creating a structure to support the strategic direction'*; *'establishing trustworthiness as a leader'*; *'having credibility to act as a role model'*; *'providing communication about developments'*; *'representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf'* and *'protecting staff autonomy'* are highly important. Also, it can be inferred that the remaining five effective leadership facets, 1,3,5,7 and 10 are moderately important. In terms of the existence of these eleven effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector, the following scenario emerges.

Facets 1, 2, 3 and 10, namely: *'providing strategic direction'*; *'creating a structure to support the strategic direction'*; *'fostering a supportive and collaborative environment'* and *'respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department'* rank quite low on mean scores (2.92 to 3.00 equating to *'don't know'*) and so it can be inferred that there is little or no evidence of their existence at HOD level in the IOT sector in Ireland.

All other facets, namely, 4,5,6,7,8,9 and 11, namely, *'establishing trustworthiness as a leader'*; *'having personal integrity'*; *'having credibility to act as a role model'*; *'facilitating participation in decision making and consultation'*; *'providing communication about developments'*; *'representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf'* and *'protecting staff autonomy'* have mean scores ranging from 2.55 to 2.78 which indicate a very moderate confirmation of the existence of these effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector. Figure 7 below illustrates a summary of the findings and clearly illustrates the difference in support for the importance and existence of these effective leadership facets.

**Figure 7: Summary of study findings**



Paired-sample t-tests were conducted on the data to establish if the mean differences between each leadership factor’s importance versus existence score was significantly different i.e. was each rating of importance higher than the rating for existence of each factor as indicated in Figure 7 above. Table 19 below presents the findings from this analysis and shows that, for each of the 11 effective leadership facets, the difference between the importance of that factor for HOD leadership and the existence of that factor by the HOD are significant. In all cases, the difference indicates that the importance of the factors is significantly higher than the level of existence or the extent to which HODs actually display that leadership factor.

It has been noted earlier in table 12 that there are not strong inter-correlations between the other importance leadership facets. By contrast there are strong inter-correlations between almost all of the existence scales for the leadership facets (see table 13). While figure 7 above primarily demonstrates the statistical significant differences between the importance and existence of each leadership facet, it also links with tables 12 and 13 which illustrates the clearly different levels of inter-correlations that exist within the scales for the importance and existence of the leadership facets.

**Table 19: T-test outputs examining the statistical difference between importance and existence of effective leadership facets**

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences			95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
		Mean Diff.	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Providing direction_I – Providing direction_E	-.57288	.70978	.03925	-.65010	-.49567	-14.595	326	.000
Pair 2	Creating structure_I – Creating structure_E	-1.33333	1.21309	.06912	-1.46935	-1.19732	-19.289	307	.000
Pair 3	Fostering support_I – Fostering support_E	-.66556	.82888	.04778	-.75958	-.57154	-13.931	300	.000
Pair 4	Establishing trust_I – Establishing trust_E	-1.31538	1.30590	.07578	-1.46450	-1.16625	-17.359	296	.000
Pair 5	Having personal integrity_I – Having personal integrity_E	-.51096	.79929	.04702	-.60350	-.41842	-10.867	288	.000
Pair 6	Having credibility_I – Having credibility_E	-1.13054	1.22262	.07229	-1.27284	-.98824	-15.638	285	.000
Pair 7	Facilitating participation_I – Facilitating participation_E	-.55674	.82525	.04914	-.65347	-.46000	-11.329	281	.000
Pair 8	Providing communications_I – Providing communications_E	-1.27500	1.21198	.07243	-1.41758	-1.13242	-17.603	279	.000
Pair 9	Representing department_I – Representing department_E	-1.11589	1.26429	.07569	-1.26489	-.96689	-14.743	278	.000

Paired Samples Test										
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
		Diff.		Mean	Lower	Upper				
Pair 10	Respecting existing culture_I – Respecting existing culture_E	-.64628	.89925	.05393	-.75245	-.54011	-11.983	277	.000	
Pair 11	Protecting autonomy_I – Protecting autonomy_E	-.84356	.98805	.05937	-.96043	-.72669	-14.209	276	.000	

Note 1: ...\_I indicates the leadership *importance* measure

Note 2: ...\_E indicates the leadership *existence* measure

Matching these findings to the research question and sub-questions, it can be stated:

***Which leadership facets are most important for the head of department role in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?***

*'creating a structure to support the strategic direction'*

*'establishing trustworthiness as a leader'*

*'having credibility to act as a role model'*

*'providing communication about developments'*

*'representing the department to advance its cause(s) and networking on its behalf'*

*'protecting staff autonomy'*

***To what extent do heads of department demonstrate effective leadership facets in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?***

The following effective leadership facets are moderately evident in the sector:

*'fostering a supportive and collaborative environment'*

*'establishing trustworthiness as a leader'*

*'having personal integrity'*

*'having credibility to act as a role model'*

*'facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation'*

*'providing communications about developments'*

*'protecting staff autonomy'*

These diagrams seek to illustrate the potential contribution of this study to both theory and practice. It is proposed that this research will make an original contribution to both the existing mainstream body of literature on leadership, as well as developing a new stream dedicated to leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland.

Another potential outcome is the development of insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes for HODs in the sector. It is suggested that the findings and recommendations from the study will provide guidance to existing and future leaders and leadership practices in IOTs.

Finally, as the findings have emanated from academic staff across the IOT sector, it should assist those charged with recruiting, training and developing people at HOD level. In particular, it may help to identify those that possess the requisite leadership behavioural factors that will contribute to effective leadership at those levels and consequently identify the training development needs of those in post and/or who aspire to serve at those levels in the IOT sector in the future. It is also argued that the survey instrument, namely, the questionnaire, is in itself a contribution to theory.

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**Preface between paper 4 (findings paper) and paper on discussion, conclusions and recommendations**

## **Preface between paper 4 (findings paper) and section 3 (paper on discussion, conclusions and recommendations)**

### **Introduction**

Following feedback from the examiners of paper 4, the researcher was asked to consider:

- Some additional statistical analysis including correlation tables; exploratory factor analysis (experience and attitude separately); ‘Pair tests’ (whether there is a difference between practical and statistical differences) and construct validity of the scales
- Changing the term ‘missing’ to ‘non-respondent’
- That more focus is on the contribution to educational leadership knowledge.
- Exploring the gaps between experienced and importance more with respect to why there is perhaps an imbalance, particularly where facets are not seen as so important.
- By simply asking what facets exist, how do you advance our knowledge?
- Making a stronger case for your academic contribution.
- Completing a thorough examination of sample bias/’Effects of demographics on answer pattern’: what did you do with cases of significant differences? Normally they are taken out of the final analysis. Why didn’t you do a factor analysis on the reliable items?
- That it would be interesting to compare a revised questionnaire with a transactional vs. transformational leadership survey.
- That it may be useful to add a tiny few more lines in some sections on interpretation as where you do it, it adds substantially to its readability.
- That the sections on effects of demographics and on the importance and existence of effective leadership facets could be shortened considerably. There is a lot of repetition of similar statistical tests that could be summarised in tables rather than as extensively in the text. Whilst the material is good more space could be given over to additional tests on the data.

- Whether you can definitively state that all ‘effective leadership facets were deemed important’ without further analysis. My instinct is that a lot of further analysis can be done on the type of quantitative data you have and should be.
- That some of the material in the appendices may make a final cut of the paper. Table 23 is a higher level stat than many reported in the paper.
- Matching the findings to the research questions might be a useful section in the paper as you do not organize the findings around your questions. Or it would have made a tight conclusion even your words on page 38 would set the work up for discussion.
- That from reading the paper, the key contribution appears to be to management practice which will be developed further in the discussion – perhaps into a management practice model? This model may be amenable to further statistical analysis. It is my opinion that the results will need a further iteration of analysis to be able to meet the criterion of adding to management practice notwithstanding that this is the first Irish study.
- That there may be a contribution to theory or to the Bryman model. This is not fully explored in the findings and was not set-up to do so. However, it may be possible to do more statistical work on the data which could be very revealing? Obviously, model testing would be ideal (testing the relationships among the importance scales of leadership behaviour). This might temper the findings, for example, at a basic level, if two dimensions explained most of the variation in the sample then this would nuance your interpretation of facets and could even turn them on their head so to speak (the HODs may be good at the facets that explain most of the variation).
- Testing the difference among early and late respondents (first and second wave).
- If this is the first large-scale empirical test of Bryman’s model? If so you could have, as one of your objectives, the further development of the measurement model and there are a number of test stages involved in doing this which you could report on. As it stands there is a reliability problem with some of the importance scales which warrants further explanation and analysis. You may do well to report some examples of factor analysis, and perhaps conduct confirmatory factor analysis. At a minimum, include a correlation table in your final submission.

- Demographics and characteristics of sample: If you need space after conducting further analysis, this section could be reduced to one Table as a lot of space is given over to reporting what are descriptive statistics. How did you deal with incomplete questionnaires? Were this group (n=51-56) different to the ones who completed the questionnaire?
- A complete analysis of this should be reported and perhaps some cases excluded. This also begs an associated question – what did you do for missing values to items? Again, this requires an analysis
- Effects of demographics on answer patterns: There may be a bit of the material not required as, in places, you almost tell us how to do the statistical tests. Why did you not use the 56 non-respondents as a group to tests demographics? May be wise to collapse all the non-Irish into a group? The Non-European group may be too small for most of the tests conducted on it. This section brings up loads of interesting questions and perhaps can be used as a reflection for further analysis. For example, the length of service had an impact on response which implies the effective leadership model could vary based on length of service. The question to be answered is: is that the case and is this a good explanation, or did this impact on the overall results you impute and on your conclusions? I do not think you can leave this angles hang from your data analysis. Again, even correlation analysis would be good here. Obviously, category size may have had an impact and you might reduce your categories to 4 or 3. A similar point can be argued for discipline area and perhaps, again, the model is different for different disciplines? A point which we in disciplines often try to argue! Department size raises similar issues.
- Importance and existence of effective leadership facets: The impact of what is a good section is somewhat reduced by going through every importance and existence scale as the text begins to get repetitive. In my view this could be radically reduced and the data explored further with a practice lens, or a measurement development one. The mid way option is also possible to explore relationships among the variables.
- You may have to deal with skewness if you do further analytical work on the data although you do mention that the data was tested for normality.

- If one adopts a critical stance on the reports on the scales one could argue that a competent job was done on presenting the data but another layer of analysis is possible. Telling us where people were on particular scales provides a description but does not go any further. The level of inference from this will be limited without further data analysis. Indeed, it may be the case that you can't argue that these facets were important based on means and SDs!
- Can you answer your research question without doing some further work on how these importance and existence variables relate to one another? You may need to factor out levels of importance, weight them and then look to existence or do this in some other way.
- Without seeing the correlations and getting under the hood of the theory it is difficult for me to judge this but perhaps some of my suggestions are useful. The data you have is way beyond descriptive statistics.
- Indicative of the issue with this section is that the next section was very interesting and the reader may dwell there as the impact of the main section is diminished slightly through repeating similar statistics and not doing enough analysis with the data.
- Overall effectiveness of leadership and following sections: The qualitative responses to your questions 67-70 are informative and quite interesting. If the paper was on measurement development you could have started the piece with this as it provides validation to the measurement categories. In the claims you make for support you need to be careful as respondents mean different things when they rate effectiveness but because this is explained you may have more of a rationale for saying that it is moderately supported. Table 21 is very informative and reads well. Its twin is Table 22. At the end of this section you begin to wonder about a HE management practice model which may be for the discussion or may be capable of being further analysed as outlined earlier.

### Researcher's responses

The researcher considered all the feedback and made the following decisions and changes to the findings paper and subsequent discussion, conclusions, and recommendations paper.

Firstly, it was decided to include correlations tables and exploratory factor analysis in the revised findings paper. It is expected that the analysis arising from these additional tests will add to both the rigour and richness of the findings.

Secondly, 'pair tests' have been included in the latter part of the paper which demonstrates that there are significant differences between the importance and existence of each effective leadership behaviour.

The term 'non-respondent' has replaced 'missing' throughout the text.

It was decided not to employ confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as the study is not based on hypotheses and did not engage a model which could be tested using CFA. However, significant additional narrative has been included on the study's contribution to educational leadership knowledge.

As mentioned in earlier chapters/papers of this study, a new questionnaire was developed to issue to participants on effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector in Ireland. Other well established instruments such as the MLQ were considered but deemed unsuitable for this study as they tended to focus on facets consistent with one or two of the main leadership theories only.

This study has established that leadership in HEIs is distinctive but does contain some elements of the various mainstream leadership theories. However, the facets do not fit neatly into any one theory. It may be necessary to adopt and review this new questionnaire for further similar studies based on the findings of this study.

Additional narrative has been added to support the interpretation of the various findings sections. Individual analysis of each of the effective leadership facets has also been removed and instead aggregated findings and accompanying description has been provided.

It was also decided to reorient the findings so that they directly relate to the research questions.

The section on the effect of demographics on answering patterns has been shortened considerably. Further analysis has also been conducted illustrating the key differences based on demographics, but not the 'why' for these differences as this would require additional research. The 'non-Irish' respondents have been combined into one group as have staff groups aged between 20-30 and those aged 31-40.

The arguments for this study's contribution to practice have also been considerably strengthened.

Analysis of the skewness (or otherwise) of data has been included.



### **Section 3: Conclusions and recommendations**

## **Discussion on Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations from an Exploration of Effective Leadership Facets at Head of Department level in the IOT sector in Ireland**

### **Abstract**

*Findings from the study are related to the research questions. In particular, the importance and existence of the eleven effective leadership facets as perceived by academic staff are discussed. These findings are then compared and contrasted with the literature and theory which was established in both the context and conceptual papers contained in earlier sections of this thesis. It can be stated that the findings on the importance of the effective leadership facets confirm the findings of Bryman's study (LFHE, 2007; 2009). The findings in relation to the existence of these facets add to and extend the findings from the same study. It is suggested that modifications to the questionnaire to add variables and eliminate negative questions will be necessary for future studies in this area. Significant differences in answering patterns based on length of service, subject domain and department size of respondents exist but will require further research to determine these patterns. It is argued that the findings have added to a wide range of theoretical leadership models but that no one model is applicable to the IOT sector due to its distinctive form of leadership. Other conclusions include the identification of a grouping of correlated effective leadership facets, new/additional leadership facets; low participation rates by females at HOD level, evidence of shared/distributed leadership and a gap between leadership theory and practice which will need to be addressed by dedicated training and development initiatives. It is concluded that the study makes a significant contribution to both leadership theory and practice, particularly in the IOT sector in Ireland. A number of recommendations for further study and action have been identified including the development of dedicated training and development for HODs, revision of recruitment and selection procedures for HODs, examining and addressing the reasons for low participation rates amongst female academics at HOD level, revision of the questionnaire and a follow up study in 3-5 years to check on changes in effective leadership in the sector.*

*Keywords: contribution to theory, contribution to practice, dedicated training, revised questionnaire.*

## Introduction

The research question for this study was: *'What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland at head of department level and which are perceived by academic staff to be important?'* This question was subsequently split into two sub questions:

*Which leadership facets are most important for the head of department role in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?*

*To what extent do heads of department demonstrate effective leadership facets in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?(i.e. to what extent do they exist)*

This paper will now discuss the findings from the study, comparing and contrasting them to the underlying literature. It will also illustrate conclusions and recommendations from the study. Finally, it will set out the limitations of the study and areas for further research. The study was conducted in eleven IOTs in Ireland amongst academic staff. It is suggested that it is one of the first studies of its kind into leadership in the HE sector in Ireland and in particular in the IOT sector. Previous studies have occurred in the UK (Henkel, 2000; 2002; LFHE, 2007; 2009; 2010; 2011; Spendlove, 2007); Australia (Ramsden, 1998); USA (Hecht, 2004; Lindholm, 2003); Canada (Benoit and Graham ,2005). Many if not all of these studies were qualitative and the current study was quantitative using a questionnaire to survey academic staff on their perceptions of leadership at HOD level.

The findings indicate that there is strong support for all eleven leadership facets as set out in the LFHE model that are important for HOD leadership effectiveness. However, the extent to which HODs display these leadership facets tends to be more moderately supported. Some evidence of negative perceptions of the leadership facets at HOD level was detected and there were also reports of additional leadership facets which could form the basis of further research studies. The paper will now continue with the discussion section followed by conclusions, recommendations, limitations of the study and will identify areas for further research.

### Response rates

Firstly, the response rates to the study will be considered. It was planned to send questionnaires to academic staff in all fourteen IOTs in Ireland. However, three IOTs declined invitations to participate in the study. Consequently, eleven IOTs participated in the study. The total number of academic staff in the survey was 3,155 (HEA, 2013). The total number of questionnaires received was 327, representing a response rate of 10.4%. According to Nulty (2008), response rates for online surveys tend to be much lower than for paper based surveys. He cites response rates between 20% and 47%. Whilst the current study's response rate was 10.4%, the numbers of questionnaires returned totalled 327 which it is argued is more than sufficient from which to draw inferences and meanings about leadership at HOD level in the IOT sector. It is suggested that the sensitivity of the subject matter, coupled with the fact that the researcher is a HRM in one of the IOTs, may also have affected the response rates. However, it is acknowledged that if further studies are conducted that more than one reminder may need to be sent.

### Internal reliability of instrument

Internal reliability of instruments is normally assured by calculating *Cronbach's alpha*, (Bryman and Cramer, 2011). It is expected that the result of such a calculation should equate to at least 0.70. There were six questions asked about each effective leadership behaviour; three related to the importance and three related to the existence of the leadership behaviour. The *Cronbach's alphas* were calculated separately for the importance and existence scales. It would appear that most previous studies in this area of leadership in HE were based on qualitative studies (LFHE, 2007; 2009). The LFHE study (2007; 2009) was based on an extensive literature review and interviews with leadership researchers. The author of the report, Professor Alan Bryman, indicated to this researcher that he was unaware of any quantitative studies in this area. In addition, an extensive literature review has not identified any studies of leadership at any level in the Irish HE sector. Consequently, it is proposed that this is one of the first studies of its kind into leadership in higher education in the Irish context. The questionnaire has been modelled on the eleven effective leadership facets identified by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009).

It was established that the *Cronbach's Alpha* values for the 'existence' scales fell within the accepted range, with a lower value of 0.74 ranging upwards to 0.91 (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). For the 'importance' scales, the *alphas* range from 0.44 to 0.85. It is acknowledged that the *Cronbach's Alpha* values for five of the scales were < .70. Four of these contained negatively worded questions, for example, the first importance scale: 'providing strategic direction' contained the following question: 'establishing long-term development goals (e.g. course development; student numbers) is **not** (emphasis added) important for effective leadership at head of department level'. It is suggested that the answering patterns for these negatively worded questions were somewhat distorted and so affected the *alpha* values for these variables and consequently the scales. A negative question was not asked in relation to the importance of 'having credibility as a role model'. However, the *alpha* value for this scale is 0.64, which is close to the 0.70 value espoused in the literature for reliability and so it has been included. In the case of the other four scales, it was decided to delete the variables which contained the answers to the negative questions and to recalculate the *alpha* values on the remaining two variables. Consequently, only two variables are included for each of those four scales. It is acknowledged that some modifications might be needed to the instrument, if it is to be used again in future studies, to eliminate some minor deficiencies. These changes may include the elimination of negative questions; the exclusion of some variables and the inclusion of some new variables established by the study. A full cycle of pilot testing from questionnaire to analysis may also assist this process.

### Demographics of respondents

It is interesting to note that more female (46.5%) than male (36.4%) academics chose to participate in the study. The relative percentages of female and male academic staff in the sector are 43% and 57% respectively (HEA, 2013). This may indicate that female academic staff are more forthcoming about leadership in the IOT sector than their male counterparts. However, this study did not establish the reasons for this difference in answering patterns between genders. It is also noted that 17.1% chose not to disclose their gender. Once again, this is an interesting finding but the reasons for this non-disclosure are not known. In terms of ethnic origin, 77.7% declared that they were Irish nationals, with 5.2% stating that were of other national origin.

As with gender, 17.1% chose not to disclose their nationality. These results are not surprising, as it is perceived that a substantial majority of staff working in the sector are Irish. However, data on the ethnic origin of staff in the IOT sector is not recorded (HEA, 2013). It is of some concern that there is so little evidence of the internationalisation of staff in the sector. The results also raise questions about why so many respondents chose not to disclose their gender or nationality. In the view of the researcher, such disclosure would not have comprised their anonymity or confidentiality of their responses. This is an area that could be addressed in further studies.

There are also significant differences in responding patterns based on length of service. In particular, 51.6% of staff who responded had more than eleven years' service. This may indicate that staff with less experience are more focused on their own early career development while more established faculty members have sufficient breadth of experience to enable them to proffer their views on leadership at HOD level in the sector. There also appears to be a correlation between the age and length of service of respondents. As stated above, 51.6% of respondents had more than eleven years experience as academic staff. The findings also indicate that 62.7% of respondents are over forty one years' of age. Consequently, it can be inferred that there are significant numbers of academic staff in the sector who are both middle aged and highly experienced. The concern arising from these statistics is the future skills need of the sector and loss of highly valuable experience when this cohort of staff retire from their posts.

In terms of the subject domain of the respondents, there is a reasonably even spread between all the subjects, with the exception of Health Sciences which is a relatively new discipline in the sector and does not exist in all of the eleven participating IOTs. The size of department of participants is also very interesting, with 33% (90) of respondents working in departments of more than 41 staff. This is of some concern as such large spans of control can put significant pressure on the HODs of such departments.

### **Demographics of Heads of Department**

Respondents were also asked questions about the characteristics of their HOD. Respondents estimated that 66% of their HODs were over forty one years' of age. However, they also perceived that only 11.3% (37) had more than eleven years' experience. It can be inferred that the majority of HODs had less than eleven years' experience and so this group is relatively inexperienced and may require training/development interventions to assist them to perform the role. The results also point to the possibility that there have been a significant number of retirements in recent years due to pending pay cuts, increased working hours and other changes in terms and conditions of employment. The majority of HODs of those responding to the survey were male, 55.4%, with only 29% female HODs being identified. Once again there was a non-response rate of 15.6% to this question. These findings highlight a significant under representation of females at HOD level and indicates that female staff may encounter barriers to promotion. This could be an area for further research. The nationality of HODs was found to be 78.3% Irish and 6.1% 'Non-Irish' in the view of respondents. 15.6% chose not to or did not know their HOD's nationality. This finding is unsurprising, as it mirrors the finding in relation to the nationality of academic staff. As mentioned earlier, the vast majority of staff in the sector are Irish and this may pose challenges for the internationalisation of the sector.

### **Effect of demographics on answering patterns**

There were no discernible differences in answering patterns based on age range, gender and nationality. However, significant differences emerged between groups based on length of service. It is argued that staff with greater levels of service may have stronger views on leadership than those with lesser numbers of years service. Also, responses based on the subject domain of respondents indicate significant differences between groups. It can be inferred that these differences are between traditional domains such as Science/Computing, Business/Education on one hand and new/emerging domains such as Health Sciences on the other hand. Differences were also detected on answering patterns based on department size. It is suggested that staff in larger departments may have less favourable views of leadership than those in smaller, more manageable departments. However, individual leader facets may be a bigger factor than department size in the eyes of academic staff. This is area that is worthy of further study.

### Effective leadership facets

The study revealed strong support for the importance of the eleven effective leadership facets. This corresponds with the findings of Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009). These earlier studies established eleven leadership facets which were important at departmental level. These studies consisted of both an extensive literature review and interviews with leadership researchers.

The literature review in Bryman's study (LFHE, 2007; 2009) featured articles in refereed journals for the time period 1985-2005 in the UK, USA and Australia. The leadership researchers interviewed for this study were all located in the UK. It can be inferred that the current study in the IOT sector in Ireland confirms that these eleven effective leadership facets are generalisable at HOD level in many countries including Ireland. This is a significant finding as it indicates that both the academic staff in the IOT sector in Ireland and leadership researchers in the UK agree that these eleven effective leadership facets are important at HOD level. This essentially suggests a template for person specifications for HOD posts; learning outcomes for training and development of such staff and competency areas to be questioned in selection processes. It can also be argued that the current study extends Bryman's study (LFHE, 2007; 2009) by obtaining academic staff views of the importance of the eleven effective leadership facets.

The current study is one of the first to empirically test the perception of academic staff of effective leadership facets. Consequently, the current study delineates the most and least important effective leadership facets and this should assist those involved in recruitment and development at HOD level. Also, the findings demonstrate the least important effective leadership facets. This should assist those involved in the recruitment and development of HODs.

By contrast, the support for the existence of these eleven effective leadership facets was at best moderate. However, previous studies (LFHE, 2007; 2009) predominantly focus on the importance rather than the existence of these effective leadership facets. It is suggested that this study adds to Bryman's work (LFHE, 2007; 2009) in that it sought the views of academic staff on the existence of these facets.



It is argued that this makes a significant contribution to leadership theory and practice in HE. In particular, while the study does not determine why these effective leadership facets are absent, it does point to a practice gap which could be addressed by training/development initiatives.

Looking again at the findings on the importance and existence of effective leadership facets, it is worth taking a while to compare and contrast them with the classical and the 'new'/contemporary leadership theories. It is suggested that there is little evidence of support for the traits/'great man' theory (Antonakis *et al.* 2004; Northouse, 2001). However, there is some evidence of the existence of behavioural (Kanji and Moura E SÁ, 2001) and situational/contingency (Bruno and Lay, 2008) leadership theories in the IOT sector.

In particular, it can be seen that some of the effective leadership facets require leaders to match their facets to the organisational setting or cycle. One example of this is: *'respecting existing culture while seeking to instil new values through a vision for the department'*. Turning to the 'new'/contemporary leadership theories, it can also be seen that there are examples of charismatic (Weber 1947, cited by Javidan and Waldman 2003) and full range leadership (Burns 1978, cited by Bodal and Namaz 2010) in the findings.

In terms of charismatic leadership theory, it is proposed that the following effective leadership behaviour match this theory:

*'establishing trustworthiness as a leader'*

Full range leadership theory advocates that it combines both transformational and transactional leadership, (Burns 1978, cited by Bodal and Namaz 2010). Was evidence of transactional leadership found in the study?

It is argued that the following effective leadership facets fall into this category:

*'providing strategic direction'*

*'having credibility to act as a role model'*

In summary, it is suggested that some elements of the main leadership theories are both important and exist at HOD level in the IOT sector. However, no one theory prevails and, as will be discussed later, leadership in the HE sector is distinctive.

It was also decided to look at the correlations within both the importance and existence of the effective leadership facets. As mentioned earlier, this study not only confirms the importance of the eleven effective leadership facets but identifies the relationship between those considered to be the most important or interrelated. Five of the effective leadership facets demonstrate strong correlations, namely:

*'establishing trustworthiness as a leader'; 'having credibility to act as a role model'; 'providing communications about developments'; 'representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf'; and 'protecting academic staff autonomy'*

It is suggested that these five form a sub-group of the most important effective leadership facets which may be specific to the IOT sector at HOD level.

In terms of the existence of the eleven effective leadership facets, there are strong correlations between ten of the eleven effective leadership facets with the exception of *'respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the Department'*. It is not possible to compare this finding with those of Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) as that study essentially focused on the importance rather than the existence of effective leadership facets. However, it can be inferred that this finding from the current study extends and adds to his study (LFHE, 2007; 2009).

A further finding from the current study was that the response to the question on the overall effectiveness of leadership indicated only a moderate support level. The mean answer was very close to ‘*don’t know*’, which suggests that many academics may be still unsure of how to classify effective leadership in practice and/or they have an over expectation of the role they expect from their HODs. This is despite their clear identification of the important leadership factors. Also, it is suggested that there may be a range of internal and external factors impinging on effective leadership. However, identification of such factors was beyond the scope of this study.

### **Additional/’new’ effective leadership facets**

As stated in the findings paper, a large and wide range of responses were received to the question on the existence of ‘new’/additional leadership facets. It was found that many of these ‘new’/additional facets actually matched quite closely the existing eleven effective leadership facets. However, it is suggested that even these had the potential to add variables to the scales used in future studies. A number of ‘new’/additional leadership facets were unearthed which could add to the eleven effective leadership facets. These included:

*‘problem solving/conflict resolution’*

*‘managing underperformance’*

*‘focus on need of students’*

It is argued that these three effective leadership facets could add richness and quality to future studies. They would also add to models/definitions of effective leadership (Collins, 2002; Conger, 1999; Howard and Bray, 1980; Likert 1961, 1967; cited by Antonakis *et al.* 2004; Higgs, 2003; LFHE, 2007; 2009). Furthermore, these emergent leadership facets could add to a distinctive model for effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector in Ireland. It is acknowledged that a range of variables would have to be constructed for these emerging scales.

It is expected that some of these variables are already contained in the comments made by respondents in the current study when identifying the new scales. It is also interesting to note that the first two 'new'/contemporary scales could be considered to be elements of transactional leadership (Bass 1997; Bass and Avolio 1996; cited by Higgs 2003). As stated earlier transactional leadership can be seen as part of transformational leadership (Higgs, 2003) and also part of the wider full range leadership model (Burns 1978, cited by Bodla and Nawaz 2010). This model also includes the *Laissez-faire* form of leadership which will be discussed later. Consequently, it can be re-stated that the findings from the current study affirm that elements of transactional, charismatic and the full range leadership models are present at HOD level in the IOT sector.

It was also found that a range of somewhat unrelated 'effective leadership facets' such as '*emotional intelligence*'; '*enthusiasm*'; '*energy*'; '*youth*'; '*humour*'; '*strong character*'; '*charisma*'; and '*ability to take criticism where criticism is due, accept it and move on*' were identified at HOD level in the IOT sector. In the researcher's opinion, these are not full effective leadership facets but elements of other facets.

For example, '*emotional intelligence*' could *inter alia* be part of '*fostering a supportive and collaborative environment*' and '*ability to take criticism where criticism is due, accept it and move on*' could be seen as part of '*having personal integrity*'. The totality of findings in relation to 'new'/additional leadership facets have, it is suggested, broadened both the number of effective leadership facets and the elements of the existing leadership facets.

### **Poor/ineffective leadership**

The LFHE study (2007; 2009) conducted by Bryman identified a number of leadership facets which were deemed likely to cause damage. These included: '*failing to consult*'; '*not respecting existing values*'; '*actions that undermine collegiality*'; '*not promoting the interests of those for who the leader is responsible*'; '*being uninvolved in the life of the department*'; '*undermining autonomy*' and '*allowing the department to drift*'. The findings of the current study in many cases mirror those identified by Bryman.

The first finding from the current study was the distancing of HODs from academic staff, which is very similar to *'being uninvolved in the life of the department'*. The findings of not looking and walking like a leader and lacking basic organisational skills do not really have parallels in the LFHE study. However, the finding that there is an over-involvement in administration/operational issues finds a comparator in *'undermining autonomy'* and *'allowing the department to drift'*. As stated above, the finding that HODs who did not have experience of teaching and/or research can also be linked to *'being uninvolved in the life of the department'*.

Similarly, the finding that uninterested or complicit managers are viewed with suspicion can be seen as analogous to *'actions that undermine collegiality'*. The final and perhaps most worrying findings from the current study portray a distrust and dismay with leadership at HOD level in the IOT sector. As stated in the findings paper, it is encouraging that there were only two such comments but the seriousness of these perceptions must be acknowledged and heeded. These particular findings can be linked to *'not respecting existing values'*; *'actions that undermine collegiality'*; *'not promoting the interests of those for whom the leader is responsible'* and *'undermining autonomy'*.

### **Distinctiveness of leadership in higher education**

The current study found that 66% of respondents viewed leadership in the HE sector as being distinctive from that found in other employment sectors. The LFHE (2007; 2009) study suggested that professionals require a different or more subtle form of leadership than non-professionals. This suggests a convergence between the two studies. The current study found that themes such as *'different environment/culture'*; *'autonomous working'* (of academic staff); *'limited authority'* (of HODs); *'measurement of success/failure'*; *'skill set of managers'* and *'motivation of staff'* all contributed to this distinctiveness.

Kantabutra (2010); Nuemann and Nuemann (1999) and Spendlove (2007) all refer to leadership facets such as visioning, focusing, implementing, communicating, motivating followers, credibility and people skills in the HE sector. It is proposed that these facets link closely to those identified by academic staff in the current study as contributing to the distinctiveness of leadership in the HE sector.

It is also noted that a significant minority of respondents (34%) expressed the view that the leadership in the HE sector was not distinctive from other sectors. The examples cited by academic staff were: '*same environment/culture*'; '*good organisational skills*' and '*communications*'. Interestingly, Spendlove (2007) stated that many of the leadership facets evident in HE institutions had their origins in the business sector. This compares closely to responses from the current study such as '*the principles are the same: vision, expertise, competency etc.*' and '*all leadership requires good communication and organisational skills*'. In summary, it can be inferred that leadership facets in the HE sector are both distinctive from and similar to those found in other sectors.

This, it is suggested, is not a contradictory statement but a reflection of emergent leadership facets in the HE sector. Some of these have their roots in other employment sectors and others are 'home grown' in the HE sector. However, it is worth repeating the point that two-thirds of respondents believe leadership in the HE sector to be distinctive and this has implications for those recruiting and developing HODs in the IOT sector.

### **Others providing effective leadership in the IOT sector**

While the primary focus of this study was on effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector, it was considered worthwhile questioning whether academic staff could identify others demonstrating effective leadership facets in the sector. A wide range of post holders were identified including administrators; Presidents; HOSs and lecturers/senior lecturers. As stated in the findings paper, only Presidents and HOSs have formal hierarchical leadership roles in the sector. The largest identified group was that of lecturers/senior lecturers who are predominantly engaged in teaching and research and have no formal leadership or management role.

The finding that this group of staff are seen as demonstrating effective leadership facets lends support to previous studies (Fletcher and Kaufer 2003, cited by Fernandez *et al.* 2010) that found an emergence of distributed or shared leadership in organisations. As stated earlier, the effective leadership facets confirmed and found in the current study relate to a number of leadership theories including behavioural; situational/contingency; transactional; charismatic and the full range leadership model.

However, this finding in relation to lecturers/senior lecturers, while confirming evidence of shared/distributed leadership, also reaffirms the distinctiveness of leadership in the HE sector. It was stated earlier that the leadership of professionals such as academic staff requires a different, more subtle form of leadership. Harris (2003); Lumby (2003) cited by Lawler (2008) found that leadership in the HE sector included shared decision-making. This view is echoed by a respondent in the current study who stated that: *'I think it is vital that heads of department who do not share the same cognate disciplines as those in their department are open to listening to academic staff about how the teaching, assessment and learning approaches work in the discipline'*. This is a key finding of the study. It highlights the collaborative and collegiate nature of leadership required in HE and, in this case, the IOT sector. However, shared/distributed leadership was not the key focus of the study and this could form the basis of a further study in the sector.

#### Discussion summary

The discussion section of this paper has synthesised the key findings and compared and contrasted them with the underlying literature and previous studies. It has been demonstrated that the importance of the eleven effective leadership facets in Bryman's reports (LFHE, 2007; 2009) are confirmed by the current study. The existence of these effective leadership facets have at best been shown to exist moderately. The LFHE (2007; 2009) studies did not focus on the existence or otherwise of these effective leadership facets. Furthermore, the current study has shown, through paired-sample *t*-tests, that there are significant differences between each leadership facets importance and existence at  $p < .05$ .

This points to a worrying gap between leadership theory and practice in the IOT sector at HOD level. This will be addressed in the conclusions and recommendations section. It is also helpful that 'new'/additional effective leadership facets have emerged, which will add to both the body of knowledge and practice for future studies and for the recruitment and development of HODs. In particular, these findings will add to a wide range of effective leadership models which are constantly evolving. The existence of negative perceptions of leadership, particularly poor and/or ineffective leadership, is a cause of some concern. It suggests that that a policy/procedure to address such issues will have to be developed.

The distinctiveness of leadership in HE was seen to exist also in the specific IOT sector. This compared favourably with the underlying academic literature. However, there was also evidence that some effective leadership facets have their origins in the business sector. This suggests that no one leadership theory or model pertains in the HE and IOT sectors. As stated earlier, a key finding was the emergence of lecturers/senior lecturers as a cohort who were perceived by academic staff as demonstrating effective leadership facets. This suggests a further strengthening of the view that leadership in HE is distinctive. It also points to the existence of shared/distributed leadership in the sector. In the following sections, the conclusions, limitations and recommendations arising from the study will be addressed.

### Conclusions

It is important at this stage to restate the research question and sub-questions. The main research question has now been adapted to the following: *‘What leadership facets exist in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland at head of department level and which are perceived by academic staff to be important?’* It is also timely to re-state the research sub-questions which form the basis of this study. This research question was subdivided into two distinct sub-questions as outlined below:

*Which leadership facets are most important for the head of department role in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?*

*To what extent do heads of department demonstrate effective leadership facets in the IOT sector as perceived by academic staff?*

Turning to the first sub-question, it can be concluded that all eleven effective leadership facets as outlined by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) are considered important in the IOT sector. The level of support for their importance ranges from 1.44 to 2.43. *Strong agreement* had a value of 1; *agreement* had a value of 2 while the neutral or *don't know* option had a value of 3.



It has been demonstrated that those responses with mean values greater than 2 all contained negative questions which may have confused respondents and distorted and/or weakened support for the importance of those eleven effective leadership facets. Furthermore, correlation and EFA tests support the conclusion that five of the effective leadership facets have strong correlations with each other. These five effective leadership facets are:

*'Establishing trustworthiness as a leader'; 'having credibility to act as a role model'; 'providing communications about developments'; 'representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf'; and 'protecting academic staff autonomy'.*

It can be concluded that these five form a sub-group of the most important effective leadership facets which may be specific to the IOT sector at HOD level.

It can be seen that these particular effective leadership facets focus predominantly on trust, credibility and the *dyadic* relationship between leader and followers. It can be concluded that academic staff are looking for leadership that they can believe and trust in to create the working environment to enable them carry out their duties. It is suggested that this finding adds to that of Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) in two ways. Firstly, it ranks the effective leadership facets by importance and it also identifies a subset of those that are considered most important in the IOT sector.

In terms of addressing the research question on the existence of these effective leadership facets in the IOT sector, a different picture emerges. There is very moderate support for the existence in practice of the effective leadership facets. As stated earlier, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement/disagreement with a range of statements on the existence or otherwise of the eleven effective leadership facets. The level of support for their existence ranged from 2.52 to 3.00. *'Agreement'* had a value of 2 while the neutral or *'don't know'* option had a value of 3.

It has been demonstrated that those responses with mean values nearer to or equal to 3 all contained negative questions which may have confused respondents and distorted and/or weakened support for the existence of those eleven effective leadership facets.

However, given that the ‘strongest’ mean response is only 2.52, it is concluded that there is little evidence of HODs demonstrating the effective leadership facets that academic staff deem important in the IOT sector. This does not mean that HODs are ineffective. However, it does illustrate a significant gap between leadership theory and practice as perceived by academic staff. It represents an opportunity to IOT management to address this issue through recruitment and selection procedures and training and development interventions.

Furthermore, both correlation and EFA tests support the conclusion that ten of the effective leadership facets, with the exception of ‘*respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department*’, have strong correlations with each other. It was noted that the importance of five of the effective leadership facets had strong correlations with each other. It is suggested that this finding adds to that of Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) in two ways.

Firstly, it measures and ranks the existence of the effective leadership facets and secondly, it also identifies a subset of those that are considered to exist most in the IOT sector.

The findings paper illustrates the results from paired-sample t-tests which established conclusively that the difference between the importance of that behaviour for HOD leadership and the existence of that behaviour amongst HOD are significantly different. In all cases, the difference indicates that the importance of the factors is significantly higher than the level of existence or the extent to which HODs actually display that leadership factor. It is concluded that training and development initiatives are required to address this major gap between leadership theory and practice.

It is concluded that the findings in respect of both these research sub-questions are context specific and add to both the theory and practice of leadership in HE and in particular the IOT sector in Ireland.

Another significant conclusion of this study is that the HOD grade is male dominated in the IOT sector. This has implications for recruitment and selection practices for HOD posts as it is clear that the number of females applying for and being selected for HOD posts is disproportionately low compared to the numbers of male HODs in the sector.

It was also illustrated in this study that in the IOT sector, most staff are Irish. This is a matter of some concern given the globalisation and internationalisation of higher education. It is concluded that IOTs need to examine means of attracting more internationally diverse staff to their Institutes to support this agenda.

It is also concluded that there is some evidence of poor and/or ineffective leadership at HOD level in the sector. The current performance management scheme excludes links to pay, promotion and disciplinary procedures. Under the Haddington Road Agreement, it is proposed to include these three issues in a revised performance management scheme. It is proposed that the views of academic staff on the performance of their HODs should be included in any such revised performance scheme.

It also must be emphasised that the performance management scheme in the IOT sector should include an emphasis on development to allow for situations where training and development interventions could be used to improve the effective leadership facets of HODs.

A further conclusion of the study is that the *de novo* instrument used for the study did not capture all of the variables and scales of effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector. However, the open ended qualitative questions did allow respondents to contribute their views on any items they thought were deficient or not included. The combination of both quantitative and qualitative questions allowed this fusion of ideas to emerge. The responses from the qualitative questions in particular should be used to revise and improve the questionnaire for further studies.

As stated earlier, the inclusion of negative questions also appears to have confused respondents and distorted responses making some of the variables within the scales unusable.

Furthermore, 'new'/additional effective leadership facets emerged during the study which could be incorporated into a revised questionnaire for future studies. Also, some new/additional variables were identified which could be added to the scales for the existing effective leadership facets. Therefore, it is concluded that the instrument should be revised for future studies of effective leadership behaviour at HOD level. However, it is recognised that the instrument achieved what it set out to do and can in its own right be considered to be a contribution to academic theory on leadership in the IOT sector.

It is concluded that leadership in the HE and particularly the IOT sector is distinctive in many ways as illustrated in an earlier section of this paper. However, there is also evidence that some leadership facets are common in all leaders and employment sectors. What is also possible to conclude is that leadership in the IOT at HOD sector does not exactly match any one single leadership theory, but that many of the facets deemed to be important and existent resonate with elements of behavioural; situational/contingency; transactional; charismatic and the full range leadership theories and models. However, it is not concluded that the findings of this study constitute a new or emergent leadership theory.

It is also possible to conclude that there are a wide range of staff in IOTs who demonstrate effective leadership facets in addition to HODs. The most evident group amongst these are lecturers/senior lecturers who are specifically not deemed to be a management grade.

It is concluded that this finding points to the existence of shared/distributed leadership in the IOT sector. Such non-hierarchical leadership is evident in many organisations where there is a predominance of professional staff.

It can also be concluded that HODs are important for the provision of effective leadership in the IOT sector. This concurs with an emerging focus on the significance of middle managers in the academic literature.

There are significant differences between the importance and existence of each effective leadership behaviour. This leads to the conclusion that there is a major gap between leadership theory and practice at HOD level in the IOT sector. It is further concluded that HODs may be unaware of this gap as the questionnaire was issued to academic staff only and HODs were not asked for their own perceptions of their effective leadership facets.

The contributions of the findings of this study to leadership theory are as follows. Firstly, the findings confirm the importance of the effective leadership facets established by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009). The findings add to the LFHE (2007; 2009) study in that they measure the existence of the eleven effective leadership facets. In addition, the findings have identified potentially new variables for the eleven effective leadership facets and have also identified potentially 'new'/additional leadership facets which are both important and should exist in the sector. These findings will help to revise and strengthen the questionnaire used in this study so that it can be used in future similar studies. It is also concluded that the existing questionnaire used in this study constitutes an important contribution to leadership theory, particularly in the HE sector. The narratives provided by respondents also add to academic leadership theory in that they illustrate valuable insights into the type of leadership facets required at HOD level in the IOT sector.

In addition, details of poor/ineffective leadership has emerged which match that found by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009). This too is a contribution to academic leadership theory.

The finding of the distinctiveness of leadership in the HE sector also adds and extends the work of previous studies in this area. However, another important contribution is the finding that some effective leadership facets in the HE sector have their origins in the business sector. This suggests a duality of effective leadership facets, some of which originate outside the sector and others that are 'home grown' so to speak. This is an important contribution to theory.

The existence of shared/distributed leadership in the IOT sector also is important as it confirms the findings of earlier studies which detected this type of leadership in HEIs, particularly in the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge Universities (Beecher and Kogan 1972, cited by Lawler 2008). This is one of the first studies of leadership at any level in the Irish HE system and, in particular, the IOT sector. Consequently, it has established a new stream of academic leadership theory and literature specific to the Irish HE sector. It is hoped that this stream will generate greater interest in leadership in the sector and that further studies will take place on this subject. This study has confirmed the importance of the eleven effective leadership facets established by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009). Consequently, it is possible to state that these effective leadership facets are generalisable as Bryman's study is based on interviews with leadership researchers in the UK and an extensive international literature review of journals in the USA, Australia, Canada and the UK (LFHE, 2007; 2009).

Turning now to the contribution of this study to leadership practice, it is possible to state that there are a number of key contributions. Firstly, as stated, this is one of the first studies into leadership at any level in the Irish HE, and in particular, IOT sector. The study has confirmed that the eleven effective leadership facets established by Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009) are important to academic staff in the IOT sector. Also, it has been shown that there is a significant gap between the importance and existence of these effective leadership facets. Further variables of these eleven have also been identified as have 'new'/additional facets. The implications of these findings for practice are multi-fold. HR staff charged with filling these posts can and should use these effective leadership facets in designing advertisements, job and person specifications for the role. In addition, these facets should aid the short listing of candidates for interview, the design of a scoring scheme for interviews and also the provision of feedback to candidates following interview.

A further contribution could be the provision of realistic job previews for potential candidates for the posts. It may also be possible to develop alternatives to the traditional interview system, such as assessment centres; psychometric testing; case studies and group interviews.

The findings should also benefit to those involved in providing/delivering training and development to those who are in HOD posts. This training and development could range from induction to coaching, mentoring and formal leadership development programmes. The development of self-awareness amongst new and serving HODs would be a critical component of ensuring that they recognise the effective leadership facets required to perform their roles. However, it is acknowledged that the role of HOD is an extremely difficult and challenging role that involves a wide range of skills.

Based on the narrative from respondents, it may be all but impossible to perform the role fully and keep all staff satisfied! Bryman's study (LFHE, 2007; 2009) has been referenced continuously throughout this thesis. A cursory glance at the LFHE website reveals a whole range of training and development programmes for senior management grades in UK HE institutions. The LFHE's remit is that: *'it is committed to developing and improving the management and leadership skills of existing and future leaders of higher education. Wherever the opportunity arises we shall work in partnership with a range of organisations within and outside of higher education for the benefit of the sector'* (LFHE, 2014).

The LFHE is funded from a combination of programmes, events, and membership fees, and investment by the four UK HE funding bodies. It is suggested that a similar body/department could be set up here in Ireland to provide training and development services to Irish HEIs on the same funding basis. It is interesting to note that the LFHE offers a programme entitled *'Introduction to Head of Department'*. The outline of the programme is detailed below:

- Look at the nature of change and discuss models for implementing your own change project
- Managing difficult conversations
- Reviewing conflict using the Thomas Kilman conflict mode tool
- Guest presentations from experienced HODs
- Action learning sets
- Diagnostics on management and leadership style

It is strongly argued that the findings from the current study can be used to develop a similar programme for HODs in the Irish IOT sector. In addition, it can be said that this study acts as a form of training needs analysis for HODs. This constitutes a major contribution to practice.

### **Limitations of study**

There are number of limitations to this current study which can now be illustrated. Firstly, the study was confined to examining effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector and so the findings are not generalisable to other leadership grades in the Irish IOT, University or international HE sector. However, it was demonstrated that the findings are consistent with those of Bryman (LFHE, 2007; 2009), who established a list of eleven effective leadership facets at HOD level in UK universities.

The *de novo* questionnaire used in this study did not capture all of the potential variables and scales associated with effective leadership at HOD level. Also, due to the adverse effect on responses created by negative questions, it was necessary to eliminate some variables from the scales for internal reliability purposes. While it was possible to determine that there were between group differences based on demographic factors such as length of service; subject domain and department size, the reasons for such differences were not established by the study.

The study sought and determined academic staff perceptions of effective leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector. It did not seek the view of other key stakeholders including students; HOSs and the HODs themselves.

The response rate at 10.4% (327) was good, but was expected to be higher. Three IOTs chose not to participate in the study for a number of reasons. It is suggested that their participation would have significantly boosted the numbers but not necessarily the response rate participating in the study.



### **Recommended areas for further studies and practice changes**

It is recommended that the recruitment and selection of HODs is an area for further research. In particular, the methods used and competency profiles of HODs need to be researched and the findings acted upon in practice.

It is suggested that IOTs need to develop succession plans and human resource planning at HOD level in order to ensure that there are sufficiently skilled personnel developed and ready to be appointed to vacancies as they arise.

It was found that some staff are working in departments which have more than forty, and in some cases, sixty staff. It is suggested that this has implications for the leadership of these departments due to the large span of control involve. It is recommended that the Deloitte Touché Report, (2000) on academic management and administration in Regional Technical Colleges (now called IOTs) in Ireland is revisited with a view to moving towards optimal department and school sizes, which should benefit more efficient leadership of such entities.

It is also of concern that there are so few female HODs. Further research is needed to establish the reasons why so few have been appointed. This study should focus on why females are not applying, why they are not being appointed and what positive actions could be taken to rectify the situation.

Further study is also required into the difference in response patterns within the various demographic groups. It is important to understand why these differences exist as this may assist present and future HODs in adapting their leadership facets to match differing needs of their staff.

It is recommended that the questionnaire is revised for future studies. In particular, consideration should be given to removing negatively worded questions to avoid distorted responses. Also, additional variables should be included in each scale to ensure a minimum of four in each scale. It should also be possible to include additional scales to reflect the 'new'/additional facets identified in the current study.

It is also recommended that a follow-up study should take place in 3-5 years to determine what if any changes have occurred in terms of both the importance and existence of the effective leadership facets. Also, if training and development of HODs has occurred in the interim, it should be possible to measure the effects if any of such interventions in terms of increased effectiveness of leadership facets at HOD level in the IOT sector. It is also proposed that any future studies should include the perceptions of HODs of their own leadership facets.

It is suggested that any revision to the performance management scheme for HODs should include feedback from their academic staff, their HOSs and HODs themselves so that a more rounded view of their effectiveness can emerge.

As stated earlier, it is argued that a bespoke leadership development programme for HODs should be developed and introduced as soon as possible due to the established distinctiveness of leadership in the sector. Such training should include induction/orientation; coaching/mentoring and specific training/development on the facets expected of them in their roles. The interventions should be available to both new and established HODs.

Similar studies should be carried out into other leadership grades in the sector such as Presidents, HOSs; Heads of Function and Central Services Managers.

It is recommended that a greater focus on student focused/centred effective leadership facets are included in future studies. Most, if not all of the existing facets are linked to staff and it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the student should be the central focus of all leadership activities in academic departments.

Finally, it is proposed that a clearer definition of the role of HODs is established. In addition, this should be communicated to academic staff so that realistic expectations of the roles are formed and accepted.

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## **Extracts from reflective log**

## Extracts from DBA Reflective Log

### Induction (August 2010)

#### **What the DBA Induction Programme meant to me?**

It represents the end of the beginning – I have talked ‘manfully’ about pursuing a Doctorate for at least five years and finally I have arrived at the starting line. I can now hold my head up high and say that YES I am studying for a Doctorate! The induction programme also provided me with a renewal of understanding of how the library operates particularly in terms of searching for journals and books that will guide me through my research. It was also helpful to get a refresher in *Moodle* (virtual learning environment) and its many benefits to our programme of study.

The two days also allowed me to meet some new people and find out a bit more about people that I already know. The ‘ice breaker’ whereby we introduced a colleague to the group was particularly interesting and ‘forced’ us all to reveal a few hidden facts about ourselves. I have also learnt that there are a range of personalities and outlooks in the group and this will present challenges to us all to work together on projects and assignments. There is a danger that I could adopt a ‘horns or halo’ outlook and link myself only to those members of the group who I believe share my own views.

This is something that I need to learn to avoid and ensure that I remain open to listening to and working with all group members. It means that I need to move past first impressions and recognise that we all have something important to contribute to the success of the programme. It would be a very dull affair if we were all of the one hue! The term ‘reflection’ was in constant use during the two days. I was very pleased to hear and see that the emphasis will be on analysis of the past, present and future and not description. This was very clear during the work we did on the case study, the feedback and the feedback on the feedback!

The ‘need to read and write’ is also something that I picked up strongly during the programme. It has been some time since I last read an academic book or journal although I do keep up to date with HR journals and articles.

Critical thinking is another key theme that emerged during the induction. Initially, I felt slightly overawed by the contribution of those around me but then I decided that I needed to stand up, state my views, stick with them and be heard. My views are as important as those of my fellow classmates. Looking back at the two days it is clear that there is a huge challenge facing me and there is a lot of work to be completed between now and September/October 2014. I have already started withdrawing from some commitments outside of work to increase my reading, writing and study time. However, I do intend maintaining other interests such as cycling, scouting, travel and a social life in order to ensure sanity during the programme.

Finally, it means a lot to me that we have excellent staff organising, running and supporting the programme. From Jackie (postgraduate administrator) through to Tom (Head of School), Nora (Deputy Librarian) and Laura (Moodle Project Manager) and especially to Felicity (Course Director) and Denis (Head of Department), it is reassuring that we have such capable staff to deliver this programme.

We were told at the end of the induction programme that our next event would be a professional development workshop offsite in Kinsale, County Cork. Roll on Kinsale !!

### **September – December 2010**

#### ***Alternative Topics***

I have taught the HR module for the last four years on the Masters in Educational Management (MAME). This module concentrates on leadership, management, motivation, conflict and changes in Education. In preparing that module for delivery I have read and referenced articles on varying aspects of leadership in education. Their primary focus is on first and second level educational institutions and indeed the student profile of the MAME group is dominated by teachers/managers from these same sectors. I considered studying aspects of leaderships in these sectors given my exposure to readings in these areas and my interaction with class groups over the last four years.

However, I dismissed these thoughts following careful consideration as I would argue that the scope for research in this area is limited as change in the primary and secondary sectors is very tightly controlled by the Department of Education & Skills (DOES).



Also, individual principals are unable to make changes outside their immediate environment and access to key decision makers may not be available. Finally, my understanding and familiarity with the IOT sector is far more advanced than it is of the primary and secondary education sectors.

I also looked at building on my MBA dissertation on attitudes of academic staff to performance management. The possibility existed of re-examining attitudes to performance management now following implementation of the scheme. The Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) has objected to the scheme since its introduction but the Government wishes to extend the scheme to link it to pay, promotion and performance. This was obviously an attractive subject area for my research topic.

However, I also dismissed this area on a number of grounds. I have concluded that this topic is too limited for a thesis at doctoral level as the focus is too narrow. I would also like to pursue a new area of research rather than limiting myself to further study in a previous topic.

Another area that I have a keen interest in is workplace equality. I have been actively involved in the development and implementation of policies and procedures in this area since I commenced work in WIT. I have represented the Institute at Equality Tribunal Mediation and Investigation hearings. On a regular basis I meet staff and discuss their concerns in cases of alleged bullying, harassment and discrimination. There is significant legislation and academic literature in this area. However, I feel it is a limited area for a DBA level thesis and I also found it difficult to identify a key aspect of equality which would be worthy of research and would motivate me specifically to pursue. Also, confidentiality and anonymity would be difficult to preserve and much of the material that I would need to use would be extremely personal and sensitive.

### ***Chosen Topic***

It became clear to me from a very early stage at the professional development workshop in Kinsale (October, 2010) that we would not leave this workshop until we developed at least the outline of our research topic and justified its selection. I started to capture my thoughts in a hand drawn ‘mind map’ throughout the first morning and I added it on several occasions whenever I was struck by a contribution from the facilitators and/or my classmates.

Initially, I thought of researching the topic of ‘*The Evolution of Leadership Styles in Higher Education in Ireland*’. I thought that I would look at leadership styles in Universities, IOTs and even private Higher Education colleges. I imagined interviewing past and present Presidents of all these organisations and building a model of leadership that would serve these colleges in the future. However, I now believe that this is too wide a field of study. Firstly, the definition of ‘styles’ is open to many different interpretations. Secondly, there are clear differences between the mission, culture, legislative frameworks, finance models and autonomy of colleges in these different sectors and this would pose significant challenges for the literature review, data collection and analysis. I suggest that these obstacles are far too difficult to overcome.

Consequently, I knew that I needed to narrow my field of study to make it relevant, practical and achievable in the time available. The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* (‘Hunt Report’), January 2011 will most likely create a further divide between the IOTs and university sectors.

One main proposed change is the emergence of Technological Universities formed from clusters of existing IOTs which will pose wide reaching challenges for present & future leaders in the IOT sector. In the current uncertain political climate, it is entirely possible that the ‘Hunt Report’ may not be implemented. Student numbers are likely to grow against a backdrop of static or reducing staff numbers and other resources including finance. At this stage I had refined my chosen topic to ‘*The Leadership Challenges facing Institutes of Technology in Ireland in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*’. My earliest recollection of formulating this research topic dates back to 2004. In February of that year I attended an international conference on Higher Education Management in UCD.

At this conference, Professor George Bain, then Vice-Chancellor in the University of Ulster spoke about leadership in universities. While his views reflected his own experiences in the University of Ulster, the principals can in my view be applied to all universities and indeed the IOT sector. He focused on leadership behavior taking precedence over beliefs. He emphasized the need for creativity, innovation, creating a sense of urgency and the importance of bringing people with you.

Professor Bain also expressed the view that the Vice Chancellor leads and the management team manage the university. This clearly suggests that there are at least two levels of leadership – strategic and operational. I still have my handwritten notes from this conference and I read them again recently to assist my writing of this reflective log. I was inspired by Professor Bain's words and thoughts. I recall them whenever I think about my research topic. I was and still am struck by his vision of leadership in Higher Education. Given the arguments set out earlier on the changes in direction and orientation of the IOT sector, I now believed that it was imperative to establish through research if these qualities of leadership can be found presently in the IOT Sector. It is equally important to research those additional qualities that will be needed by future leaders in the sector.

I have already mentioned my mind map which began life on the Thursday morning in Kinsale. I kept adding themes to it throughout the day. Some of the group asked to see it and gave me feedback and helpful suggestions for which I am grateful. The workshop focused on professional development and there were many facilitated discussions by Felicity and Denis on dimensions of leadership which helped form my thinking on the research topic.

Tom McCabe who recently completed a DBA in Nottingham also made the process very real and achievable to me and everybody in the room when he spoke about his own experiences. He also illustrated the difficult work-life balance issues that will have to be managed.

As a husband and father of two children I am very aware of the need to maintain this delicate balance. David Barrett of Cut-e Consultants spoke to us collectively and individually about our personal competencies and profile. I outlined my mind map to him in our 'one to one' meeting and he was very interested in and supportive of my research topic.

On Friday morning we were asked to present our topics to each other in groups of two and my class partner Aileen McHugh assured me that she was 'sold' on my idea and indeed I was also very excited by her research area which will focus on leveraging commercial value from the Property Registration Authority datasets.

### ***Developing the Topic***

I have read many articles on topics including authentic leadership; leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; challenges that shaped leaders; can leadership be taught? and resonate leadership, in order to frame my topic and position it in the academic literature. Some articles dealing specifically with leadership in HE have also been reviewed. While, these topics would appear diverse, they are closely connected to each other and some or all of these elements will certainly be included as areas to explore in the primary research stage of my research. My reading is motivating and enthusing me to keep going and I am certain based on my initial literature review that I will discover a significant body of existing relevant literature which will guide my work on my proposed research topic.

My current career position clearly influences my thinking. I have been HR Manager in WIT since 1994. I have participated in all major change initiatives in the Institute. I am also part of a national HR managers group and this helps me keep informed of and involved in changes in the sector. I have already spoken to and will need to continue to talk to 'critical friends' in the HE sector and seek their honest views on my proposals.

These critical friends will include some of the senior managers in my own Institute and other Institutes; Institutes of Technology Ireland (IOTI); the Higher Education Authority (HEA); the Department of Education & Science (DOES) and fellow HR Managers.

My participation on the DBA programme has already begun to influence my work as HR Manager in WIT. I believe that I am more self-aware, conscious of others view of me and I also more confident in approaching change, grievances and conflict because of the skills I am now developing and learning.

### January-October 2011

In early January I received my reading pack for Workshop 2: '*Advanced Business Theory*' which was planned for two days in early February. The readings were quiet complex and challenged me to understand what constituted a theory and how theories would have to be used to support my research topic. We were also asked to prepare and deliver a 15 minute presentation on our topics, focusing on the range of theory bases that been published around our topics, demonstrating which theories best suited our topic and 'defending' the most relevant theory base.

This required an extensive literature review, selection of theory bases and the development of a 'tight' presentation which would best represent my studies to date. The challenge was to represent an extensive literature review in 15 minutes! Another challenge I faced was that I did not receive the feedback from the previous assignment until after the February workshop. Thus, any mistakes or misinterpretations I made in the January 2011 project were likely to be repeated in preparing the February presentation! For example, I had chosen a working title of '*The Leadership Challenges facing Institutes of Technology in Ireland in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*'.

The feedback I received on this assignment included the comment that the timespan (21<sup>st</sup> Century) in the title was too wide. This title also figured prominently in the February presentation. Overall I felt the presentation went well even though I was very nervous. I strongly pushed my topic and defended the theory bases. I received 13/20 or 65% for the presentation. The lecturers present felt it was a good presentation. Some of the comments received included a comment that the focus of research should be on authentic leadership development rather than leadership challenges.

While I enjoyed the workshop, it was a bit rushed and like many of my colleagues, I left it very unsure of where I was going next. We were asked to produce a 6,000 word paper based on a critical discussion and analysis of dominant theories and a convincing defence of the relevance of such theory to our management problems.

Over the coming months we met as a group with ever dwindling numbers to discuss our approach to the written assignment. Tom O' Dwyer (classmate) suggested that we all produce a 'one pager' on our understanding of what the assignment should look like. Susan Whelan (lecturer) kindly agreed to meet us in early June to listen to our proposals and to give us some feedback. This 'first Friday' proved our best informal gathering to date. Everybody attended either in person or virtually and a good discussion ensued and Susan gave good individual and collective feedback.

However, a number of the class sought an extension of the submission date due to holidays. It was announced that the submission date was extended to September 2<sup>nd</sup>. I kept working but I drifted towards the new submission date. I eventually submitted my assignment from the train to Dublin in the early morning hours of September 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was a great relief to submit the paper but immediately doubts surfaced in my head on whether or not I had addressed the assignment correctly. However, I decided to move onto the readings for the next workshop which was scheduled for October 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. We were given 24 essential readings covering the topics of philosophical perspectives, conceptual frameworks and research design. These readings proved to be very 'readable' and understandable.

The assignments for this workshop consisted of an in-class presentation of the literature reviewed to date and an advanced business theory paper which was originally due to be submitted in June, 2011 but was extended to early September, 2011 by the course tutor following discussions with the class group and the course leader. A key learning point in this situation is that it is better to suffer and meet the original deadline rather than relax somewhat and suffer over a longer period - including the summer break. In hindsight, it is my considered view that very little was gained by extending a submission deadline. Also, the extension effectively eroded the lead-in time for Workshop 3: '*Research Design*' which took place in early October, 2011. Indeed, the reading material and pre-workshop assignments were received almost at the same time as we were submitting the advanced business theory paper.

The big learning outcome from this workshop was that it pays to have an agenda/purpose for our monthly meetings and to prepare accordingly. We agreed to submit our papers for this workshop in June before I went on holidays. I went on holidays in July with notes and a memory stick in my luggage. I read my notes and initial writing while in Spain with a view to completing the assignment on my return to Ireland in late July. I committed significant time to the assignment on my return from holidays and was confident that I would submit the assignment by the due date.

All was going well until we had our monthly meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. At the meeting it was announced that we would be required to make a 20 minute individual presentation on the topics outlined above and their relevance to our topic. My wife and I had booked a cruise to celebrate her significant birthday and we would be away from the 22<sup>nd</sup> September to 2<sup>nd</sup> October! Once again I packed my notes and the memory sticks and continued the readings that I began before the cruise. I developed and completed most of the presentation on the ship and thankfully submitted it by the deadline date of the 4<sup>th</sup> October.

In hindsight, it was an excellent exercise as it ‘forced’ me to study the readings in detail and to articulate my philosophical stance. I stated in my presentation that I was a subjectivist, phenomenologist operating from a deductive viewpoint! I chose a mixed methods approach consisting of semi-structured interviews and an authentic leadership questionnaire developed by the Authentic Leadership Institute.

As I have already mentioned, I submitted the presentation two days before the workshop. The workshop consisted of a mixture of topics presented by Tom O’Toole, Bill O’ Gorman and Sean Byrne (lecturers) and ourselves, the students. After the first lecture it became clear to me that I should be using an inductive rather than a deductive approach! Ah well, I can’t change the slides now! We had been told that the selection of presentations would be ‘random’ which turned out to be the same alphabetical approach as the previous workshop thus meaning that I would be last to present again on Saturday morning! This added to the nerves as I had to sit through all my classmates’ presentations – which to be fair were generally very good.

I also had to listen and learn from the three lecturers who were brilliant but so brilliant that I was continuously seeing errors in my pending presentation! My time to present duly arrived on Saturday morning. I was confident and felt that I delivered clearly and effectively and within the time allotted. The feedback from the lecturers and my classmates was next. The word ‘concerns’ was used frequently but mainly in relation to the narrowness of the topic and the sample size.

Some of the other comments suggested looking at international comparators, revisiting the inductive versus deductive debate, looking at functional versus academic leadership and perhaps looking at a comparative study with the private sector. A key question asked was ‘*where does leadership lie in IOTs?*’ It was suggested that this could prompt a look at both Governing Body and Executive Board levels.

It was also commented that the conceptual framework was complex and that I needed to conduct a risk analysis of the construct validity? It was also suggested that I should take 2/3 theoretical (leadership) models and through an inductive process examine and determine which model was most prevalent in the sector. I was also complemented on delivering a very clear presentation of a complex topic. This has given me plenty of food for thought and should I say reflection. Following our individual presentations, we had held a group debate on Government Enterprise Policy which at times descended into farce but was great fun.

Bill O’ Gorman explained that the purpose of the debate was to develop our critiquing skills so that we would not just accept everything we read but that we would criticise it and develop our own views.

Since the completion of the workshop I have started sketching my conceptual framework which will form the starting point of the 6,000 word paper we must submit by December 23<sup>rd</sup>. My early sketches are uninspiring but I am confident that they will improve! My initial thoughts are that I will need to move back up the ‘funnel’ and revise my research question so that it does not delimit my research. For example, a possible title might be “*An exploratory study using mixed methods to determine which leadership model(s) are appropriate to create effective leadership at the strategic level in the Institute of Technology sector*”.



The implications for my research study are that I will need to develop a conceptual framework and also I will need to develop a different questionnaire to cover multiple leadership models.

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, we all submitted our ‘one pagers’ on our conceptual framework, philosophical stance and research design to Peggy Coady (classmate) who kindly collated them for the lecturers.

### **November 2011 to December 2012**

On Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November we met as a group and while we did not present individually, we did receive group feedback and certainly my perception was that most if not all of us had considerable work to complete to meet the project requirements. Many of us felt disheartened and fearful of the level of work required. In my own situation, I decided to review all the workshop readings. My reasons for doing so were to ensure that I obtained a better and clearer understanding of the assignment. Following this work, I reframed my research question, the conceptual framework and research design. I was very conscious of the earlier comments that my research question was too narrow. I was equally conscious of not making it too wide. I looked at some other theses for guidance and comparison. I also was extremely conscious that as a full-time manager with family and other responsibilities that I could not embark on a research project that for example would involve extensive time away from work and family examining leadership in other colleges particularly overseas.

To me the project must be feasible, dare I say limited and achievable. These thoughts weighed heavily on me as I pondered the best way forward. I also re-read my earlier assignments and feedback. I was certain of one thing – leadership is the main field of my study. Furthermore, I believe that leadership in HEIs particularly in the IOT Sector is the ‘distilled’ focus of my study. However, I have started to move away from looking exclusively at top level leadership and now am looking at leadership throughout the organisations – ‘distributed’ leadership so as to speak. Literature on leadership in HEIs often speaks about distributed leadership and so I now realise that I need to look at leadership at a number of levels in the IOTs. Research design is also driving this view as a study of top leadership alone will not constitute a sufficient sample size for a doctoral thesis.

The other alternative would be to carry out an international comparison study of top level leaders which in my view is infeasible due to the reasons outlined above. It was now proposed to study leadership at a number of levels (middle to senior management) throughout the IOT Sector. In particular, it is planned to look at external and internal influences on leadership in the sector. This provides me with the opportunity to examine significant external influences such as Government Policy, funding and HE Strategy. It also enables an examination of internal influences such as the 'soft' (e.g. values, culture) and 'hard' (e.g. strategy, structure) issues. I also devoted significant time and effort to positioning the research in accordance with philosophical models (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

I have also struggled to determine the methodologies and methods best suited to gather and test primary data. I previously have used a phenomenological approach employing qualitative methods, namely, semi-structured interviews for my MBA studies in 1998. However, after completing several iterations of my research topic and methodologies, I now believe that I should be following the positive tradition, using a deductive approach but perhaps a mixed method approach. I was pointed towards the case study method and read two of Yin's books which confirmed my view that this method may work for this research topic. The great advantage of case studies is that multiple methods and sources can be used to construct and validate the study.

As mentioned, I read and re-read many articles and books in order to distil and organise my thoughts in preparation for writing the paper. I did not commence writing until about ten days before the submission deadline of Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December. Initially, writing was slow but every so often I got a flow and this kept me from lifting the phone to withdraw from the course. I worked as logically as I could through the three filters: conceptual framework; philosophical perspectives and research design. It was slow work but I could see that I was making good progress. I know this because things were starting to fit together, make sense and lead logically from one area to the next. I took two days annual leave to complete the assignment and I also developed 'man flu' at this time which made it difficult for me to concentrate and also affected my energy levels. However, I persevered and finished the assignment at 5pm on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

I e-mailed it straight away to Sean Byrne our lecturer because I did not trust myself to stop tinkering and making changes to the document. I handed in the hard copies next morning as requested.

We had already received the reading pack for the next workshop in February 2012 and so I began to read some of the material over the Christmas break. However, I was very tired and needed a break and so the work completed was minimal. I started studying again in earnest when I returned to work in early January. It soon became apparent that the workload associated with the workshop was enormous. The mandatory readings for the quantitative statistics module consisted of 4 articles, 6 chapters of a book and 3 more documents which ranged from 90-444 pages! The qualitative statistics readings consisted of eight journal articles. Both 'modules' required a pre-workshop assessment which involve significant amounts of work. I have already taken a day's annual leave this year to try and complete the statistical computational work.

A number of thoughts have occurred to me as I prepare for the pending workshop. Firstly, it is becoming increasingly difficult to complete the course work while working full-time. The course is designed for practitioners but the workload would appear to be better suited to staff on academic contracts that can avail of research days, gaps in teaching delivery and extended leave periods to complete work. I can anticipate having to use annual leave to complete most if not all assignments. The recommended study commitment for the programme is 15 hours per week. Some weeks I achieve this target but many weeks I am unable to do so because of work, family and other commitments. I am experiencing some frustrations in tying down my research topic and consequently the research methods. I firmly believe that we all need individual supervisors immediately to give us focus, direction and support. The course tutors are excellent but we now need individual help. I also think that I and perhaps others need to talk to our managers about study leave and other supports.

The February workshop on data analysis techniques proved to be the most technically difficult of all challenges to date. We were charged with learning about both SPSS and Nvivo. In preparation for the workshop we completed an assignment using both packages.

My initial thoughts were that I would be stronger on the qualitative rather than the quantitative methods but amazingly, I received better marks in the pre-workshop SPSS project than the Nvivo project. I must confess that I sought help from an academic colleague in the Institute. I did all the work on the assignments but he proved an invaluable guide in understanding the requirements of the project. At the workshop we delved into both packages in great detail and then we were set two major post-workshop assignments to complete. The Nvivo project was based on analysing interviews we had to conduct with colleagues on a topic which was not our research topic. The SPSS project was based on pre-supplied data and questions. These assignments were submitted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2012.

Results from these assignments were received in October, 2012. I was particularly pleased to complete this workshop and assignments successfully as the material was technically very difficult.

The overall marks received from both the pre and post workshop assignments were very similar but with the Nvivo (qualitative) winning out by 5% over the SPSS (quantitative) marks. However, I actually enjoyed working on the SPSS project more so than the Nvivo project. I believe that this is because I have a good aptitude for figures. My primary degree is in accountancy which further supports this disposition.

Also, there is a cleanliness and neatness about the Figures produced from SPSS which lends itself to greater certainty in the presentation of findings, discussion and conclusions of the research study. In my view, it is after this workshop that I decided to use quantitative techniques for this research study. However, I am still cautious and aware that I cannot use quantitative techniques just because I like them. They have to match the philosophical stance and the purpose of the study. After the data analysis techniques workshop, my thoughts returned to the research question and the focus of my study. Over the summer months and leading up to the next workshop (which was scheduled for October, 2012) I had many changing thoughts about the scope of my research.

I contemplated profiling leadership styles/approaches in IOT Management; widening the leadership of the study to include Central Service Managers, Heads of Department, Heads of School, Heads of Function and the President; focusing on leadership in times of significant changing structures; examining the impact of leadership on change and change on leadership; and looking at the leadership required for mergers. This constant chopping and changing is difficult to handle and I was very conscious of the need to refine and define my research question or questions in line with the literature.

While all this mental gymnastics were occurring the reading material for workshop 5: '*Research Paper: Preparation and Delivery*' arrived in the post in August, 2012. Five separate and distinct pieces of work had to be submitted before, during or subsequent to the workshop. The main deliverable was a conceptual paper which was our first journey to writing an academic paper which would be of publishable standard. The course team asked us to submit this paper in advance of the workshop and we received feedback on our 'work-in-progress' conceptual papers and submitted the final paper on 23<sup>rd</sup> November. We were then asked to prepare an oral presentation of our papers which we would deliver at a *colloquium* in early December, 2012.

This was a very nervous time for me and indeed all my classmates. While the course team did not indicate that this workshop was any different from its predecessors, in my view it represented the transfer stage between masters (level 9) and Doctoral (level 10) levels. I felt enormous pressure to get this paper right. I believed that failure to do so would mark the end of my studies and progression to the remainder of the doctoral programme would be closed to me at this point. The *colloquium* itself would feature two external examiners from the UK, an internal examiner, our own supervisors plus our class group.

What made it worse for me personally was that I was scheduled to present on Friday morning and would be the second last member of the class to speak. One by one my classmates presented and faced the question and answer session from the panel and the class. As time went on I kept thinking, I should have included something or I should have left out something that was now included. However, there was no opportunity to change anything as the paper had been already submitted and reviewed.

I should also mention that I invited my manager to my presentation as I wanted him to see what he was supporting me to do. When my turn came, my presentation was well received. The questioning was difficult but fair and one of the externals, Murray Clark focused in on the table of effective leadership facets which I adapted from Bryman's studies (LFHE, 2007; 2009) on effective leadership in HE in the UK.

He asked if I had considered conducting an empirical study of these effective leadership facets in the Irish IOT sector using a questionnaire. I caught the eye of my supervisor seated next to Murray and she was nodding her approval so I told Murray that yes I would do what he was suggesting – was this my 'eureka' moment?

Bryman's study (LFHE, 2007; 2009) was based on an extensive literature review and interviews with leadership researchers. The combination of the results from both these activities lead to the identification of eleven effective leadership facets which were deemed to exist at both departmental and institutional level in HEIs in the UK. However, there appeared to be little evidence of any similar studies in Ireland in either the University or IOT sectors. This seemed to me to be an opportunity to develop a niche research area in an Irish HE context. The feedback on this paper and from the *colloquium* was very positive. I was encouraged to extend Bryman's (LFHE, 2007; 2009) study to an Irish context. Also, it was also suggested that I develop a 'newish' conceptualisation of HE leadership in an Irish context. However, by the far the most important outcome was the confirmation that I was now registered on the DBA following a successful transfer at the December DBA *colloquium*. The major challenge now was to study the relevance or otherwise of Bryman's (LFHE, 2007; 2009) effective leadership facets. This challenge was made significantly more difficult when I contacted Professor Bryman and discovered that he was not aware of any quantitative studies or scales in this area.

### **January – October 2013**

Stage 2 consisted of a cumulative series of research papers. The conceptual paper referred to above was presented at the doctoral *colloquium* in December, 2012 which is described as the 'cusp' of stages 1-2. The conceptual paper was deemed to be paper one of four papers required in stage 2.

The other papers were:

- *Philosophy & literature reflections*: workshop: 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2013
- *Methodology/research design*: workshop: 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2013
- *Research findings*: workshop: 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2014

I recognise that stage 2 represented a significant elevation in the quality of work that will be expected. To date, with the exception of the presentation of the 'work-in-progress' conceptual paper, most of our work has been submitted privately to our course tutors. It is evident that submissions in stage 2 would be far more public and had to be presented to a panel of academics (including examiners and our supervisors) and our fellow students. It is probably grossly unfair to compare this to the 'X Factor' but there are some similarities!

It has necessitated extensive preparation of not only the papers, but our defence of the papers. We were required to defend the rigor and thoroughness of our thoughts and words. We were obliged to demonstrate that we had contemplated alternative options and strategies but that the approach chosen is the 'one true path'. Instead of receiving grades and marks we were assessed on a continuum of *'fail'*; *'resubmit with major rework and re-submission'*; *'recommended with minor review'* or *'recommended'*. As an ambitious student, it was my intention to achieve one of the latter two results for each of the four papers in stage 2. In my view, the achievement of either of the other two possible results would have represented a significant setback to my ambitions to achieving the DBA qualification.

Each of us had just 15 months including the workshops to draft, revise and submit the four papers outlined. It was also now evident that these papers will form the substantial basis or chapters of the final thesis document. Clarity, academic rigor, cogent arguments, logic and contribution to theory and practice will all be key elements of these papers. The subject matter of each of the papers has already been covered in workshops in stage 1.

I anticipated that each of these areas will have to be revisited, revised and developed further in order to produce a paper worthy of submission and indeed possibly publication in a journal or at a conference. Following the completion of these research papers, students are expected to submit their final thesis by the 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2014. It is evident to me that significant working and re-working of the constituent papers along with the inclusion of introduction/context and conclusion/recommendations chapters will be required. This final stage, stage 3 will culminate in an individual VIVA in September-October 2014.

Paper 2 focused on *Philosophy & Literature Reflections* and was submitted in mid April 2013 and was presented at the *colloquium* on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, 2013. I decided to front end the paper with the theory on research philosophy and then move to a discussion on research methodologies. In particular, I looked at the merits of qualitative and quantitative methods, research design, survey features and related issues. Once again, there was extensive questioning on my paper but the overall tenure was positive.

However, one key theme emerging was that my presentation at the *colloquium* was much clearer than the written paper. In addition, it was felt that my paper was a bit disjointed which large sections of theory followed by practice based text but without sufficient connection or interweaving of these related themes. There was also feedback on the need to have established/published scales to accurately measure the 11 effective leadership behavioural factors. This may prove difficult as there is no evidence of established scales in the literature. However, I was confident that I could rely on the literature which underpinned the 11 effective leadership behavioural factors. Once again, the final result was that the paper was 'recommended'. This was a great boost to my confidence and kept me focused on working on papers 3 and 4.

Paper 3 was submitted in September, 2013 so that it could be presented at the *colloquium* on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2013. I decided to make this my methodology paper. I focused very strongly on the questionnaire design, justifying the links between the individual questions, supporting literature and effective leadership behavioural themes. Critically, I also ensured that the research question and sub-questions linked to the questions in the questionnaire.



I included details on the pre-testing of the instrument, a meeting with my HR Manager colleagues and how all of these influenced the re-design of the questionnaire. The feedback and questioning that followed my presentation could be described as being at the robust end of the scale. This surprised me as many of the earlier presenters got a very brief questioning and feedback. Maybe it was because my study is one of only two based on the IOT sector and the only one involving academic staff and management. In my view, there were wholesale changes proposed and I also felt that some of the comments were contradictory. I was very disappointed and disillusioned following my presentation and it must have shown as I was approached (thankfully) by two of the programme tutors who reassured me that the changes being suggested were only minor in nature. However, I did fire off an e-mail in haste and probably anger to my supervisor listing all the feedback received. She responded quickly, urging me to remain calm and await the official feedback. I took her advice and the feedback arrived on 17<sup>th</sup> October, saying the paper was again 'recommended' and only minor changes suggested – what a relief!

#### **October 2013 to May 2014**

I met my supervisor on the 18<sup>th</sup> October in Galway and we had a very positive meeting and agreed the way forward. We went through the feedback and accepted some suggestions and rejected others. I felt I now had a clear plan on how to proceed. We agreed changes to the access letters, the layout of the questionnaire and the inclusion of three scales per effective leadership behaviour to ensure internal validity using *Cronbach's Alpha* measures.

I reviewed the questionnaire again in light of the feedback from the doctoral *colloquium*. I reflected on the advice from my course colleagues who said that the interspersing of questions on both Heads of School and Department in the same sections was confusing. I took the decision to split them but now I ended up with a questionnaire of over 150 questions!

My gut feeling was that this was too long and it would put off people from taking part in the study. I arranged a meeting with Denis Harrington (Head of Department) to seek his advice. I also spoke to my supervisor and both of them were happy for me to proceed with a survey of HODs only. This reduced the questionnaire to a much more manageable 81 questions.

I had submitted the original questionnaire for approval to the WIT Ethics committee. This had received approval subject to a number of conditions concerning anonymity, confidentiality and pre-access issues. I addressed these issues and re-submitted the questionnaire based on surveying HODs only and I was granted approval to proceed with the study. While this was great news I was genuinely scared and nervous of the reaction I would receive when the study went live.

Firstly, I wrote to Presidents, HR Managers and the Asst. General Secretary of the TUI informing them of the study, seeking their permission and support to conduct the study with academic staff in their institutes. The initial feedback was tremendous.

The only 'negative' feedback I got was from one institute who had a different management structure and felt that their involvement would skew my results. I assured them that I could tailor the questionnaire to facilitate them but they still had concerns and so they opted out of the study.

I asked the HR Managers to pass on a letter to their HODSs and I was heartened to receive many positive replies from HODs supporting the study. The HR Managers also agreed to send the questionnaire to the academic staff in their respective IOTs.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> November, I pushed the proverbial button and sent the questionnaire to my HR Manager colleagues and I waited to see what would happen. This e-mail generated quite a number of responses mainly positive ones! One or two people wanted to know if I had ethical approval – thankfully I had! Some others wanted to use the findings for their own (unspecified) purposes. However, many of the responses pledged support and more importantly promised that they would complete the questionnaire.

My nervousness turned to anticipation as the first batch of responses started arriving in SurveyMonkey. The flow increased steadily and then stopped in early December. I sent a reminder on the 6<sup>th</sup> December and thankfully the responses started arriving again in good numbers. I closed the questionnaire on the 20<sup>th</sup> December and decided against further reminders as I felt there was a thin line between reminding and annoying people.

In January, 2014 I began collating and analysing the data with more than a little help from a lecturing colleague in WIT. He showed me how to group the data and import it from SurveyMonkey to SPSS. I started analysing the data and thankfully finished my findings paper on time so that I met the submission date of 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2014. The subsequent *colloquium* took place on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> March and the paper was well received. The key issue was the justification of the decision to study effective leadership facets at HOD level only. Like all *colloquia*, there was plenty of feedback but most of it was minor in terms of recommendations around further statistical tests and less repetition of low level descriptive tests. I felt very happy after this *colloquium* and so did my supervisor. I could almost see the finishing line!

I spent the next few months revising the findings paper to reflect the feedback. I also worked on the context paper which would introduce the thesis. Finally, I pulled the whole thing together into one document. Now I could see the full picture emerging. I could see the links developing between all the papers/chapters. A lot of editing was needed on the document but that is normal and it is a good headache to have!

Looking back now at all the different papers, I can see how my thoughts have emerged and changed. However, I can also see that my original idea of studying leadership in the IOT sector has remained intact even if the specific aspects of leadership being studied have changed somewhat. It has been a challenging four years, sometimes frustrating, sometimes elating, but the important thing is that the study has been completed! However, my supervisor has now convinced me to submit a paper to a conference. I submitted an abstract in April and it was accepted and now I have to write and present the paper – will I ever learn!

### **General Reflections on the DBA**

In the 1980s almost 500,000 studied in Graduate schools to achieve ABD (all but dissertation) status (Gerermoth 1991, cited by Sheppard *et al.* 2000). It is estimated that more than 50% of these students never earned their degrees. This is a sobering statistic for any of us on the journey hoping to achieve the Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA). It is inferred that there are a number of reasons for this lack of achievement. These are identified in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Reasons for not achieving a Doctorate**

Sheppard <i>et al.</i> (2000)	Phillips and Pugh (2000)
Lack of advice	Not wanting a PhD
Not knowing why you are doing the programme	Not understanding the nature of a PhD by overestimating what is required
Poor supervision	Not understanding the nature of a PhD by underestimating what is required
Lack of commitment/work ethic	Not having a supervisor who knows what a PhD requires
Being disorganised	Losing contact with your supervisor
Not understanding the demands of the study	Not having a thesis (i.e. something that you wish to argue, a <i>position</i> that you wish to maintain)
Becoming overwhelmed	Taking a new job before finishing
Personal/family problems	

It has been suggested that when you are doing a doctorate, you are playing in a game where the goalposts are continually being moved (Phillips and Pugh, 2000). This clearly adds to the complexity of the process. However, it is asserted that if these ‘threats’ are recognised, eliminated or reduced then the achievement of the DBA is a realistic project. It can be argued that the best way to overcome these obstacles is to plan, execute and review. Planning is a crucial step in identifying the workload and meeting the timelines involved.

It has been stated that the key to achieving the DBA is to take responsibility for one’s own actions. Phillips and Pugh (2000) coined the phrase ‘*Under your own management*’ which is deemed to be critical to the nature of postgraduate and particularly doctoral education. The responsibility for determining what is required, as well as for carrying it out remains firmly with the student rather than his/her supervisor and other members of the faculty. Another challenge is to maintain enthusiasm and motivation from start to finish. It is argued that students must like/love their research topic.

This in my view will help overcome periods of self-doubt and allow me become a competent professional researcher. The Institute has delivered course material; guidance; workshops and assignments per the agreed schedule and the students have attended the various programme inputs; completed and submitted assignments thus ensuring the completion of the 'contract'. What can be elucidated from the coursework to date?

It is suggested that Stage 1 of the DBA programme has served to develop a work ethic amongst us all. It has also acted to initiate and improve our skills and competencies in a wide range of areas from Professional Skills Development to Research Paper Delivery. The programme has also facilitated intra group learning. This is evidenced by the cross learning we receive from comparing/contrasting ideas and approaches in presentations/papers; question and answer sessions and group work. It is noted that Stage 1 is designed to '*address research and business skills requirements in progressive depth through a series of workshops, using knowledge gained in each preceding session to build a skilled researching professional*' (Professional Doctorate in Business Administration, Induction Programme, 2010).

It has been my experience that these objectives have been met. Like steps of the stairs, I have gradually climbed through the workshops adding skills and experiences on my journey. The volume and complexity of the workload has been fully recognised and realised. While this paper represents the first formal documenting of the research project plan, many informal plans and revisions have been conducted by this researcher.

These have involved:

- Organising special leave from my management position to attend the workshops and pre-workshop meetings
- Availing of annual leave to supplement work on the various projects and assignments required by the programme
- Setting aside personal reading, study and writing time to complete course work
- Clarifying expectations of work quality with the course lecturing team
- Planning and organising the work on assignments to ensure that they have been submitted by the due dates

### Research Expectations

One of the key expectations is that my work will demonstrate originality. Francis (1976) and Phillips (1992), cited by Phillips and Pugh (2000), suggest a number of ways in which students may illustrate originality as outlined in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Examples of Originality**

(Francis, 1976)	(Phillips, 1992)
Setting down a major piece of new information in writing for the first time	Carrying out empirical work that has not been done before
Continuing a previously original piece of work	Making a synthesis that has not been made before
Carrying out original work designed by the supervisor	Trying out something in this country that has previously only been done in other countries
Providing a single original technique, observation, or result in an otherwise unoriginal but competent piece of research	Taking a particular technique and applying it to a new area
Having many original ideas, methods and interpretations all performed by others under the direction of the postgraduate	Bring new evidence to bear on an old issue
Showing originality in testing somebody's idea.	Being cross-disciplinary and using different methodologies
	Looking at areas that people in the discipline have not looked at before
	Adding to knowledge in a way that has not been done before

Doctoral students must also be able to show that they have made a significant contribution through their work. It is deemed sufficient that students contribute an incremental step in understanding. It is not necessary for them to have a whole new way of looking at the discipline or the topic (Phillips and Pugh, 2000). A PhD does not have to inspire a revolution in thinking about a research discipline.

As one examiner put it, ‘.....A PhD is three years of solid work, not a Nobel Prize’ (Mullins and Kiley 2002:386, cited by Finn 2009). Finn (2009) also cites independence; contribution to knowledge (nature of the research question, effective methodology, evidence of critical evaluation); originality and suitability for publication as important indicators of the research outcome. Further aspects of the research expectations are outlined in the questions and answers as follows.

The self-directed question now posed is:

*What are my expectations as a researching professional?*

This question can be sub-divided into three main sub-questions:

*What contribution will my research make to academic theory and knowledge?*

*What contribution will my research make to leadership/management practice?*

*What differences will my research make to me as person and a practicing professional manager? Or alternatively, why do I want to achieve the DBA?*

It is critical that each of these questions is answered fully as failure to do so will question the viability of continuing the study from this point onwards.

My initial answer to each of these three questions is set out below:

*What contribution will my research make to academic theory and knowledge?*

It is suggested that this research will make a significant contribution to knowledge and understanding of leadership styles and their effectiveness in higher education and in particular the Institute of Technology (IOT) sector in Ireland. It will seek to bridge the gap in the literature between general leadership and higher educational leadership styles. In terms of academic theory contribution, the study has the potential to build on the extensive existing body of leadership literature. It will do this by growing the relatively low volume of literature which is specific to both public and higher education sector leadership. It will also present an opportunity to critique established leadership styles in the specific context of the Institute of Technology (IOT) sector.

*What contribution will my research make to leadership/management practice?*

It can also be inferred that this research will make an original contribution to leadership practice in the IOT sector. It will also be beneficial to educational policy makers like the Higher Education Authority (HEA), Institutes of Technology Ireland (IOTI) and the Department of Education and Skills (DOES) Ireland.

In particular the study will assist with a greater understanding of leadership in the IOT sector; contribute to the management of change; create insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes and enhance the recruitment of HODs (middle managers) to lead IOTs in the coming years. The following table provides an excellent summary of what it means to become a fully professional researcher and supports the answers given to both the questions raised above.

**Table 3- Becoming a fully professional researcher (Phillips and Pugh 2000)**

It means that you have something to say that your peers want to listen to
You must have a command of what is happening in your subject so that you can evaluate the worth of what others are doing
You must have the astuteness to discover where you can make a useful contribution
You must be aware of the ethics of your profession and work within them
You must have mastery of appropriate techniques that are currently being used and also aware of their limitations
You must be able to communicate your results effectively in the professional arena
All of the above must be carried out in an international context; your professional peer group is worldwide
You must be aware of what is being discovered, argued about, written and published by your academic community across the world

This table highlights the many challenges facing me as a researcher. It can be argued that challenges equate to the ‘eight commandments’ of research. They can and should be used as benchmarks against which my research will be measured. The third question posed in relation to my expectations as a researching professional is:

*What differences will my research make to me as person and a practicing professional manager? Or alternatively, why do I want to achieve the DBA?*



A doctor's degree is considered to be a licence to teach (Phillips and Pugh, 2000). This means to teach at third level as a member of academic staff. I have already taught at degree and masters level in my own college. Furthermore, I have successfully supervised undergraduate and postgraduate dissertations. The award of DBA will enhance my ability to continue these activities with a greater level of expertise. It is also possible that with further training I could become a doctoral level supervisor. The DBA could also facilitate a transition to a full-time academic role either in my own Institution or another college.

However, there are many reasons for my pursuit of the DBA. The award confers a level of expert authority on the recipient be it as an academic or a practitioner (Phillips and Pugh, 2000). Consequently, it is possible that I could pursue an academic or functional management post in a different area or higher level to my existing post. Alternatively, I could remain in my existing post and become involved in course development and delivery on leadership programmes for my college and/or the sector based on the DBA and subsequent publications and research.

I firmly believe that if, and hopefully when, I achieve the DBA qualification that it will greatly assist me to achieve a senior management position in my own or similar organisation. In pursuing this ambition, I am extremely conscious of balancing the role of researcher with that of my day job as manager/leader. I must, and will continue to fulfil my commitments in my managerial role but I will balance this with my continuing studies. The two roles need to be inter-dependent and assist each other by practice feeding theory and *vice versa*.

I would qualify for the award of *Post Graduate Diploma in Business Research Methods* on successful completion of Stage 1 of the DBA. However, my ambitions will not be met by this award alone. Only the conferring of the *Professional Doctorate in Business Administration* will confirm the achievement of level 10 learning and knowledge on the author. This award will be a public acknowledgement of a major academic advancement. I have previously mentioned that I was awarded an Executive MBA in 1998. It is now important in terms of continuous or lifelong learning that a further achievement, that of level 10 is attained to demonstrate continuous improvement. In the next section, I will address the critical topic of supervision.

## Supervision

A key challenge I face is managing the DBA while engaging with distance supervision. As an internal candidate of Waterford Institute of Technology, I am obliged to have an external supervisor. My supervisor is based in University College Galway. I need to manage my time efficiently so I will need to use phone, e-mails and meetings to engage with her and seek feedback. My supervisor is an expert in leadership, particularly public sector leadership so I am very pleased with her appointment. I will need to determine which approach my supervisor favours in order to determine what will be expected of me (Phillips and Pugh, 2000). The same authors suggest that researchers need to complete a number of steps in order to 'manage their supervisors'.

They have outlined the following as being important to this role:

- Supervisors expect their students to be independent
- Supervisors expect their students to produce written work that is not just a first draft
- Supervisors expect to have regular meetings with their research students (every 4 to 6 weeks)
- Supervisors expect their research students to be honest when reporting on their progress
- Supervisors expect their students to follow the advice that they give, when it has been given at the request of the postgraduate
- Supervisors expect their students to be excited about their work, able to surprise them and fun to be with!
- The need to educate your supervisor!
- Take responsibility for the contents/agendas of meetings
- Do not make excessive demands and do not become a nuisance!

## Risk Analysis

In this section I will outline the factors that might threaten the successful completion of tasks and how I can reduce or minimise these risks (Phillips and Pugh, 2000). The first risk identified is that of other researchers producing work similar to mine before my work is completed. I will minimise this risk by constant 'boundary scanning'.

That is, I will regularly examine journals, other publications and conference proceedings to ensure that I have not been overtaken. My research is based in the Institute of Technology sector where I work, so it will be vital to keep abreast of developments, reports, policy changes as these may have a major bearing on my research. In a worst case scenario, I may have to change the orientation of my research or reach an agreement with another researcher on both of us making small changes in our approach.

A further risk is that of time management and failure to complete the thesis by June 2014. To date, I have attended every workshop and seminar and I have submitted all assignments on time and passed each of them to a reasonably high standard. I have used some annual leave to supplement my study time as I often can end up working late or having family or social activities which erode my course time. I will also use a diary to plan meetings, family and other events so that my study can be adjusted accordingly. Of course there will be contingencies and I need to build in 'expansion' time in my schedule so that I always have a few days/nights to spare for submissions etc. which can be used in the event that other planned times are lost.

The loss of my supervisor for whatever reason would be a serious blow to my research. I have heard of cases where supervisors have changed jobs, become ill or were no longer prepared to supervise students. I am confident that I can avoid the latter situation by maintaining regular contact, delivering work as requested on time and heeding her advice.

In the event of an illness or change of jobs removing my supervisor, I will immediately seek a replacement while continuing my work. There is a need for me to be independent but I am not so foolish as to believe that I can complete the thesis without expert supervision.

A constant threat is that of loss of motivation and enthusiasm. To date, I have experienced a number of occasions when it seemed like I was making no progress and I wanted out. However, I have found that the more people know that I am doing the programme, the more support and encouragement I am getting from them.

Even in my darker moments, when I have contemplated giving up, there is always someone motivating me to keep going. I am conscious of the need to exercise, keep fit and be healthy. I will continue to cycle at least once a week and go for a walk most evenings if possible. Sheppard *et al.* (2000) also talk about giving oneself rewards for meeting deadlines. I believe in this advice and take my rewards when I can.

I hold a responsible and busy position as HR Manager in an Institute of Technology. In terms of my work commitments, I will plan my work schedule so that as far as it is practical, I will avoid off-site meetings and travel in the lead-in times to submission dates and workshops. I will also use work experiences and conferences to supplement my thinking and writing. I will also avoid applying for new jobs or physical moves until such time as I complete the research.

I have a very healthy family and my own personal health is also good. I plan to maintain my own good health by regular exercise and medical checks. I also intend taking at least one night off to rest and enjoy a social life. I will also maintain an interest in sport. I have taken up cycling in the last two years. I have always believed that a fit body leads to a fit mind and *vice versa*. I will also take regular short weekend breaks and summer holidays throughout the programme to maintain a proper work-life balance. If any of my immediate family becomes seriously ill I would have to seek a deferment of the time needed to complete the DBA. However, I am confident that I could return to my studies given the advanced stage of the programme that I have now reached.

Another risk I have identified is that of access to Institutes for data collection and/or low response rates. I have already sought the support of the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) to encourage their members to participate in my study and I have received a positive response. I am confident that I can gain access to IOTs for my research. I am a member of the National IOT HR Managers forum and through this group I can gain management support for my study. I plan to make a small contribution to a charity or individuals who participate in my research in order to incentivise participation.

A final area of risk lies in the field of ethics governing my study. Firstly, I will need to obtain ethical approval from the Ethics Committee in Waterford Institute of Technology and possibly other Institutes to allow me access staff as participants in the research.

I will also need to have the informed consent of each participant and give them assurances on confidentiality and anonymity. I will need to ensure that data and any personal information is stored securely and not accessible by anybody other myself. I will have to inform participants of the purpose of my research and any possible use of their responses.

So the journey ends or is it just the beginning? My supervisor is talking about outputs and publications. Clearly, I am expected not to just place the thesis on a dusty shelf. The challenge is publish and to pursue further research opportunities. This is something that I hope to do for many years to come.

### **The end of the beginning**

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## Appendix 1: Head of Department, job description

**Post: Head of Department**

**Reporting to: Head of School**

The successful candidate will have appropriate administrative and supervisory experience and will be capable of meeting and promoting, in an equitable way, the diverse academic present and future needs of the Department within the School of Science. The appointee will be responsible through the Head of School to the President for the efficient and effective management and control of the assigned Department, and for its development in accordance with Institute policy and plans.

- The appointee will lead, direct and manage the academic programmes at Department level including teaching, research, programme development and design, academic assessment and academic administration.
- The appointee will act as advisor and leader in quality assurance issues and will implement agreed quality assurance procedures and other procedures including progression, complaints processing, grievance and disciplinary, etc.
- The appointee will manage and direct the staff of the Department including timetabling and evaluating staff performance.
- The appointee will work with the Head of School and develop, agree, implement and manage School and Department policy.
- The appointee will carry out such duties as are assigned by the Director/Head of School as appropriate, including but not limited to:-
- Developing a rolling strategic and operational plan for the Department consistent with School and Institute objectives and ensuring the staff are continuously advised on plans, policy and other necessary matters.



- Providing overall management and administration of the Department, including managing the Department budget and maintaining appropriate records and making available information as required by senior management
- Playing a leading role in the development, implementation and maintenance of academic quality assurance arrangements
- Providing academic leadership and scholarship on existing and new courses, in course development and in course coordination
- Directing and supervising the work of members of staff of the Department, including evaluating staff performance and acting in an advisory capacity and as a professional support in academic matters to colleagues
- Advising on and participating in recruiting suitably qualified staff and managing in consultation with the Head of School and other relevant members of Institute management the development and implementation of a staff development programme for the Department
- Participating in appropriate activities, including external activities, necessary to the development and promotion of the Department, School and the Institute; advising on and participating in the promotion and marketing of the Department, School and Institute, its research, and its courses including the preparation of marketing literature and brochures and advising on student intake
- Teaching classes for up to 105 hours per annum and carrying out assessment, monitoring and evaluation of examination work and providing an academic and consultative support to students in their learning activities; directing and supervising the work of Tutor/Demonstrators and taking academic responsibility for the academic standards of this work

- Working with the central management team [e.g. Registrar, Head of Development, Secretary/Financial Controller] and other Heads of School and Department as required and participating in committees as required from time to time
- Liaising with awarding bodies, trade and professional organizations, government agencies etc. as required
- Advising on equipment and physical requirements
- Participating in committees and meetings as required
- Carrying out such other appropriate duties as may be assigned by the Head of School from time to time.

The appointee will carry out the lawful instructions of the President or authorized officer and comply with the requirements and regulations of the Minister for Education.

The performance of this work will require regular attendance at the Institute in addition to class contact hours during the normal working week. In addition, as the School of lifelong Learning and Education operates both daytime and evening programmes, attendance will be required during both time periods from time to time.

## Appendix 2: Effective leadership facets

Effective Leadership Behaviour	Behavioural Elements	Source	Scale of Measurement
Providing strategic direction	<b>Implementing Vision</b>	Benoit and Graham (2005)	Ordinal
	<b>Developing</b> long-term department <b>goals</b> ;	Carroll and Gmelch (1994);	Ordinal
	Act as <b>facilitator</b> (sensor; agenda and standard setter)	Stark <i>et al.</i> (2002)	Ordinal
	Determining direction; <b>Establishing priorities</b>	Middlehurst (1993), Birnbaum (1988)	Ordinal
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction (of the School/Department)	Initiating structure; creating an <b>environment or context</b> for academics; climate regulator	Knight and Holden (1985); Creswell <i>et al.</i> (1990); Bryman (2009);	Ordinal
	Being a provider of <b>resources and information</b> ;	Creswell and Brown (1992);	Ordinal
	Adjusting <b>workloads and schedules</b> ;	Creswell and Brown (1992):	Ordinal
	Assist academic staff set <b>personal goals</b> ;	Creswell <i>et al.</i> (1990)	Ordinal

Effective Leadership Behaviour	Behavioural Elements	Source	Scale of Measurement
Creating a structure to support the strategic direction (of the School/Department)	Focus on <b>development of staff</b>	Ramsden (1998b); Clott and Fjortoft (2000);	Ordinal
	Infecting people with vision; generating <b>external focus</b> on long-term trends and positioning	Nuemann (1995); Smart <i>et al.</i> (1997)	Ordinal
	<b>Mission agreement</b>	Fjortoft and Smart (1994)	Ordinal
Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment	Collegiality and Cooperation; <b>flexibility and versatility;</b>	Mitchell (1987);	Ordinal
	Collective excellence and <b>teamwork;</b>	Trocchia and Andrus (2003);	Ordinal
	<b>Interpersonal atmosphere</b>	McGrath (2005)	Ordinal
	<b>Encourage</b> and support <b>faculty;</b>	Creswell <i>et al.</i> (1990);	Ordinal
	<b>Recognising</b> and celebrating <b>achievements</b>	Bland, Center <i>et al.</i> (2005)	Ordinal
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	<b>Mutual</b> trust and <b>respect</b>	Mitchell (1987)	Ordinal

Effective Leadership Behaviour	Behavioural Elements	Source	Scale of Measurement
Establishing trustworthiness as a leader	<b>Listen to needs</b> and interests of staff	Creswell <i>et al.</i> (1990)	Ordinal
	<b>Constructive feedback</b> and mentoring	Fernandez and Vecchio (1997); Winter and Sarros (2002)	Ordinal
Having personal integrity	<b>Trustworthy communication</b>	Rantz (2002)	Ordinal
	<b>Concern for others</b> , unselfishness, fairness	Mitchell (1987)	Ordinal
	Treating staff <b>equally and fairly</b>	Moses and Roe (1990)	Ordinal
Having credibility to act as a role model	Being seen as someone who <b>keeps promises</b>	Harris <i>et al.</i> (2004)	Ordinal
	<b>Connected</b> to institution	Nuemann and Bensimon(1990)	Ordinal
	<b>Sharing knowledge and expertise</b> about publishing and funding	Creswell and Brown (1992)	Ordinal

Effective Leadership Behaviour	Behavioural Elements	Source	Scale of Measurement
Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation	Provide the ' <b>why</b> ' for change and help staff to achieve change	Ramsden (1998a)	Ordinal
	Consultative approach to change	Padilla (2005)	Ordinal
	<b>Openness</b> among senior managers	Allen (2003)	Ordinal
	Open to <b>suggestions and for consultation</b>	Moses and Roe (1990)	Ordinal
	Consensual decision-making; <b>mutual supportiveness</b>	Bryman (2009)	Ordinal
	Promoting <b>participative decision-making</b>	Bland, Weber-Main <i>et al.</i> (2005)	Ordinal
	Decision making based on <b>negotiation and participation</b>	Allen (2003)	Ordinal
Providing communications about developments	Good communications about <b>major issues</b>	Bland, Center <i>et al.</i> (2005)	Ordinal
	<b>Improving climate</b> through communication	Middlehurst (1993)	Ordinal

Effective Leadership Behaviour	Behavioural Elements	Source	Scale of Measurement
Providing communications about developments	<b>Early warning systems</b>	Birnbaum (1988)	Ordinal
Representing the Department/School to advance its causes and networking on its behalf	Being an <b>advocate</b>	Bland, Weber-Main <i>et al.</i> (2005)	Ordinal
	<b>Championing the cause</b> of staff within and beyond the institute	Creswell and Brown (1992); Nuemann and Bensimon (1990)	Ordinal
	Ability to <b>represent department</b> to central admin.	Trocchia and Andrus (2003)	Ordinal
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department	Generating a culture <b>conducive and supportive of research</b>	Weber-Main <i>et al.</i> (2005)	Ordinal

Effective Leadership Behaviour	Behavioural Elements	Source	Scale of Measurement
Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department	Heads Of Department must be seen as <b>interactional leaders, sensitive to culture</b> of their departments	Knight and Trowler (2001)	Ordinal
	Leaders are <b>custodians</b> as well as <b>change agents</b> of organisational culture	Knight and Trowler (2001)	Ordinal
	Defining <b>core values</b> of the institution in the face of developments they seek to transform	Bargh <i>et al.</i> (2000)	Ordinal
Protecting academic staff autonomy	Facilitating <b>autonomous working</b>	Bland, Weber-Main <i>et al.</i> (2005)	Ordinal
	<b>Professional freedom</b> and responsibility	Mitchell (1987)	Ordinal
	Knowing how much <b>support</b> academic staff need	Wolverton <i>et al.</i> (2005)	Ordinal
	Autonomy and <b>participation</b>	Winter and Sarros (2002)	Ordinal
Overall efficiency of leadership		Author	Ordinal



<b>Effective Leadership Behaviour</b>	<b>Behavioural Elements</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Scale of Measurement</b>
Other effective leadership facets (yes/no)		Author	Nominal
Other effective leadership facets at HOS/HOD levels		Author	Interval (cumulative)
Distinctiveness of Higher Education leadership		Author	Nominal and open-ended
Others involved in effective leadership (Yes/No)		Author	Nominal
Identification of others involved in effective leadership		Author	Interval (cumulative)
Gender of respondents		Author	Nominal

<b>Effective Leadership Behaviour</b>	<b>Behavioural Elements</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Scale of Measurement</b>
Length of Service of respondents		Author	Ratio
Age of respondents		Author	Ratio
School/Discipline of respondents		Author	Nominal
Gender of HOSs/HODs		Author	Nominal
Length of Service (estimate) of HOSs/HODs		Author	Ratio
Age (estimate) of HOSs/HODs		Author	Ratio

## Appendix 3: Approval for study from WIT Ethics Committee

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Phort Láirge

Waterford Institute of Technology

Port Láirge, Éire,  
T: +353-51-302000  
info@wit.ie

Waterford, Ireland,  
T: +353-51-302000  
www.wit.ie



Ref: 13/INT/HR/01

14<sup>th</sup> November, 2013.

Mr. Neil O'Sullivan,  
HR Manager,  
WIT.

Dear Neil,

Thank you for submitting your amended documentation in relation to your project '*An exploration of effective leadership behaviours at Head of Department level in Institutes of Technology (IOT's) in Ireland*' to the WIT Research Ethics Committee.

I am pleased to inform you that we now fully approve WIT's participation in this project and we will convey this to Academic Council.

We wish you well in the work ahead.

Yours sincerely,

Professor John Wells,  
Chairperson,  
Research Ethics Committee

cc: Dr. Alma McCarthy

## Appendix 4: Pre-access letters

Dr Aldan Kenny  
Asst. General Secretary  
Teachers Union of Ireland

17<sup>th</sup> November, 2013

Dear Dr Kenny,

The attached questionnaire is part of a research study in fulfilment of a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) in Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). The title of the research is '*An exploration of effective leadership behaviours at Head of Department level in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland*'. All academic staff in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) are being invited to participate in the study. The questionnaire constitutes a non-personalised study of leadership at Head of Department level in the sector and is not designed or intended to be critical of Heads of Department in any way. It is planned to distribute the questionnaire via Survey Monkey in the coming week. I would be grateful if you would inform the TUI Branch Secretaries in each IOT of this impending study.

The study will examine the importance and extent of eleven effective leadership behaviours at Head of Department level in IOTs in Ireland which were first identified by Bryman (2007, 2009) in a study of Effective Leadership in Higher Education conducted for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education in the UK. The questionnaire is split into eleven sections corresponding with these eleven effective leadership behaviours followed by a number of short sections on overall effectiveness of leadership, Head of Department characteristics and respondent characteristics.

The significance of this study is that it is proposed that it will be one of the first studies of its kind of leadership and its effectiveness in the IOT sector in Ireland. The study will contribute to both the existing mainstream body of literature on leadership as well as developing a new stream dedicated to leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland. Another potential outcome is the development of insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes for Heads of Department in the sector. A further expected outcome is a clear indication of the styles of leadership that exist and are deemed to be effective by academic staff within the participating organisations. This in turn will assist present and future leadership practitioners in the IOT sector.

The data collected from this study will be analysed and published in a thesis which will be examined for the award of DBA. All data collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and participants are assured that anonymity will be preserved. In order to achieve this objective, the IP address of respondents will not be stored in the survey results. In addition, it will not be possible to identify individual Institutes of Technology in the thesis.

If you would like a copy of the findings or if you have any questions about the study, please contact the researcher:

Neil O' Sullivan  
051302020  
0876620232  
nosullivan@wit.ie

Yours sincerely,



DBA Student

17<sup>th</sup> November, 2013

To each Head of Academic Department,

The attached questionnaire is part of a research study in fulfilment of a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) in Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). The title of the research is '*An exploration of effective leadership behaviours at Head of Department level in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland*'. All academic staff in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) are being invited to participate in the study. The questionnaire constitutes a non-personalised study of leadership at Head of Department level in the sector and is not designed or intended to be critical of Heads of Department in any way. It is planned to distribute the questionnaire via Survey Monkey in the coming week.

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If you would like a copy of the findings or if you have any questions about the study, please contact the researcher:

Neil O' Sullivan  
051302020  
0876620232  
nosullivan@wit.ie

Yours sincerely,



DBA Student

President

X Institute of Technology

18<sup>th</sup> November, 2013

Dear President,

The attached questionnaire is part of a research study in fulfilment of a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) in Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). The title of the research is '*An exploration of effective leadership facets at Head of Department level in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland*'. All academic staff in Institutes of Technology are being invited to participate in the study. The questionnaire constitutes a non-personalised study of leadership at Head of Department level in the sector and is not designed or intended to be critical of Heads of Department in any way. It is planned to distribute the questionnaire via SurveyMonkey in the coming week.

The study will examine the importance and extent of eleven effective leadership facets at Head of Department level in IOTs in Ireland which were first identified by Bryman (2007; 2009) in a study of Effective Leadership in Higher Education conducted for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education in the UK. The questionnaire is split into eleven sections corresponding with these eleven effective leadership facets followed by a number of short sections on overall effectiveness of leadership, Head of Department characteristics and respondent characteristics.

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A further expected outcome is a clear indication of the styles of leadership that exist and are deemed to be effective by academic staff within the participating organisations. This in turn will assist present and future leadership practitioners in the IOT sector.

The data collected from this study will be analysed and published in a thesis which will be examined for the award of DBA. All data collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and participants are assured that anonymity will be preserved. In order to achieve this objective, the IP address of respondents will not be stored in the survey results. In addition, it will not be possible to identify individual Institutes of Technology in the thesis. If you would like a copy of the findings or if you have any questions about the study, please contact the researcher:

Neil O' Sullivan  
051302020  
0876620232  
nosullivan@wit.ie

Yours sincerely,

---

DBA Student

17<sup>th</sup> November, 2013

Dear HR Manager,

Please see attached letter and questionnaire for your information. Please pass on the letter and questionnaire to all your Heads of Department for their information. I plan to issue this questionnaire to academic staff in all IOTs as part of my DBA studies in the coming week. As you may be aware I am the HR Manager in WIT but I am conducting this research solely as a student on the DBA programme here in Waterford. If you have any queries about the study please do not hesitate to contact me on 0876620232.

best wishes

Neil

## Appendix 5: Final version of questionnaire

### 1. Introduction

Dear lecturer,

The following questionnaire is part of a research study in fulfillment of a Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) in Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT). The title of the research is 'A Study of Effective Leadership Behaviours at Head of Department level in Institutes of Technology (IOTs) in Ireland'. All academic staff in Institutes of Technology are being invited to participate in the study. The questionnaire constitutes a non-personalised study of leadership at Head of Department level in the sector and is not designed or intended to be critical of Heads of Department in any way.

The study will examine the importance and extent of eleven effective leadership behaviours at Head of Department level in IOTs in Ireland which were first identified by Bryman (2007, 2009) in a study of Effective Leadership in Higher Education conducted for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education in the UK. The questionnaire is split into eleven sections corresponding with these eleven effective leadership behaviours followed by a number of short sections on overall effectiveness of leadership, Head of Department characteristics and respondent characteristics.

The significance of this study is that it is proposed that this will be one of the first studies of its kind of leadership and its effectiveness in the IOT sector in Ireland. The study will contribute to both the existing mainstream body of literature on leadership as well as developing a new stream dedicated to leadership in the IOT sector in Ireland. Another potential outcome is the development of insights and recommendations for leadership development programmes for Heads of Department in the sector. A further expected outcome is a clear indication of the styles of leadership that exist and are deemed to be effective by academic staff within the participating organisations. This in turn will assist present and future leadership practitioners in the IOT sector.

The data collected from this study will be analysed and published in a thesis which will be examined for the award of DBA. All data collected will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and participants are assured that anonymity will be preserved. In order to achieve this objective, the IP address of respondents will not be stored in the survey results. In addition, it will not be possible to identify individual Institutes of Technology in the thesis. If you would like a copy of the findings or if you have any questions about the study, please contact the researcher:

Nell O' Sullivan  
051302020  
0876620232  
nosullivan@wit.ie

Thank you for participating in the survey.

Copyright Nell O' Sullivan, November, 2013

## 2. Providing Strategic Direction

**\*1. Establishing priorities is important for effective leadership as a Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly Disagree

**\*2. My Head of Department establishes priorities in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*3. Establishing long-term development goals (e.g. course development; student numbers) is not important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*4. My Head of Department does not establish long-term development goals in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*5. The ability to implement strategic vision is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*6. My Head of Department implements strategic vision in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

### 3. Creating a Structure to Support the Strategic Direction

**\*7. Providing resources and information to achieve strategic goals is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*8. My Head of Department provides resources and information to help achieve strategic goals in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*9. The contribution of academic staff to the strategic planning process is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*10. My Head of Department allows academic staff to contribute to the strategic planning process in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*11. Focusing on the development of academic staff which is aligned to strategic goals is important for effective leadership as a Head of Department**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*12. My Head of Department focuses on the development of staff aligned to strategic goals in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

#### 4. Fostering a Supportive and Collaborative Environment

**\*13. The creation of a sense of community is not important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*14. My Head of Department does not create a sense of community in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*15. The ability to motivate academic staff is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*16. My Head of Department demonstrates an ability to motivate academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*17. Recognising and celebrating the achievements of academic staff is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*18. My Head of Department recognises and celebrates the achievement of academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

## 5. Establishing Trustworthiness as a Leader

**\*19. The establishment of trust is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*20. My Head of Department establishes trust in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*21. The establishment of respect for staff is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*22. My Head of Department establishes respect for staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*23. Responding to the needs of academic staff is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*24. My Head of Department responds to the needs of academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

## 6. Having Personal Integrity

**\*25. Treating staff fairly and ethically is not important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*26. My Head of Department does not treat staff fairly and ethically in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*27. Concern for the wellbeing of academic staff is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*28. My Head of Department demonstrates concern for the wellbeing of academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*29. Being able to trust communications from Heads of Department is important for effective leadership at that level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*30. I trust what my Head of Department communicates to me in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree



## 7. Having Credibility as a Role Model

**\*31. The ability to keep promises to academic staff is important for effective leadership at the level of Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*32. My Head of Department keeps promises made to academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*33. Having the required experience and knowledge to manage a Department is important for effective leadership as a Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*34. My Head of Department demonstrates the required experience and knowledge to manage a Department in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*35. Sharing knowledge and expertise with academic staff is important for effective leadership at the level of Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*36. My Head of Department shares knowledge and expertise with academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

## 8. Facilitating Participation in Decision Making and Consultation

**\*37. Involving the right staff at various levels in decision making is not important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*38. My Head of Department does not involve the right staff at various levels in decision making in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*39. Consulting with academic staff on major decisions is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*40. My Head of Department consults with academic staff on major decisions in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*41. Openness to suggestions from academic staff is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly Disagree

**\*42. My Head of Department is open to suggestions from academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

## 9. Providing Communications about Developments

**\*43. The provision of information about key developments affecting the Department is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*44. My Head of Department provides information about key developments affecting the Department in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*45. The provision of feedback to academic staff on suggestions they make is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*46. My Head of Department provides feedback to academic staff on their suggestions in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*47. The provision of information about changes in the Department is important for effective leadership at the level of Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*48. My Head of Department provides information about changes in the Department in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**10. Representing the Department to Advance its Cause and Networking on its Beha...**

**\*49. Representing the Department to advance its cause is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*50. My Head of Department represents the Department to advance its cause in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*51. 'Championing' the cause of academic staff is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*52. My Head of Department 'champions' the cause of academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*53. Being an advocate for the Department is important for effective leadership as a Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*54. My Head of Department acts as an advocate for the Department in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**11. Respecting Existing Culture while Seeking to Instil Values through a Vision...**

**\*55. Creating a climate open to new ideas is not important for effective leadership at the level of Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*56. My Head of Department does not create a climate open to new ideas in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*57. Having empathy with academic staff values is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*58. My Head of Department has empathy with academic staff values in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*59. Defining core values for the Department is important for effective leadership at the level of Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*60. My Head of Department defines core values for the Department in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

## 12. Protecting Academic Staff Autonomy

**\*61. Facilitating autonomous working of academic staff is important for effective leadership at the level of Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*62. My Head of Department facilitates autonomous working amongst academic staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*63. The support of academic freedom of staff is important for effective leadership at the level of Head of Department**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*64. My Head of Department supports academic freedom of staff in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*65. Knowing how much support academic staff need is important for effective leadership at Head of Department level**

- Strongly Agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*66. My Head of Department is aware how much support academic staff need in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

### 13. Overall Effectiveness of Leadership

**\*67. My Head of Department is effective in his/her day to day role**

- Strongly agree     Agree     Don't know     Disagree     Strongly disagree

**\*68. Are there other effective leadership behavioural factors which you can identify at Head of Department level?**

- Yes     No

Please comment

**69. Is leadership in higher education distinctive from that found in other sectors of employment?**

- Yes     No

Why?/Why Not?

**\*70. Do staff other than Heads of Department demonstrate effective leadership behaviours in Institutes of Technology?**

- Yes     No

Please Comment

#### 14. Head of Department Characteristics

**\*71. Is your Head of Department male or female?**

- Male  Female

**\*72. What Nationality is your Head of Department?**

- Irish  
 European (other than Irish)  
 Non-European

**\*73. How long is your Head of Department in his/her current role (estimate)?**

- 1-5 years  
 6-10 years  
 11-15 years  
 16-20 years  
 Over 20 years

**\*74. What age is your Head of Department (estimate)?**

- 20-30  
 31-40  
 41-50  
 51-60  
 over 60



## 15. Respondent Characteristics

**\*75. Are you male or female?**

- Female
- Male

**\*76. What is your Nationality?**

- Irish
- European (other than Irish)
- Non-European

**\*77. Please select your length of service (to the nearest year) from the list below:**

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- over 20 years

**\*78. Please select your age range (to the nearest year) from the list below:**

- 20-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- Over 60

**\*79. Please identify (from the list below) the domain in which you mainly lecture:**

- Business/Education
- Humanities/Social Sciences
- Science/Computing
- Health Sciences
- Engineering

Other (please specify)

**\*80. How many staff are in your Department (estimate)?**

- Less than 20
- 21 to 30
- 31 to 40
- 41 to 50
- 51 to 60
- Over 60

**\*81. Please identify your subject discipline**

## Appendix 6: Additional leadership facets

Other Effective Leadership Facets	Link with existing leadership facets
<b>Matching Staff to their abilities</b>	<b>Protecting staff autonomy</b>
Effective <b>communication skills</b> & emotional intelligence (e.g., listening, <b>empathy</b> , awareness & self-awareness)	<b>Providing communications about developments</b> <b>Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department</b>
There is a need for a clear understanding of the role of management in a professional service-provider organisation. In my view, this is <b>to create the context within which the service professionals provide the service. Their job should not be to tell me how to do my job as increasingly seems to be the case. Rather, it is to enable me to do my job.</b>	<b>Creating a structure to support the strategic direction</b> <b>Protecting staff autonomy</b>
<b>Sincerity, Enthusiasm</b>	<b>Having personal integrity/ New</b>
<b>Knowing the policies and regulations associated with academic management which can help to guide and advise academic staff.</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
<b>it requires somewhat of a political quality and engagement</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
<b>Head of department should maintain a grounded relationship with staff and foster a bottom up not top down direction of communication.</b> Undoubtedly the 'can do' leaders are the ones who do not play power games with their staff.	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
<b>Core skill is one of teambuilding and maintenance.</b> Also, in using existing competent staff, whilst building competence in others for appropriate succession from within a department rather than sourcing from outside first.	<b>Creating a structure to support the strategic direction</b>

<b>Other Effective Leadership Facets</b>	<b>Link with existing leadership facets</b>
<b>Most effective leaders look like leader, talk like leaders, walk like leaders and act like leaders.</b> Less effective leaders I have encountered display only some or none of these traits.	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
<b>Role with the media and promoting the public image of the college and education.</b> Effectively dealing with incidences, student behaviour challenges.	<b>Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf</b>
<b>creativity, energy, youth, humour</b>	<b>Providing strategic direction</b>
<b>clear vision , build effective relationships in staff</b> recognise and develop a protocol for ineffective staff	<b>Providing strategic direction Creating a structure to support the strategic direction</b>
Delegation of work to committees. <b>Fair allocation of workloads.</b>	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
<b>Providing a good role model</b> Thorough understanding of problem resolution processes <b>Development of strong academic profile of attainment</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment</b>
HOD should be free enough of operational logistics to be able to engage with proper academic leadership. Instead HOD role is largely taken up with resolving, in the short term, of operational matters only.	<b>Negative perceptions</b>
Emotional intelligence, <b>empathy, motivation</b> , open-door.	<b>Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department</b>
Understanding that we are all humans Eliminate favouritism	<b>Negative perceptions</b>
<b>Lead by example</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
<b>Be an active researcher him / herself Be of a high academic / administrative standard so as to have respect of peers</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>

<b>Other Effective Leadership Facets</b>	<b>Link with existing leadership facets</b>
<b>Communication abilities</b> , humour, positivity	<b>Providing communications about developments</b>
Dealing with poor performance - there appears to be no sanctions/actions taken for poor teaching practices and lack of attendance at classes by academic staff.	New
<b>Willingness to allow staff to get on with ideas and support them.</b> They are professionals and want to do the best for their students	<b>Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation</b>
<b>Integrity</b>	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
<b>Empathy</b> , strong character,	<b>Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department/New</b>
<b>Ability to prioritise</b> , the courage to challenge and have difficult conversations, challenge of operating within the constraints set by Executive	<b>Providing strategic direction</b>
<b>Integrity, both in one's own work and in maintaining academic standards is paramount.</b>	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
<b>All HODs should be required to comply with their 3 hour teaching commitment in their contracts</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
<b>Balancing the need for confidentiality with the need for open, low-level communication</b>	<b>Providing communications about developments</b>
Deliberate distancing by managerial culture between themselves and academic staff i.e., increasing absence of vertical integration in the institutional structure, leaving two separate horizontal cultures. Bureaucratic engagement only from above with a noticeable and increasing lack of hands-on, knowledgeable involvement. More of core daily business and organization is being devolved by management onto the heads of teaching staff.	<b>Negative perceptions</b>
<b>Planning / Communication</b>	<b>Providing strategic direction</b>

Other Effective Leadership Facets	Link with existing leadership facets
Manage people as having a human brain in their head not act as an administrator.	<b>Negative perceptions</b>
<b>The ability to plan, organise, lead and control</b> - lacking in a lot of cases	<b>Providing strategic direction</b>
<b>The development of team teaching initiatives (when like-minded, competent staff are utilised) is very effective.</b>	<b>Protecting staff autonomy</b>
<b>Understanding individual staff member's needs and micro-managing these.</b>	<b>Establishing trustworthiness as a leader</b>
Yes, it is very important for HOD to assume when communicating with HOS and senior management that they also have all the positive leadership behavioural characteristics so that effective communication can take place. <b>There is little benefit to the effective management of a Department, if the HOD is unable to communicate effectively with senior management and expect that communication to be acted upon.</b>	<b>Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf</b>
<b>I think empathy in regards family friendly work practices is most effective in motivating staff It is only for a few years for each member.</b>	<b>Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department</b>
<b>Being available to staff.</b> HOD is overworked.	<b>Establishing trustworthiness as a leader</b>
<b>Good listener, approachable, good communicator.</b>	<b>Providing communications about developments</b>
<b>Being able to contribute to discussions about the subjects of the department, not just administrative issues.</b> A manager who knows little about the intellectual content of the department is not a leader but merely a management stooge. He or she is not a respected colleague, but a time-server. If he or she doesn't read or think or teach or publish in the area why is he or she there? Such a person will not be respected, and suspicions of cronyism or nepotism will be rife.	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>

<b>Other Effective Leadership Facets</b>	<b>Link with existing leadership facets</b>
<b>The Head of Department needs to identify with industry and be aware of their needs. This leads to the development of courses that result in 'employable' learners.</b>	<b>Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf</b>
<b>Trust, honesty, fairness, integrity</b>	<b>Establishing trustworthiness as a leader Having personal integrity</b>
<b>Openness and cooperation. Listening and knowing that you are being heard</b>	<b>Creating a structure to support the strategic direction</b>
<b>Organisational and administrative skills</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
Effective communication with learners.	New
<b>Consistency and parity for all employees</b>	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
<b>Effective verbal and written communication with staff and external stakeholders. Encouraging and motivating staff. Being fair to all staff.</b>	<b>Providing communications about developments Establishing trustworthiness as a leader Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment Having personal integrity</b>
<b>Honesty and the belief your head of department wants to improve the department</b>	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
Ability to take criticism where criticism is due, accept it and move on.	New
<b>A good leader should have good written and oral communication skills, without this, there can be little credibility or respect. Also, a knowledge and understanding of the discipline areas of the Department, or at least evidence of willingness to learn, should be required.</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model Providing communications about developments</b>
Poor communication skills	<b>Negative perceptions</b>
<b>Operation of the formal v informal organisation. Chairing meetings. effective and succinct communications + well written!</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model Providing communications about developments</b>

Other Effective Leadership Facets	Link with existing leadership facets
<b>Honesty, walk the walk, practice what you preach, openness, happy demeanour, expect the best of people, create the conditions where staff can excel</b>	Having personal integrity Creating a structure to support the strategic direction
courage, <b>integrity</b> , political insights	Having personal integrity
Being perceived as not just a 'yes' woman/man for senior management.	Negative perceptions
All seem to be covered	YES !!!
<b>We are an academic institution and therefore leadership in the areas of Research which will impact our future.</b> My head of department has no research profile , no higher degree and no interest in encouraging/supporting those of us who would like to pursue a PhD for instant and in generally incompetent in this aspect of the role	Having credibility as a role model
<b>Departmental leaders should have a basic level of interest in the core areas of Departmental Course areas.</b> Uninterested leaders are very damaging to core business.	Having credibility as a role model
<b>Heads of Department need to be able to represent the views of the department and the staff without top-down decision making over-riding all processes.</b>	Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf
<b>Being willing to invest time in facilitating a democratic exchange of views BETWEEN members of a department. HODs need to be advocates for students in an increasingly punitive and controlling HE environment (semesterisation, standardised credits for modules irrespective of the CONTEXT of student learning.</b>	Creating a structure to support the strategic direction Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf
An ability to match staff to head up projects	Protecting staff autonomy
Being a proven scholar in the areas which the department has responsibility for	Having credibility as a role model



<b>Other Effective Leadership Facets</b>	<b>Link with existing leadership facets</b>
Competency regarding the implementation of change is imperative to effective leadership and management	Providing strategic direction
Generally 'people skills' such as empathy and a friendly demeanour critical, and also being fair and at times resolute i.e. not courting popularity. This must be accompanied by strong administrative skills.	Having personal integrity Having credibility as a role model
High quality communication skills, knowledge of the college policies and application of same	Providing communications about developments Having credibility as a role model
Organisational skills	Having credibility as a role model
Setting good examples, mutual respect	Having credibility as a role model Establishing trustworthiness as a leader
Has good core knowledge - understands the complexity of each course and skills needed to deliver it, Proactive about change-recognizes the changing economic impact on courses and is thinking how to improve	Having credibility as a role model
Proper communication with staff in an appropriate forum	Creating a structure to support the strategic direction
Lead by example i.e. HODs ought to still lecture after becoming HODs which isn't always the case. Many HODS' are professional managers with no experience of lecturing. This results in a disconnect between HOD's and Lecturers	Having credibility as a role model
Heads of Department tend to simply be implementers of autocratic decisions arbitrarily dictated by the most senior management.	Negative perceptions
Truthfulness, honesty, confidence, <b>integrity</b> , professionalism, decisive, steadfastness, <b>vision</b> , <b>fairness</b> , responsibility, <b>the ability to battle and support staff and programmes and take the responsibility if certain projects don't work out.</b>	<b>Having personal integrity</b> <b>Providing strategic direction</b> <b>Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf</b>

<b>Other Effective Leadership Facets</b>	<b>Link with existing leadership facets</b>
<b>Ethics, fairness--not using their position to advance their own personal interests and to advance the careers of their friends / family.</b>	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
<b>Understanding the process of academic research and academic research supervision as well as the process of teaching and lecturing.</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
<b>Communication upwards to higher management what goes on in the classroom. Involvement in the classroom</b>	<b>Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf Having credibility as a role model</b>
<b>Interpersonal communication Inspiration</b>	<b>Having personal integrity Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment</b>
<b>HOD's have prime responsibility for academic timetabling and as such they should lead by example and 1, teach their required hours, and 2 provide transparent fair and equitable timetables to avoid resentment among staff.</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model Having personal integrity</b>
<b>Yes the encouragement of more cross departmental and cross disciplinary work and collaboration, I feel this is lacking and also the fact that no time is afforded on timetables for staff or venues for them to meet with their colleagues to discuss their work, issues, support each other and develop joint assessments and work material and it prevents duplication of work and shares the talents and skills of staff.</b>	<b>Protecting staff autonomy</b>
<b>Leading by example. Ethical responsibility.</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model Having personal integrity</b>

Other Effective Leadership Facets	Link with existing leadership facets
<p><b>Ability to communicate and be an active listener. Be aware of the role of the lecturer, in an ever changing educational environment. Treat people as individuals and not as the collective.</b></p>	<p><b>Establishing trustworthiness as a leader Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment</b></p>
<p><b>An ability to motivate staff</b></p>	<p><b>Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment</b></p>
<p><b>Sometimes a manager has to lead.</b> Our HOD won't be linked to any cause and we exist in a culture where he can't be held to account for failure or success. We are never promoted, we (academic staff) are used to function as mini HOD's without pay or recognition. Our department is sinking due to a lack of so many of the points you make. We are in dire need of leadership and presence. Another aspect is lack of working relations at HOS and HOD level. This rupture is probably the most depressing aspect of our situation. But both operate as untouchables. It often feels like a slow rot under their watch. Those of us who put our heads above the parapet are so overworked and under-appreciated. When we say it's not on and we won't continue to be bullied in this fashion we are sent to "Coventry". I come from an industrial situation. I know the meaning of work. This is just terrible treatment of staff, plain and simple.</p>	<p><b>Having credibility as a role model</b></p>
<p><b>Ability to communicate what is happening at executive board level</b></p>	<p><b>Providing communications about developments</b></p>

Other Effective Leadership Facets	Link with existing leadership facets
<p>Communication skills: very basic, oral and written skills are required to ensure staff receive acknowledgment of concerns expressed and general issues raised. Communication strategies and expectations should be a norm but may require protocols so that everyone is aware of expectations. Empathy is good and fine, but clear goals must be set, adhered to. Academic freedom is all fine, but dealing with basic issues like timetables and getting basic parts of the job done (lectures happening, exams written submitted and model answers in, designating person to deal with extern or the like) should be basic operational issues that are not within the realm of academic freedom.</p>	<p><b>Having personal integrity</b></p>
<p><b>Openness</b></p>	<p><b>Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation</b></p>
<p><b>I think it is vital that Head of Departments who do not share the same cognate disciplines as those in their department are open to listening to academic staff about how the teaching, assessment and learning approaches work in the discipline. Having an understanding of these approaches demonstrates respect to the traditions of the disciplines we teach and help to build rapport. When changes have to be made, I believe that staff will feel that the rationale for decisions come from a more informed place.</b></p>	<p><b>Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation</b></p>
<p><b>It is clear that many HODs do not have the basic organisational skills required to do their job.</b> What is more evident is that those at higher management levels have failed to do anything to rectify that. Some departments have been poorly run for many years; luckily that does not apply to me.</p>	<p><b>Having credibility as a role model</b></p>
<p><b>Communication skills; Problem solving skills; visionary; creativity</b></p>	<p><b>Providing communications about developments. Providing strategic direction.</b></p>

<b>Other Effective Leadership Facets</b>	<b>Link with existing leadership facets</b>
Decision making skills and Interpersonal/conflict resolution skills are important in the environment that we operate in	New
<b>Setting an example for the department in terms of performance and research.</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
<b>Participation in external bodies professional/community/industry/schools. Representing the department discipline(s) in region.</b>	<b>Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf</b>
<b>Communication and people skills</b>	<b>Providing communications about developments. Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment</b>
<b>Do unto others as you wish them to do unto you. Show academic leadership through scholarship. Challenge the rigour and validity of institutional policy where it undermines academic/educational values and goals. Challenge the channelling of resources towards administration and so called prestige projects that have not been subject to rigorous analysis appropriate for an educational setting. Ensure resources follow the student in the context of international students. Apply similar rigour to management processes as is applied to academic quality.</b>	<b>Having credibility as a role model Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf Creating a structure to support the strategic direction</b>
<b>Communications is a key skill that I feel, in the day to day running of a Department, should be a very high priority which I feel is not used effectively. We do not receive communication from our Head of Department relating to the day to day running of the Department</b>	<b>Providing communications about developments</b>
<b>Promote continual professional development</b>	<b>Creating a structure to support the strategic direction</b>
<b>Consistency of approach Equity and Fairness</b>	<b>Having personal integrity</b>

Other Effective Leadership Facets	Link with existing leadership facets
Regular one to one interaction with all staff members	Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation
Listening skills. Networking skills. Presence. Links outside of WIT and to industry	Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation Representing the department to advance its cause and networking on its behalf
Leadership in education is very important as you are dealing with the minds of the future. Planning, and coordination and leadership are extremely important.	Having credibility as a role model
Greater equity and fairness in the allocation of work - the 'voluntary' aspects of the job i.e., non-lecturing activities. Encourage all staff to participate in non-lecturing activities within the School. Very often it is the 'same' people who do the additional work or voluntary work.	Having personal integrity
Ability to manage with no resources. Ability to deal with a management structure which is heavily weighted in terms of span of work load.	Having credibility as a role model
Treating staff with respect and communicating in a timely manner i.e. Don't ignore staff questions or issues.	Establishing trustworthiness as a leader
Open door policy	Having credibility as a role model
Communication. Knowledge of staff expertise, potential and strengths.	Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department
The main question is not if my HOD is personally a strong leader, the issue is if the organisational structures in IOT encourage leadership. There is a gap between HOD responsibilities and decision making opportunities.	Negative perceptions

<b>Other Effective Leadership Facets</b>	<b>Link with existing leadership facets</b>
X IT is an extremely toxic management culture in which it is difficult for HODs to operate effectively, especially in larger departments. The HOD simply reflects the general management culture at X IT. It is one of the worst places to work I have ever encountered in which staff are not valued.	<b>Negative perceptions</b>
<b>Effective day to day communication in order to encourage and improve morale</b>	<b>Providing communications about developments</b>
<b>Listening.</b>	<b>Establishing trustworthiness as a leader</b>
<b>Ability to communicate clearly. Fairness. No favouritism towards some staff</b>	<b>Establishing trustworthiness as a leader Providing communications about developments</b>
<b>To be unfixed and yet progressive. Unfixed because you need to work with, obtain performance from and support a wide mix of staff/faculty; and so being too clear about an agenda is a recipe for conflict. Progressive in that you need to push the place forward to follow what society/economy need from us. A tough job.</b>	<b>Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment</b>
<b>Talk to staff ; Explain reasons why you do things; Have staff meetings ; Read staff profiles before assigning Modules; Try to understand you cannot keep changing modules on staff; Our department head does not seem to understand the stress this causes; I am on parental leave mainly because of losing core modules; I am constantly afraid of new timetables; need I go on !</b>	<b>Establishing trustworthiness as a leader Providing communications about developments</b>
<b>HODs should model the way - do what they say they will do and in doing so they will set the model of behaviour they expect of their staff.</b>	<b>Having credibility to act as a role model</b>

Other Effective Leadership Facets	Link with existing leadership facets
<b>Orchestration: I think a Head of Department has to have the ability to identify and orchestrate resources within their department</b>	Having credibility to act as a role model
Basic organisation skills would also be important. There is no point in being a great leader if you do not take care of business.	Having credibility to act as a role model
Approach-ability, Being able to talk to academic staff at an academic staff level rather than a management level	Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment
Compassion	Respecting existing culture while seeking to instil values through a vision for the department
Openness and transparency Treating everyone as equal	Having personal integrity
HODs need to be diplomatic but ultimately make a decision that may not be welcome, based on what is best for students, the department and the reputation of the college course. HODs need to identify those academic staff that work hard at their jobs and differentiate those from others who do not. Ultimately they need to have clear judgement and the ability to apply discipline where necessary without being swayed by emotional, erroneous arguments.	Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment
Ability to effectively mediate	New
Willingness to discuss various aspects of work practice and conditions on a regular basis as desired by staff.	Establishing trustworthiness as a leader
Leaders need to be good listeners, they also need to be able to let go of the reins now and again and let other take on some leadership responsibilities	Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation
Charisma	New



<b>Other Effective Leadership Facets</b>	<b>Link with existing leadership facets</b>
Questions so far focus on academic staff, and focus on the needs of students is also important.	<b>New</b>
<b>pragmatic and realistic when making decisions</b>	<b>Facilitating participation in decision-making and consultation</b>
Being good at Chairing meetings	<b>Having credibility as a role model</b>
Openness and transparency, fairness, objectivity	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
Empathy with student issues	<b>Having personal integrity</b>
Empathy, empowerment and facilitation.	<b>Having personal integrity</b>

## Appendix 7: Distinctiveness of Higher Education Leadership

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
It is distinctive by virtue of its staffing and environment though probably utilises similar qualities and skills	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Because of the complex nature of higher education, i.e. provision of a valuable service with significant commercial and social implications for students, leadership styles have to accommodate this remit which is not so easy. Cost benefit trade-off is significant and not so simple to manage.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
have to deal with the commercial world can affect recruitment and enrolment of students	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Not driven by profit. Knowledge and expertise is at the academic staff level	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Yes, because it should entail a lot more than procedural management of the process	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Accounting for academic standards in a public service environment is pretty unique.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
The fundamentals elements/qualities required of leadership in any organisation is universal, the application of these qualities is specific to the sector of employment, this is the only aspect that I see as distinctive amongst leaders.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Yes, to a certain extent. The balance between lecturing, research & continual professional development must be acknowledged and considered by leaders. Few other industries require constant CPD.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
There are so many other forces at play and unclear goals, e.g. budgets don't get allocated until at least 3 months into an academic year and sometimes later, hence adjustments have to be made which result in plans having to alter dramatically, similarly with the CAO lottery, the changing variables and politics form external parties, e.g. dept of finance, politicians, etc add some other extraordinary variable at times	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
It is a more diverse role in that you are dealing with various groups who have very distinct needs and requirements	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Different from some areas similar to others.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Leadership in higher education is much more about getting employees to "buy in" to new ideas / projects eg new course development	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Leadership in the Education sector appears to be of a fire-fighting, reactive nature.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Yes because the nature of what we do is different from other sectors is different. It is intense, high contact, you must be at the top of our game in front of a class all the time.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
Less formal authority - more co-operative management style is needed	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
There is generally no comparison between the ongoing deadlines that often have to be met in other sectors.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Custodian of education, much more than bottom line.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Herding cats!	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
There are more stakeholders often with their own agenda.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
The "pastoral" aspect of the not-for-profit educational sector creates a different set of priorities and goals, and consequently, a different set of leadership duties and responsibilities, to that of the for-profit sector.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
No and yes. Leadership in higher education should share the same basic elements as that found in other sectors but due to the unique nature of the education sector a more nuanced approach than that found in mainstream business is needed.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
The issues involved are often different and require different skills/behaviours.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Different goals or targets so different strategies needed.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
dealing with prima donnas who all think they are the most important person must create its own unique issues	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Put simply...the public sector protective bubble...no comparable level of responsibility as the private sector	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
I think its a particular situation that requires great skill - too many people managing as if its a generic skill - education is a particular discipline and needs to be recognised as such	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
It is more than just managing people and tasks, it is about creating an environment in which collegiality and academic fellowship can flourish. Additionally it is quite feasible that they staff may be more qualified and have more publications.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
It a very different in many ways.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Yes, Education is not a business though this is the way education is viewed. It is a long term investment in the nation's economy and the whole of life costs and benefits need to be evaluated rather than a yearly balance sheet, important as this may be.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Due to the nature of employment contracts	<b>Different environment/culture</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
Nature and structure of the academic role	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Yes, because higher education should not just be seen as a factory conveyor, yes we should have quality systems and good ancillary support but proper leadership requires some vision and belief in the staff to deliver higher education and employable skills to students. Sometimes this requires a Head of Department to argue against a budgetary constraint.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Political Interference	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Leadership in education should not be driven by commercial nor financial motives. Educators - i.e. lecturers and those in education management - should be driven by the development of the student in a holistic fashion and by research imperatives.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Because the role of the educator in higher education is so diverse, with a multitude of responsibilities, which can lead to great job satisfaction or stress depending on the environment that is created by all, particularly the head of the department.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
I think that Heads of Dept. have to address a wide range of issues ranging from teaching to admin to research, alongside the various expertise of their staff. They also have a lot of responsibility for issues that are not directly linked to the classroom such as budgets etc so I do feel that the role is more complex than in other sectors.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
It is not businesslike	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
The ethos of education is different that business, therefore it needs to be looked at through a different set of lenses.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
It's a difficult economic climate that public sector are working in at the moment and I realise that a lot of decisions are based on funding and monies available to the Dept.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Non profit making	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Relationship between management and 'workers' should be collegiate at HE whereas in other sectors it is more authoritarian	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
It should be less adversarial and more cooperative - all seeking a common objective - less conflict than in other sectors.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Much broader context with many stakeholders and very different political and structural context	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Typically HOD's have to deal with a greater spread of academic and social issues than other areas of employment.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
Because a knowledge of academic processes are required.. However, business leaders would often make very good HODs because of the structured nature of the job.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Because of the service nature of the industry, the constraints imposed by being in the public service, and the need to control and nurture ego of many of the employees in the sector.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
It needs to be much more nuanced. The IR context dis-empowers managers so they need to be much more thoughtful/patient about how they get things done. The staff are a bunch of complex over-thinkers (that is what we are usually paid to be) with an opinion on everything- so managers need to be inclusive, draw in ideas, but ultimately cannot give staff/faculty a veto on progress. Finally as a service business the staff/faculty are the product so it is vital that they are happy, inspired, motivated and committed to the cause. Healthcare management is the only tougher show in town !	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
The fact that its not a profit making organisation, its distinct in its management and operations. Funding is largely dependent on the government, as such there is a lot of control and management is made to work with whatever budget that is allocated to them.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
It should not be profit driven even though increasingly budgets etc are part of the job.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
A greater emphasis on the social role of an education provider in an economy. Other sectors would have a greater emphasis on the economic contribution of their department.	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Different to private sector through nature of the employment contracts (limited carrot/limited stick)	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Public sector terms and conditions Unique nature of academia	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
<b>A changing landscape. (Total 53)</b>	<b>Different environment/culture</b>
Only in that academics will talk around why something should be done or not, they have the academic argument which sometimes is not effective. Less talking more doing.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Willingness to experiment and the need to trust staff in their own endeavours is paramount. Supporting innovation is often not for profit in the first instance	<b>Autonomous working</b>
leaders in higher education need to be able to understand what it takes to create and manage an autonomous team; while at the same time enabling individuals to excel at their particular specialism	<b>Autonomous working</b>
HEIs tend to be flatter in terms of management hierarchy and more peer-based. Multiple hierarchies exist in addition to formal management structures including academic silos. Decision-making is more difficult. resource allocation is difficult due to high level of fixed resources. People management more difficult given public sector nature of employment conditions.	<b>Autonomous working</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
Leader needs to be a facilitator	<b>Autonomous working</b>
In this sector, leadership should always be seen as Collegial (amongst peers) broadly sharing concern for the future of Third Level education in equipping Learners with Life Skills and not discretionary (dictatorial) as in the classic capitalist Employer/employee relationship.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
In the facilitation of autonomy and academic freedom	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Because you must allow staff greater freedom to be effective	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Staff are expert - the HoD needs to give the academic the support to express this expertise	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Managers in education may tend to have less direct authority over academic staff than managers in other sectors have over their staff due to the fact that the core duties and rewards of academics are negotiated at national level and to the fact that academic work, by its very nature, requires a high degree of staff autonomy. Therefore, influencing by communicating, by constructing a shared vision and by consensus building are even more important in education, perhaps, than in other sectors.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
The more mature the employees are the more they need to be empowered not 'tick boxed'	<b>Autonomous working</b>
The best staff are self-motivated and have a genuine interest in their own field. If something occurs to them at midnight on a Sunday, they will work on it. Such people ought to be supported and given plenty of leeway, not 'managed' or treated like interchangeable workers on a production line. They do not appreciate people of limited ability (but with good networks of cronies) telling them what to do.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Due to the degree of autonomy/independence required by staff for successful delivery	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Because collegiality/academic freedom/etc etc ensure a less-directive leadership style than in many areas. But that's a clear distinction. Less recognised, and so more important, is the fact that higher education environments tend to be highly-politicised environments, within which autonomy is valued, resources are limited and personnel change tends to be low (outside of quite junior staff). This facilitates the development of a political style of leadership (as distinct from functional, or objective-driven).	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Because of the autonomous way that most academic staff work, it's harder to keep on top of what their goals and achievements are and also it's difficult to generate an atmosphere of teamwork. Also, the HoD doesn't have much by way of "stick" to make changes.	<b>Autonomous working</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
Lecturing staff are like independent sole traders and it is often a challenge to get them to have a shared sense of purpose around the needs of students can be a challenge. Teaching/learning is a values based social practice and getting a disparate group of coalesce around an agreed value system is another challenge	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Because it needs to be community based and collaborative while still getting the job done.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
More autonomy of lecturing staff.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
You are engaging with a professional community who have autonomy and there is little that they can be 'told' to do therefore the leadership role in HE is more complex as you need to convince the team that the request is reasonable and of value to them/ the institute in order for them to engage with the request.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Quite often the staff are more qualified than the head of dept therefore he / she needs to have empathy with the staff, understand the concepts being taught and knit distinctive groups together achieving a synergy for the department. What makes this different to leadership in other business sectors.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
More freedom needs to be given to staff in education. Academic freedom is very important and cannot be achieved with someone 'looking over your shoulder' as can be the case in some industries	<b>Autonomous working</b>
The probability of dealing with staff of an equal academic status	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Corporate peers of HE academics are more subservient to their corporate leaders than HE academics are to their leaders. There appears to be more autonomy granted to academics. Leaders in HE are fundamentally constrained in their ability and/or willingness to discipline faculty members for the latter's behaviour that in the corporate world may be viewed as causes for suspension or termination. Corporate leaders cannot afford (financially, politically, and culturally) to have such employees remain in their organisations. HE leaders cannot afford (financially, politically, and culturally) to have such employees removed from their organisations.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Academics do not come under the day to day supervision of the HoD as each is an expert in their area.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Because lecturers are autonomous and there is a higher level of trust in the leadership relationship	<b>Autonomous working</b>
Often dealing with people who are used to working alone in a classroom environment and don't like to be told what to do! At the end of the day, HODs don't know exactly what goes on in the classroom environment and don't really have control over this.	<b>Autonomous working</b>

Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?	Theme (Content analysis)
More inclusive of ideas. Employers have more freedom to explore new avenues of working. Self motivation is a key aspect of teaching in higher education for staff therefore management need to encourage this.	<b>Autonomous working</b>
In the private sector you just have to do what your boss tells you. The Head of Department in my experience is much more open to meaningful collaboration with all staff (academic, technical and administrative). <b>(Total 28)</b>	<b>Autonomous working</b>
All leadership requires good communication and organisation skills to facilitate delivery of a product/resource in the most acceptable way possible. Whether that product/resource makes a profit or not is irrelevant.	<b>Communications</b>
It requires regular contact with Academic staff on key issues relating to staff and students and on progressing the way forward.	<b>Communications</b>
I have found that the HODs of graduate schools far more inclined to listen to their staff about strategic issues than this in undergraduate schools, especially if the staff members are only doing service hours to those departments.	<b>Communications</b>
There is far less contact with subordinates in the academic world than WOULD BE ALLOWED in the business world.	<b>Communications</b>
As I have worked in many organisations both educational and commercial, I feel there are many similarities. You need to understand the job and then do the job, grow with the business , involve and motivate staff, not annoy them, get everyone working as a team for the good of the organization. Know the business and where it is going, If hard decisions need to be made explain them to EVERYONE not just the few dominant characters! <b>(Total 5)</b>	<b>Communications</b>
A lot of responsibility but limited authority i.e., can't fire staff.	<b>Limited authority</b>
Is this not what this project is about? no hire and fire so you're there no matter how well or how badly you do -same as academic staff in this regard	<b>Limited authority</b>



Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?	Theme (Content analysis)
I have spent 17 years in private practice, a significant number of which at Director / Managing Director level. There is a distinct lack of effective management within the IoT Sector generally in my experience. There is no effective "carrot and stick" and the lack of same has resulted in a significant number of staff effectively being unmanageable. Also, many of the appointments made to "management" positions, i.e. HoD, HoS are internal and the persons appointed do not have the requisite experience or skills to manage.	<b>Limited authority</b>
Your ability to sanction staff is very limited. You cannot effectively sack any one.	<b>Limited authority</b>
HoD can be limited by what changes they can implement to improve teaching and learning. Management of academic staff by motivation and reward is not implemented - there is no distinction made between academic staff (good, bad or indifferent). Feedback from learners is not always incorporated into change, but managed by fire-fighting issues.	<b>Limited authority</b>
A HOD does not have the right to reprimand/ fire staff that are not performing.	<b>Limited authority</b>
Academics in leadership posts	<b>Limited authority</b>
Power roles are poorly defined. Heads of Departments are neither line managers or effective supervisors. they appear to do only the bidding of the Head of School regardless of the impact of those requests	<b>Limited authority</b>
Structure of higher education and accountability very different from some sectors e.g. private sector, unions present an additional challenge. Resources are limited as with many other sectors and where negative answers are given here it may not be in the gift of the HoD to support academic staff through professional development, either financially or through the timetable.	<b>Limited authority</b>
At HOD level, no real decisive power, really an administrative role, not found in private industry. There is no reward or reprimand for staff so there is loss of authority with respect to implementing change.	<b>Limited authority</b>
Head of Departments really don't have authority. They are generally not trained for leadership roles.	<b>Limited authority</b>
its mainly useless in terms of modern effective management best known methods,	<b>Limited authority</b>
Decision-making hindered by centralised authority.	<b>Limited authority</b>
In my experience, leadership in middle management in Institutes of Technology has become obsolete. As mentioned earlier, they merely implement arbitrary decisions made by the most senior management.	<b>Limited authority</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
The head of department role is confusing because for the most part it is a role that is taken up with staff timetabling and dealing with individual staff issues. the head of department role also seems to deal a lot with individual student issues. the leadership and development role is not obvious- at least not on a daily basis.	<b>Limited authority</b>
Budget constraints in a public service environment	<b>Limited authority</b>
More led by national policy/Department of Education, management in private enterprise might need to be more self-reliant and flexible.	<b>Limited authority</b>
If this question refers just to HoD level - ratio of professional level staff to HoD with no intermediate levels is very unusual. My answers reflect poorly on HoD and post is often filled by "yes men and women" but it is perhaps an impossible job . Questions exploring lecturers' attitudes to HoD role, lack of authority, perceived workload, concentration of power at HoS level in many IoTs could give an extra dimension to your findings.	<b>Limited authority</b>
Constraints in place from other tiers within the academic framework can limit the effectiveness of the HOD	<b>Limited authority</b>
Poor communication, very limited autonomy, have recruited staff without reference to independent interview panels, no data on budgets and their deployment, limited research effort, poor expression of goals, very limited feedback, do not set out policy positions or parameters, are selective in their staff deployment, do not exhibit reciprocal openness. Heads of Department are considerably down the food chain of leadership in the IOT sector, well after Presidents, Registrars, Heads of School, Head of Research, Heads of Development etc There is no sense from this questionnaire of the scope for leadership activity or processes and how they might be or are constrained by the holders of these named roles.	<b>Limited authority</b>
Resource constraints as a limiting factor Lack of clear structures for career development Performance feedback and review is not linked to staff/management development	<b>Limited authority</b>
Because they don't have the power to really deal with problematic employees	<b>Limited authority</b>
HOD is a no win position, balancing Academic Staff, Students, Management and admin staff all pulling in opposite directions without any real power other than timetabling ? Impossible as they have not carrots to give and no stick !!	<b>Limited authority</b>
<b>public sector more constrained (Total 24)</b>	<b>Limited authority</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
Private industry is more effective and is better at allocating scarce resources. There is no way of dealing with an ineffective manager in the public sector... in private sector an ineffective manager would be eliminated to another role or leave the company. There is no follow up for missed targets in the public sector. In private sector you would never get a department head who does not have any qualifications in the area, or even after a couple of years in the role does not understand the bigger picture.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Measurement of success is an issue. Lack of adequate resources.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Some people will be naturally effective from day one. Others will need time and experience. How do you quantify this?	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
From my experience working in Biomedical Sector, inefficient and ineffective leadership cannot be tolerated - in higher education ineffective managers can hide. (Equally poor lecturers can hide also). In reality students will still go to third level, degrees will still be awarded regardless of poor management.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
The points above seem to map onto a range of sectors here in Ireland. There are too many poor managers being appointed which indicates that selection procedures are either cosmetic or decided by the internal politics of the institution.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
due to the fact that it's public sector - it takes some of the control away from HODs, very difficult to fire staff under you! This gives staff a lot of power, which can undermine the authority of HODs.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
When I worked in industry, staff were reviewed by management and promoted based on their performance. Competency was rewarded. However, this is not the case in higher education; competency and performance are not considered when staff move up the pay scales. Leadership in higher education should be rewarding those staff that outperform their colleagues and should move away from the one-size-fits-all approach.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Typically HOD and senior management have no formal management qualifications or prior relevant experience in human resource management, financial management, strategic planning or customer service. It could be viewed that those that take up leadership roles in Higher Education do so because they are not content with their lecturing role.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
In other sectors of employment, particularly in the private sector, poor leadership seems to matter more, and poor HODs would not be allowed to remain in their jobs as is the case in IOTs. Although management (including HR) is aware of existing problems, they are not addressed.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
"As long as one student does well, then we've done our job." is not typical of successful businesses.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>

Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?	Theme (Content analysis)
Striving to our enhance our research profile is crucial to our aspiration to become the Munster Technology of Munster. This involves encouraging the taking up of PhD level of qualifications. My HoD, is not qualified for this, has shown no interest in the last year and in my view is incapable of he role going forward.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
It doesn't have to be effective in order for HODs to keep their position.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Because there are apparently NO consequences for any actions. Staff are pandered to excessively and then inequities are common place, this leads to resentment and a general lack of consistent approach. Within every dept there are different sets of rules/ expectations.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
In industry leadership is displayed in simpler terms i.e. success is easier to see, people move forward due to experience and skill not necessarily due to years of employment. Results are more tangible.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Academia has different outputs/metrics	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Unfortunately, yes. If the public sector were treated more like the private sector, where accountability and performance are measured then the leadership styles of HODs may improve.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
It is woefully lacking in HE. There are no consequences for anyone in failing to carry out their duties and obligations.	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Skills will be the same The goals will be different	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Unfortunately people are not sufficiently disciplined as part of the public sector. In industry people would face the threat of being fired! <b>(Total 19)</b>	<b>Measurement of success/failure</b>
Public sector mentally of not motivating, encouraging, praising and developing staff. They sometimes don't think that's their role. Ends up being nobody's role as a result.	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
As public sector it can be difficult to manage some staff as cannot motivate with bonuses.	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
HOD has no control over remuneration so rewarding people is challenging - there are few ways to recognise good performance and fewer ways to deal with poor performance, it is difficult to manage in a unionised environment, multiple understandings of leadership exist so it is difficult to know what leadership means in the IoT sector	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
The person needs a range of skills that include not just expertise in their area but vitally, appropriate managerial and interpersonal skills to bring very disparate people (that is individuals used to working autonomously in their own particular environments) together. This is too often lacking	<b>Motivation of staff</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
Because an academic leader does not directly impinge on the workings of staff (classroom teaching and assessment). Therefore they have to lead from the front in a much more motivational role.	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
Leadership in an academic environment is about motivating people that are probably as experienced/educated and intelligent as those in management positions. It is about creating a learning environment where staff members can develop themselves and work harmoniously with fellow staff members.	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
It requires both academic area understanding, people skills, capacity to motivate and also procedural/administrative skills	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
Often dealing with many individuals rather than groups of staff.	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
Leadership in higher education requires a belief in the value of academic achievement.	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
Leadership is identify how to and getting the best out of your staff	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
The aim is to get the best out of the people under you and to provide a link with higher management	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
It is permanent, and as such not effective in the long run. It should be awarded on a temporary contract with mid reviews involving staff and Heads of Schools (the same applies for heads of schools). It should also be for fixed terms of 4 years with the maximum of two terms in succession. This way it will motivate other people to take on extra administration and contribute to the strategic vision of the Institute. <b>(Total 12)</b>	<b>Motivation of staff</b>
Not sure	<b>N/A</b>
I don't know	<b>N/A</b>
Don't know. Have not worked in another area as big as an IT	<b>N/A</b>
It is distinctive in that its poor compared to the private sector	<b>N/A</b>
Yes and no. The concept of 'leadership' itself is ambiguous and problematic in this context - why was the word 'management' not used here? Higher education (public sector, private sector) shares characteristics with other sectors and in this sense it is not 'distinctive'. But it also has some unique characteristics. In this context, the appropriate approach to management/leadership is contingent.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
I have not work outside the HE sector, but suspect leadership qualities are transferable and fairly universal.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
The principles are the same: vision, expertise competency etc. A good leader should be able to lead a retail centre, factory or a college because the competencies are transferable	<b>Same environment/culture</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
All leadership traits should be demonstrated by effective leaders no matter what the discipline. The ability to plan/set goals, organise, lead/motivate and control are fundamental skills for all leaders. How much training is given at HOD level? Incumbents are often drawn from the lecturing body and may have no basic management training and are therefore unaware of the full extent of the role. The commercial skills that served those who come from industry may not be appropriate to the type of decision-making required by the organisation (E.g. autocratic V democratic styles).	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
Leadership suggests the power to influence, whatever the sector	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
Should not be any different from private sector/for profit organisations.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
A good leader will usually show a suite of very basic personal qualities and abilities that can be transferred to any area, e.g. ability to listen, interest in various aspects of core business in a department, ability to develop friendly and co-operative relationships with staff etc.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
Same principles of management and leadership apply	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
It's about managing people and resources effectively	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
Not in my experience but it ought to be.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
I don't think so, in my experience there has been no difference in sectors of employment. It always comes down to the individual manager, their leadership style, their personality, their ability to work with senior management, their own agenda career-wise.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
Managing people should be the same where ever the job is.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
Effective leadership relates to effective management or being able to get the most out of your employees whatever the employment sector.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
The fundamental requirements are the same	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
I think the same characteristics apply.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
Good leadership is integral to the leadership role in any organisation.	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
types of leaders are similar in HEIs and all other organisations and sectors some have great vision and objectives whilst others are merely manager managing a department not really leading it	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
Good leadership transcends the business boundaries	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
why should it be...we have managers, products and customers...we also have a dynamic marketplace!!!	<b>Same environment/culture</b>
<b>We should all strive to be the best of the best (Total 20)</b>	<b>Same environment/culture</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
Heads of department are often promoted based on academic achievements rather than an ability to lead and manage. I believe this results in ineffective leadership. There is usually little or no training in HRM and communication.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
As many heads of department are academics, many do not have the leadership and management skills.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
HOD's administer, they do not lead or manage. They are lacking in leadership skills.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
lack of effective communication and appreciation for frontline staff from senior management	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
Not meaning to appear over critical but there appears to be more of a distance to the front line staff at times. Not all HODs or HOS have experience of lecturing or lecture any hours within the class room and I feel this is a deficit, perhaps they may become more aware of the issues, student difficulties, lack of resources etc. that lecturing staff encounter.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
It's not industry and leaders should be well-trained in the workings of higher education before they interact with academic staff.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
Lack of managerial experience evident in most HoDs; Often best qualified and best candidates for job are unsuccessful in their application	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
Many academics I don't think are skilled in leadership, some in HOD positions excelled academically but do not have good leadership skills.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
Most HODs are not trained in planning, HR, strategy - role should be short-term and rotating	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
Similar traits required, possibly in different amounts, need strong diplomacy skills in academic environment given strong unions.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
The leadership and hierarchy structures in IoTs are apparently not competence or performance driven but based on administrative decisions. This is fatal on a long term.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
Academic leadership requires additional skills over and above those in the private sector. Academia has a very different set of core values and traditions. In my IOT we have little sense of this and seem to think that the way forward is some kind of commercialisation agenda.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
Academics end up as administrators using rather than develop skills	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
No coercive power, need to rely on persuasive powers/interpersonal skills to get things done	<b>Skill set of managers</b>
Most managers in education come from an academic background and have never actually studied a managerial course to know about leadership and motivation. They lack accountability and have a closed shop stifling debate.	<b>Skill set of managers</b>

<b>Distinctiveness of Higher Educational Leadership why?/why not?</b>	<b>Theme (Content analysis)</b>
<p>Leadership in higher education differs from other sectors in that you can be the leader of a department without necessarily being an expert in all areas of the department's activities. You could be from a business background, but have responsibility for humanities or languages or other areas outside your comfort zone. Leadership in higher education is also about leading individuals who are experts in their own field and accustomed to working independently as is the nature of teaching.</p>	<p><b>Skill set of managers</b></p>
<p>Much wider role (<b>Total 17</b>)</p>	<p><b>Skill set of managers</b></p>