

LEADerShip at a Glance

CHLNet's "Top Three" Suggested LEADS Readings for COVID-19¹

Haque A. The COVID-19 pandemic and the role of responsible leadership in health care: thinking beyond employee well-being and organisational sustainability. [Leadership in Health Services](#). 2021 Feb 8.

Summary:

This is the first of two papers on the theme of 'responsible' leadership. In this instance the authors argue that the unprecedented crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic has posed an enormous challenge for health-care organisations to find strategies to deal with the health and wellness of the provider workforce, and which is vital to their survival.

The health-care employees are the frontline soldiers to fight against COVID-19 pandemic. Currently, the authors argue, there is a lack of research regarding the conceptualisation of COVID-19 and its impact on health-care employees' well-being and their organisational sustainability.

The authors define responsible leadership as "a values-based and principle-driven relationship between leaders and stakeholders who are connected through a shared sense of meaning and purpose through which they raise to higher levels of motivation and commitment for achieving sustainable value creation and responsible change."

Extending the role of responsible leadership into the realm of an organization's 'strategic climate'—defined as "as employees' shared perceptions of an organisation's strategic policies, practices and procedures" -- they develop a multi-level conceptual framework to show the relationship between leadership practices to create a strategic climate and the direct relationship to employee (e.g., workers, nurses, and professionals) well-being and organisational sustainability. This model can be used to help address the challenges COVID-19 has visited on the health and wellness of organizational employees and clinicians.

The paper presents five testable propositions and highlights the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on employee well-being and organisational sustainability. The proposed conceptual model is a step forward to not only explore future empirical research but also it will help the health-care policymakers to take responsible initiatives to increase employee well-being and uphold organisational sustainability.

LEADS Link: Much of what is discussed in this paper related to the practices implicit in responsible leadership can be mapped to the expectations of leaders outlined in the LEADS framework. Their argument for aligning responsible leadership is in keeping with the use of the LEADS capabilities—especially those in the [Engage Others](#), [Achieve Results](#) domains--and their practice in organizations.

¹ As recommended by Dr. Graham Dickson (CHLNet Senior Research Advisor)

Maak T, Pless NM, Wohlgezogen F. The fault lines of leadership: Lessons from the global Covid-19 crisis. [Journal of Change Management](#). 2021 Jan 2;21(1):66-86.

Summary:

In this article the authors reflect on the role that leadership has played in the response to the global COVID-19 crisis. To them, “Responsible leadership represents what Joseph Rost referred to as a ‘post-industrial concept of leadership’. Its multilateral, relational focus stands in contrast to the *industrial paradigm* of leadership that has dominated scholarship from 1900 to 1990, and which is ‘rational, management oriented, male, technocratic, quantitative, goal dominated, cost–benefit-driven, personalistic, hierarchical, short term, pragmatic, and materialistic’

Using this concept, they discuss two major ‘fault lines’ of leadership: narcissism (driven by putting oneself and career before the needs of others), and ideological rigidity (a vigorous defence of existing beliefs, and attack on those who appear to threaten and undermine deeply held convictions despite the evidence to the contrary: i.e., vaccines). A fault line is a problem that may not be obvious under normal circumstances but could cause leadership to fail stakeholders and society at large in a defining moment such as a global pandemic. Using case examples from global political leaders the authors elaborate on these breaking points in crisis leadership and contrast them with the healing properties of leader compassion and mending forces of evidence-based decision making. They conclude their article with implications for responsible leadership research and practice.

Link to LEADS: LEADS is an evidence-based conceptualization of leadership: aimed at the goal of serving others through one’s leadership role in health care. In that sense, all of the capabilities speak to being ‘responsible’ leaders through developing relationships dedicated to that purpose. It rejects the narcissistic approach and encourages the use of evidence to shape leadership practice, not the self-serving behaviours for *Self*; nor adopting positions that simply reinforce one’s ideological view of the world. In a sense, LEADS is responsible leadership, and an antidote to the two fault lines described by the authors.

Martin-Anatias N. [New Zealand's success in tackling COVID-19: How Ardern's government effectively used social media and consistent messaging during the global pandemic](#). In *COVID-19 in International Media 2021 Aug 12 (pp. 139-149)*. Routledge.

Summary:

This chapter looks at what kinds of linguistic, conversational, and semiotic (gestures, images, and objects referred to) choices Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern (and her handlers and publicists) made that enable the New Zealanders (NZers) to feel safe during the first wave of the COVID=19 pandemic. To this end, the data was gathered from the PM’s personal social media account, a government Instagram account (@unitedagainstcovid19), brochures distributed by the government, and NZ national newspapers from March 26 to April 26, 2020. This study operates under the assumption that social media usage celebrates democratization and treats power as fluid and dynamic; not just located in, and the purview of, the formal authority of the Prime Minister’s office. It also considers the PM’s social media updates and @unitedagainstcovid19’s discourse as political statements delivered either officially or informally.

The chapter shows how—by choice of language, tools of delivery, tone of voice, and body language—social media messaging from the Prime Minister and her office emphasized both the imperatives implicit in dealing with the lockdown, i.e., being direct and straightforward when regulating NZers’ behavior

during the pandemic, while it also asks them to be caring and compassionate with one another. A bonus result is that it thus portrays herself as such as well.

The chapter goes on to describe in greater detail how the most powerful figure in NZ used her social media appearance to reduce, if not eliminate, the hierarchical power gap between herself and her fellow NZers during the COVID-19 pandemic national lockdown. Also, it unpacks how the discourse used by NZ government has encouraged collectiveness and highlighted humanity, as opposed to economics, in tackling this global pandemic. To this end, this study also highlights the writer's subjective perspective as an Indonesian writer currently living in NZ with some North American experience.

Link to LEADS: The first link of this chapter is to the 'Caring' dimension of the LEADS framework. Here we have a national leader who found the right combination of messages and medium to demonstrate not just the behaviours needed to ensure that the population operationalized the behaviours that would have the result of minimizing suffering from COVID-19, but did so by modeling caring and compassion for the population of NZ. She 'communicated effectively'—Engage Others—and 'mobilized knowledge—Develop Coalitions--and in the process grew her own credibility to govern on behalf of the country.