Multilevel and multisite leadership development from a leadership-as-practice perspective: an integrative literature review

Salla Lehtonen
School of Economics, University of Turku, Pori, Finland, and

Hannele Seeck
School of Economics, University of Turku, Turku, Finland and
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Abstract

Purpose – This paper reviews what has been written on leadership development from the leadership-as-practice (L-A-P) perspective, which views leadership as emerging in everyday activities and interactions of a collective in a specific context. This paper aims to deepen the theoretical understanding of how leadership can be learned and developed from the L-A-P perspective.

Design/methodology/approach – An integrative literature review was undertaken to review and synthesise what has been written on the topic in journal articles and scholarly books.

Findings – The importance of the context and the practices that are embedded in it is the most central aspect affecting leadership development from the L-A-P perspective. This places workplace leadership development centre stage, but several papers also showed that leadership programmes have an important role. Not only collective capacity building is emphasised in the papers, but the importance of individual-level leader development is also recognised.

Originality/value – The contribution of this study is twofold: First, it brings the currently fractured information on L-A-P development together to enhance theory building by providing a synthesis of the literature. Second, a conceptual framework is constructed to show how the L-A-P perspective on leadership development can take both leadership development at the collective and individual levels into account, as well as the learning that takes place either inside or outside the workplace. This study's results and framework show that the development has its own specific purpose and suggested methods in both levels, in both learning sites.

Keywords Leadership-as-practice, Leadership learning, Leadership development programmes

Paper type Literature review

Introduction

Lately, concerns have been raised about leadership development programmes failing to extend leadership capacity to meet the complexities of current organisational life (Beer *et al.*, 2016;

Day and Dragoni, 2015; Salicru, 2020). Leadership development theory and practice have been criticised for not focusing on the context where leadership is enacted (Gurdjian *et al.*, 2014; McCauley and Palus, 2021; Schyns *et al.*, 2013) and for concentrating on the individual leader's knowledge, skills, leadership styles and behaviours, instead of on enhancing collectives' leadership capacity (Bolden and Gosling, 2006; Denyer and Turnbull James, 2016; McCauley and Palus, 2021). We argue that the leadership-as-practice (L-A-P) approach to leadership development could potentially address these concerns, because seeing leadership as arising in collectives and as embedded in the context resides at the very heart of this perspective.

In L-A-P, leadership is viewed as emerging in a practice rather than as residing in the traits or competencies of individual leaders (Carroll *et al.*, 2008; Raelin, 2016a). Thus, L-A-P concentrates on the *doings* of leadership, on the everyday activities and interactions (Crevani and Endrissat, 2016) that involve "skilled improvised in-situ coping" (Chia, 2004, p. 33). Leadership moves from individuals to collectives because it happens in "the space between" individuals (Lichtenstein *et al.*, 2006) and emerges from the interactions within the context (Sergi, 2016). Consequently, L-A-P has profound implications for leadership development and learning (Case and Sliwa, 2020; Raelin and Trehan, 2015), whereby a radical re-design of leadership development programmes is required (Crevani *et al.*, 2010) and leadership development needs to be re-imagined (Crevani, 2018; Harrison, 2017; Raelin, 2016b).

The current paper's aim is to review the literature on leadership development from the L-A-P perspective in academic journals and scholarly books, thereby deepening the theoretical understanding of leadership development from the L-A-P perspective. A lack of earlier reviews and recent growth in L-A-P literature has provided momentum for this *integrative* literature review (Torraco, 2016) to synthesise what has been written on the topic. The research question is as follows:

RQ1. How can leadership be learned and developed from the L-A-P perspective?

We contribute to theory building in two ways:

(1) by bringing the currently fractured information on L-A-P development together; and

(2) by developing a conceptual framework that shows how the L-A-P perspective on leadership development can account for the development of leadership at the collective and individual levels, while also incorporating both leadership learning and interventions in the workplace and in programmes outside of the workplace.

This article begins by introducing the L-A-P view of leadership development and after that the methodology is described. In the Findings section, the results are summarised and reviewed, especially regarding what the articles consider the central aims of leadership development from the L-A-P perspective. A synthesis of the articles is provided in the form of a framework that identifies four domains of leadership development in L-A-P, each of which has a specific purpose. The Discussion and Conclusion sections of the paper introduce how this framework can be used for practice and further theory development on L-A-P leadership development, by providing avenues for further study.

Background for leadership development as a topic of study from the leadership-as-practice perspective

L-A-P decentralises leadership away from the individual, repositioning it as emerging in a practice involving a collective of people and non-human artefacts situated within a particular context (Kempster *et al.*, 2016; Youngs, 2017). The oft-claimed change this has for

leadership development is a turn away from the current mainstream approach, which concentrates on the competencies of an individual, here instead moving towards a more relational leadership construct (Denyer and Turnbull James, 2016), in other words, a turn from *leader* development to *leadership* development (Day, 2001). In addition, because leadership practices are embedded in a specific organised context and the social relations therein, this requires a form of knowing that is highly context dependent (Corradi *et al.*, 2010). This highlights the importance of workplace learning (Case and Sliwa, 2020; Kempster and Stewart, 2010).

In general, L-A-P is still in the early phases of development (Raelin *et al.*, 2018). It was inspired by a broader practice turn in social studies at the turn of the millennium (Crevani and Endrissat, 2016), especially following strategy-as-practice thinking (Carroll *et al.*, 2008). The L-A-P view is explicitly rooted in a constructionist paradigm (Carroll *et al.*, 2008; Raelin, 2020; Wolfram Cox and Hassard, 2018) and is based on a process perspective that defines leadership through future and direction (Crevani, 2018; Crevani *et al.*, 2010; Kempster and Gregory, 2017).

L-A-P is closely related to relational leadership. They both apply a process perspective to leadership and see leadership taking place as work is done and they overlap when a strong process/relational ontology is used (Crevani and Endrissat, 2016). Crevani and Endrissat (2016) defined the difference as linked to the focus. In relational leadership studies, the focus is on leadership as it emerges in the relations between individuals, typically taking the form of dialogue, whereas in L-A-P, the focus is wider, on practices in which leadership emerges through participating people and non-human artefacts. These non-human artefacts constitute spatial configurations and physical objects, for example, documents and computer programmes (Ropo and Salovaara, 2019; Sergi, 2016). The relationship between the views is so close, however, that some researchers consider L-A-P a part of relational leadership theories (Eva *et al.*, 2021). Critical leadership studies that discuss socio-materiality, including non-human influences on leadership (Ropo and Salovaara, 2019; Wolfram Cox and Hassard, 2018), are often closely related to the L-A-P perspective and some of these studies are even explicitly L-A-P (Case and Sliwa, 2020; Carroll, 2016; Sergi, 2016).

Currently, there is still limited empirical research on L-A-P (Kempster *et al.*, 2016; Raelin *et al.*, 2018), with less on leadership development from an "as practice" perspective, which is still in its infancy (Eva *et al.*, 2021). In spite of L-A-P's newness, there are indications that some leadership development practitioners have included practice approaches in their programmes (Carroll *et al.*, 2008). Often, these are mixed with other approaches that are ontologically very different (Denyer and Turnbull James, 2016).

Method

This paper reviews the literature on leadership development from an L-A-P perspective, using an integrative literature review technique to analyse, critique and synthesise the literature (Torraco, 2005, 2016; Elsbach and Knippenberg, 2020) and examine and analyse the main ideas and relationships (Snyder, 2019). The review type suits new, emerging research topics as it allows for both a narrower or broader scope for selecting studies (Torraco, 2016).

Searches were conducted in two databases – Business Source Complete (EBSCO) and Scopus – in October 2020 and January 2021. The search was time limited to 2000–2020, since the L-A-P perspective was created after the practice shift in social studies at the turn of the millennium. The Boolean phrases used were "Leadership-as-practice", "Leadership as practice" and "Leadership practice" in titles or keywords and also "leadership development" OR development OR learning needed to be mentioned. The searches resulted in 232 articles. We made the initial screening used based on title and abstracts and it led to the selection of 54 articles for full-text review. Based on the full-text review, only nine articles met the

inclusion criteria. Additionally, *Leadership* and *Management Learning*, two of the most influential peer-reviewed journals in L-A-P studies, were reviewed back to 2008, when "the first of the most influential documents" in the discourse was published (i.e. Carroll *et al.*, 2008). To complement the initial searches, an additional snowballing step (Efron and Ruth, 2018) was conducted for the identified articles to find earlier articles that might be relevant. To mirror this approach, the documents that cited the identified articles were also searched for in the Scopus database. See Figure 1 for details on the article identification process and the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

In total, 18 papers were selected for the final analysis. Of these, 12 articles explicitly applied L-A-P. To broaden the scope because of L-A-P being an emergent research topic (Torraco, 2016), the remaining six articles were selected because they targeted the development of leadership practice with ontological and epistemological assumptions similar to L-A-P, even if the relationship to L-A-P was not explicitly stated. See Appendix for a list of included papers.

Findings
The most agreed-upon idea in the reviewed papers seems to be the importance of context in L-A-P-based leadership development. This is not surprising, because L-A-P views leadership as situated practice and action (Carroll *et al.*, 2008). One of the most direct influences this has on the leadership development from the L-A-P perspective is the
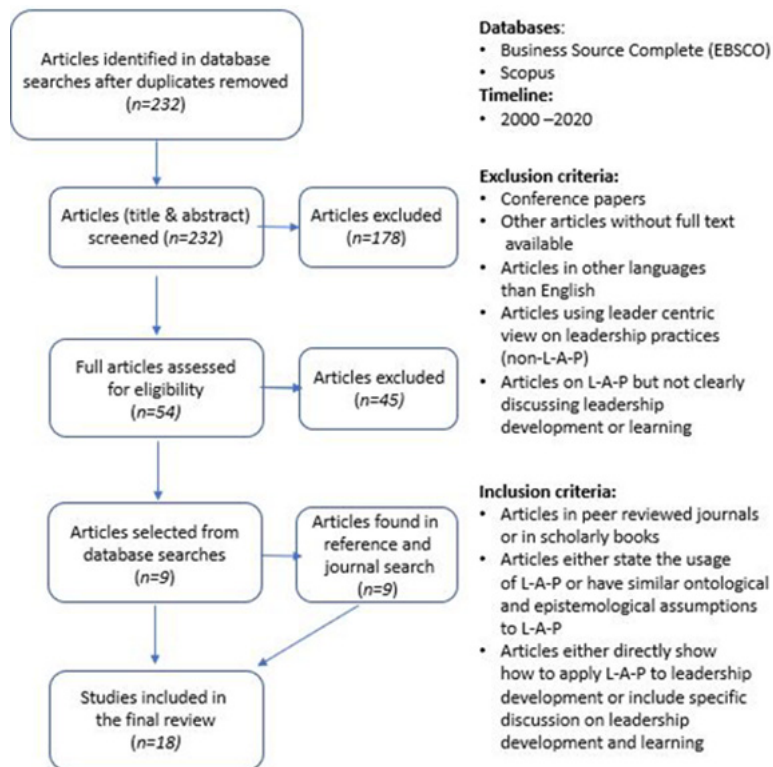

Figure 1.
Diagram summarising the study selection process

dominance of informal workplace learning and development. However, many of the papers still concentrate on, or at least include, a discussion about leadership development programmes. The aims of these programmes, as described in below, appear to be different from the current mainstream approach.

Because the focus of the L-A-P approach is practices that involve a collective of people, it is not surprising that, in most of the articles, the main focus relating to leadership development was collective capacity building. However, some of the papers concentrate on individual-level development and learning (Case and Sliwa, 2020; Kempster and Stewart, 2010) and several of those in which the focus is on collective capacity building mention that individual-level development is also important to the perspective (Carroll *et al.*, 2008; Carroll and Simpson, 2012; Gergen and Hersted, 2016). In contrast to leader-centric approaches, from the L-A-P perspective, a leader and leadership development are not seen as sequential steps towards improved leadership but are more entangled (Carroll and Simpson, 2012).

In the following sections, we will describe the aims of leadership development from the L-A-P perspective and introduce a framework that demonstrates that the leadership development from L-A-P perspective has its own specific purpose and suggested methods for both levels and for both leadership development programmes and workplaces.

The aims of leadership development from the leadership-as-practice perspective
Leadership practices are often so embedded in the context that both Carroll *et al.* (2008) and Raelin (2016a) follow the strategy-as-practice thinking of Chia and MacKay (2007), whereby much of leadership practice is viewed as unconscious or unspoken. Therefore, one of the aims of L-A-P development should be to bring the unconscious and unspoken into a more active, conscious and explicit domain. Denyer and Turnbull James (2016) also pay attention to bringing the tacit into the explicit domain in two of the four principles that they list for L-A-P development. In addition to tacit practices, Denyer and Turnbull James (2016) discuss on revealing the *leadership concept* (Probert and Turnbull James, 2011), which is the unconscious assumptions about leadership that every organisation has. Even if crises, failures or dysfunctions might help to reveal unconscious assumptions and practices (Carroll *et al.*, 2008) and are thus appropriate situations for leadership development interventions (Probert and Turnbull James, 2011), in the L-A-P leadership development, we must bear in mind that a much larger proportion of leadership practices are mundane but should not be ignored (Carroll *et al.*, 2008). Consequently, interventions and methods are required to work with these mundane and unspoken leadership practices as well. Carroll (2016) demonstrated through ethnographic observation that physical space, routines and artefacts can reveal a leadership practice and concludes that these "pivotal sources" should take central roles in leadership development. Kempster and Stewart (2010) noted in their co-created autoethnography that the method led to significant reflexive leadership learning. They follow Cunliffe's (2008) view of reflexivity as a dialogic and relational activity that allows taken-for-granted aspects of conventional day-to-day leadership practices to be explored.

Assuming that practices are embedded in context, the importance of *in situ* and informal learning in the workplace is highlighted. There seems to be a general understanding in the L-A-P perspective that leadership practice is learned predominantly through participation in local practice. In fact, informal workplace learning holds such a central role in the L-A-P perspective that Raelin (2018) claims that removing leaders from their context to learn leadership is pointless; instead, leadership development interventions should be arranged in the actual workplace amid those people (Raelin, 2011), spaces, routines and artefacts that situate leadership in real life (Carroll, 2016). Kempster and Stewart (2010) agree that

informal learning is dominant but state that formal learning also has a role. By studying extant texts about leadership development programmes, it became evident that the aim of these programmes is "not to teach leading" (Gergen and Hersted, 2016; Raelin, 2011), but rather to help learners to learn from experience and support leadership development and learning in the workplace, for example, by sensitising learners to their practices (Gergen and Hersted, 2016; Kempster and Iszatt-White, 2013). The link between the programme and workplace practices is critical in the view. Carroll and Simpson's (2012) study demonstrated how a group of executives used a virtual discussion forum as a liminal space to transition leadership development between a leadership programme and a worksite.

Collective capacity building aims to recognise leadership practices and develop the actual leadership practices in and for that collective's specific context (Crevani, 2018; Denyer and Turnbull James, 2016; Kempster and Gregory, 2017). Kempster and Gregory (2017) demonstrate with their study that even learning leadership *in situ* can be tacit and leadership practice development can happen through absorbing this tacit learning into everyday knowing. Tacit learning can happen through being and doing when in a collective participating in a practice, even without articulating the fact, but rather when it is something that is known without an explicit agreement that "when we do it next time, we do it differently" (Kempster and Gregory, 2017, p. 509).

However, it must be admitted that even if we see the leadership emerging in the practices of a collective, individuals have influence on them (especially those who hold power over others, as included in criticism of L-A-P; see Collinson, 2018). Case and Sliwa (2020) demonstrated through a co-constructive autoethnography that an individual can learn to influence the direction of leadership emergence and unfolding. Their study reveals, through an individual's longitudinal experience, how a person can, through conscious reflexivity, observation and experimentation, gain reflexive knowledge about one's own and other's contribution to the embodied and socio-material unfolding of leadership practices in a specific context. Based on Case and Sliwa, one aim of individual leadership learning from the L-A-P perspective is "to develop knowledge about one's own and others' embeddedness within leadership practice and to gain practical appreciation of agentic possibilities and constraints" (p. 552). Denyer and Turnbull James (2016) concentrate on collective capacity building but note that individual development should not be overlooked. They state that the aim of individual-level development interventions could be to ease the mindset shift of moving away from traditional views on leadership and to learn to manage the expectations placed on an individual because of traditional notions of heroic leadership.

Framework for leadership-as-practice leadership development
Using the reviewed articles, we created a framework that demonstrates how leadership development from the L-A-P perspective provides opportunities for multisite and multilevel approaches to leadership development (Figure 2). There has been a general movement from formal classroom leadership programmes to practicing leadership development in the context of work (Day, 2001); however, in practice, more effort is allocated to formal training than to supporting informal learning (MacGillivray, 2018). Development from the L-A-P perspective can be seen as an advocate for the latter, harnessing both formal and informal interventions to support *in situ* learning.

The main purpose of L-A-P leadership development programmes outside the workplace is to facilitate the development of capabilities to support *in situ* workplace learning and the development of leadership practices. Individual-level leadership programmes in our framework refer to public leadership programmes, for example, business schools. The intention in L-A-P-based programmes is not to teach how to lead (Raelin, 2011), as doing so would maintain the
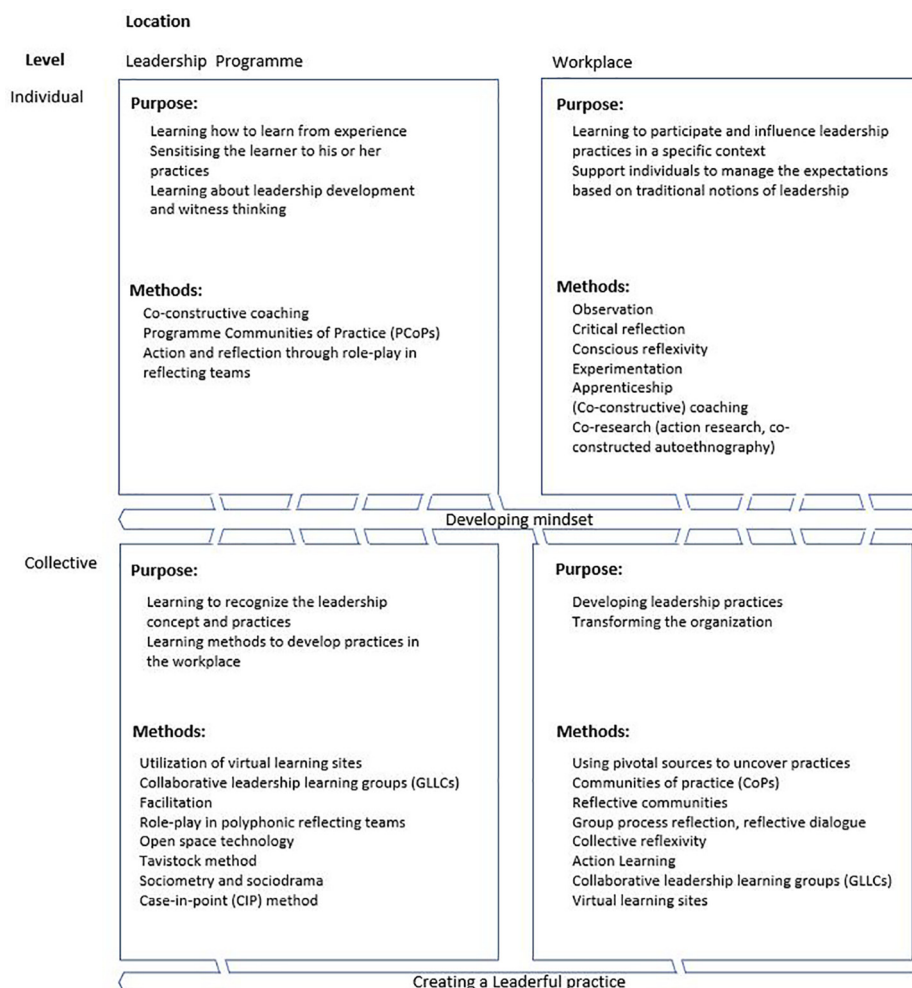
Location

| Level | Leadership Programme | Workplace |

Individual

Purpose:

Learning how to learn from experience
Sensitising the learner to his or her
practices
Learning about leadership development
and witness thinking

Methods:

Co-constructive coaching
Programme Communities of Practice (PCoPs)
Action and reflection through role-play in
reflecting teams

Purpose:

Learning to participate and influence leadership
practices in a specific context
Support individuals to manage the expectations
based on traditional notions of leadership

Methods:

Observation
Critical reflection
Conscious reflexivity
Experimentation
Apprenticeship
(Co-constructive) coaching
Co-research (action research, co-
constructed autoethnography)

Developing mindset

Collective

Purpose:

Learning to recognize the leadership
concept and practices
Learning methods to develop practices in
the workplace

Methods:

Utilization of virtual learning sites
Collaborative leadership learning groups (GLLCs)
Facilitation
Role-play in polyphonic reflecting teams
Open space technology
Tavistock method
Sociometry and sociodrama
Case-in-point (CIP) method

Purpose:

Developing leadership practices
Transforming the organization

Methods:

Using pivotal sources to uncover practices
Communities of practice (CoPs)
Reflective communities
Group process reflection, reflective dialogue
Collective reflexivity
Action Learning
Collaborative leadership learning groups (GLLCs)
Virtual learning sites

Creating a Leaderful practice

Figure 2.
Framework for L-A-P
development

individual leader-centric tradition (Gergen and Hersted, 2016). Rather, the aim of public
programmes is to incorporate learners' contexts and lived experiences into classroom activities
(Kempster and Iszatt-White, 2013) and thereby sensitise learners to the dimensions of their
practices (Gergen and Hersted, 2016) and help them to learn from lived experience (Kempster
and Iszatt-White, 2013). Following this and considering Schyns *et al.*'s (2013) work on critical
leadership education, the aim of leadership development programmes is for participants to
learn about leadership development, for example, witness thinking (Raelin, 2011) and ways to
support leadership development in the workplace. Kempster and Iszatt-White (2013) suggested
using co-constructed coaching pairs in classroom settings, with pairs reciprocally acting as
researcher and respondent to allow underlying assumptions that have shaped learners' situated
understanding of leadership practice and tacit knowledge embedded in their actions to surface
and help them to articulate that. Another suggested method is setting up programme

communities of practice (Smith *et al.*, 2019). Gergen and Hersted (2016) suggested that action and reflection through role-play in reflecting teams also has the potential for relational enrichment in individual-centred leadership development programmes.

Because L-A-P sees leadership as emerging in practices that involve a collective of people, the focus is most often on collective capacity building. Denyer and Turnbull James (2016) argue that, because attention should be placed on practices, processes, relations and roles in a specific context for L-A-P interventions, learning leadership requires discussion and collaboration with people who share that context. This can be achieved by creating an L-A-P leadership programme among teams that also work together (Raelin, 2011) and with participants at different levels of the same organisation (Gergen and Hersted, 2016). This is demonstrated in the lower left-hand corner of our framework in Figure 2. The programmes can facilitate team's recognition of leadership concepts and practices in their organisation and understanding of how to develop them in practice (Denyer and Turnbull James, 2016). To ease the transition between programmes and worksites, virtual learning sites can act as liminal spaces to support community formation, collaborative dynamics and work-like processes (Carroll and Simpson, 2012). Denyer and Turnbull James (2016) suggested setting up collaborative leadership learning groups (CLLGs) to enable learning and support and create collective leadership patterns in the programme and workplace. In CLLGs, the focus is on learning about collective leadership practices and collaboration; solving a practical problem is incidental. In these groups "learners commit to one another's learning and are mutually accountable for the learning outcomes" (Denyer and Turnbull James, 2016, p. 269). Gergen and Hersted (2016) suggested as a method a role-play in polyphonic reflecting teams with members from different levels of the same organisation and Salicru (2020) suggested as methods facilitation, open space technology, the Tavistock method, the case-in-point method and sociometry and sociodrama.

The main intention of workplace leadership learning for an individual is to learn to participate in leadership practices and eventually, to influence them (Case and Sliwa, 2020). Denyer and Turnbull James (2016) also claimed that individual support is required to manage the expectations regarding traditional leadership concepts. On-site leadership development methods that support individual leadership learning include observation (Case and Sliwa, 2020; Kempster and Stewart, 2010), apprenticeships (Harrison, 2017; Raelin, 2016a, 2016b), different types of reflections (Harrison, 2017; Raelin, 2016b, 2018) and experimentation and conscious reflexivity (Case and Sliwa, 2020). Co-constructed autoethnography has demonstrated its usefulness in accumulating reflexive leadership learning (Case and Sliwa, 2020; Kempster and Gregory, 2017; Kempster and Stewart, 2010). Coaching (Raelin, 2011, 2016b) could be used as support to manage heroic leadership expectations for the individual.

In the collective workplace format, learning leads to the development of actual leadership practices (Kempster and Gregory, 2017) and through them, organisations are transformed (Harrison, 2017). Revealing and working with the practices require that the participants reflect on their actions and practices together and this puts learning at the very core of L-A-P (Raelin, 2011). Carroll (2016) suggested that "pivotal sources", such as spatial configurations, artefacts and routines, should take a central role in leadership development, as they can help make leadership visible and enable discussions. To support learners in both observing and experimenting with their own collective tacit processes, communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991, cited in Raelin, 2016a; Harrison, 2017), reflective communities (Bohm, 1985, cited in Raelin, 2016a) or group process reflection (Raelin, 2016b) are suggested. In L-A-P, action learning is often suggested method for intervention (Raelin, 2011, 2016a, 2016b, 2018; Raelin and Trehan, 2015; Salicru, 2020) that involves an action learning team focusing on a

real-time organisational challenge and in so doing, individual and group learning occurs (Salicru, 2020). Utilisation of CLLGs (Denyer and Turnbull James, 2016) and virtual learning sites (Carroll and Simpson, 2012) introduced in collective leadership programmes are carried over to and set up in workplaces to continue to support collective leadership development in practice.

Even though we have drawn the levels separately in the framework for clarity's sake, in L-A-P, the interrelationship between the situated actions of individuals (micro-level) and different socially defined practices (macro-level) becomes intensely complex and entangled (Carroll *et al.*, 2008; Raelin, 2020). Thus, moving from leader to leadership development is not seen as involving sequential steps to achieve improved leadership practice, as in the mainstream approach, but rather as much more intertwined (Carroll and Simpson, 2012). To demonstrate the entangled relationship in our framework, we borrowed the concept of *mindset* from Carroll *et al.* (2008). Mindset here is a practice logic that draws attention to revealing and working with assumptions that drive leadership thinking and practice rather than to the behaviours caused by them (Carroll *et al.*, 2008; Carroll and Simpson, 2012) and therefore requires perpetual individual and collective reflexivity (Raelin, 2016a).

The final concept that completes the framework is *leaderful practice* (Raelin, 2011). Leaderful practice as a concept is closely related to L-A-P. Based on Raelin (2011), leaderful practice advocates democratic values, while L-A-P does not take an ideological stance. Organisations that aim for inclusive leadership can use collectiveness, concurrency, collaboration, compassion (Raelin, 2011) and co-creation (Salicru, 2020) to systematically co-create a community through "free expression and shared engagement" (Raelin, 2011, p. 196). To enable inclusive leadership, forms of engagement need to be developed that result in an increased collective action space and inclusive clearing for action; thus, the aim of leadership development should be the development of these leadership practices (Crevani, 2018).

Discussion
The purpose of this study was to review and synthesise the extant literature on leadership development and learning from the L-A-P perspective and contribute to theory building through the created framework by increasing the understanding of how leadership can be learned and developed. The provided synthesis can be used by both leadership development practitioners and academics.

Implications for practice
For leadership development practitioners, the framework provides guidance for redirecting the focus of leadership development interventions onto mundane practices and the relational aspects of leadership. The L-A-P perspective can add value to leadership development programmes by building a bridge between business contexts and programmes and concentrating on programmes supporting informal *in situ* workplace leadership learning and development.

Moving the focus on development interventions away from individual competency development and to wider capacity building around leadership processes may be challenging, especially because of the strength and persistence of the traditional heroic view of leadership (Salicru, 2020; Schweiger *et al.*, 2020; Schyns *et al.*, 2013). This is likely because of the predominance of individual-centric views in business schools (Collinson and Tourish, 2015) and widely within the business world (Alvesson and Jonsson, 2018). The heroic view of leadership might make it difficult for programme sponsors to accept a leadership development programme that does not concentrate on leaders' competencies and participants might have a hard time relating to other views on leadership, such as L-A-P

(Denyer and Turnbull James, 2016), which has two implications for leadership development. First, this highlights the importance that business schools include information on these non-heroic ideas of leadership, such as L-A-P, for their programmes and demonstrate the approach by involving the methods and purposes represented in the framework. Second, it could be beneficial to use a multi-perspective approach in leadership development interventions (Eva *et al.*, 2021), in which L-A-P would be one layer of leadership development interventions. In that case, the framework presented here would not only work for a purely L-A-P approach towards development, as it could also add to leadership development more generally by providing guidance to avoid overlooking practices and to direct focus onto the mundane and socio-materially relational aspects of leadership.

Implications for research: what next?

Because the majority of papers on L-A-P development or learning are conceptual, future studies should explore a variety of qualitative methods and provide empirical evidence for the claims made in previous articles and this framework. We suggest that practitioners and scholars experiment with the ideas presented in this framework in their development interventions and conduct studies on the participants' and facilitators' experiences. Being true to the epistemological assumptions of the L-A-P view, the trainings' influence on practices is best studied using ethnographic or phenomenological methods. Earlier work has proven that co-constructed ethnography also works well when studying leadership learning from the L-A-P perspective (Case and Sliwa, 2020; Kempster and Gregory, 2017).

The review of current studies also reveals a clear need for more studies at both, the micro and macro, levels. Because the L-A-P approach focuses on practices that involve a collective of people, it is not surprising that, in most of the articles, the main consideration relating to leadership development was collective capacity building; however, there is a dearth of studies on a collective's leadership development where the same collective is used as a research subject. In particular, longitudinal studies of these collectives would provide needed empirical knowledge. However, it is important that individuals and their influence are not forgotten in the L-A-P perspective either. An important contribution could be made by studies that concentrate on the entangled relationship and interplay between micro- and macro-levels in leadership development. An interesting addition would be including the organisational (meso) level to the studies and to this entangled relationship.

Conclusion

We conducted an integrative literature review on leadership development from the L-A-P perspective. The study contributes to the theory by demonstrating that the L-A-P perspective on leadership development has the potential to contribute to leadership development across individual and collective levels and through informal workplace learning and formal leadership development programmes.

The limitations of our study come from the limited number of empirical studies on the topic and the selection of the studies. Because of the highly diversified research on the practice view of leadership, we wanted to focus the study tightly around the L-A-P perspective to demonstrate more clearly what it can bring to the leadership development table. The selection of studies could have been different and we could have included more individualistic practice views or a close but separate stream of leadership practice studies in school contexts (as mentioned by Youngs in Raelin *et al.*, 2018). That study could be completed after the different research streams have stabilised. We hope that our work inspires other researchers to complete empirical studies on leadership development from the L-A-P perspective. This would help in gaining richer and empirically tested insights into the

contribution and value that the L-A-P perspective can bring to leadership development research and practice.

References

Alvesson, M. and Jonsson, A. (2018), "The bumpy road to exercising leadership: fragmentations in meaning and practice", *Leadership*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 40-57.

Beer, F., Finnström, M. and Schrader, D. (2016), "Why leadership training fails-and what to do about it", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 94 No. 10, pp. 50-57.

Bohm, D. (1985), *Unfolding Meaning*, Foundation house, Loveland, CO.

Bolden, G. and Gosling, J. (2006), "Leadership competencies: time to change the tune?", *Leadership*, Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 147-163.

Carroll, B. and Simpson, B. (2012), "Capturing sociality in the movement between frames: an illustration from leadership development", *Human Relations*, Vol. 65 No. 10, pp. 1283-1309.

Carroll, B., Levy, L. and Richmond, D. (2008), "Leadership as practice: challenging the competency paradigm", *Leadership*, Vol. 4 No. 4, pp. 363-379.

Carroll, B.J. (2016), "Leadership as identity: a practice-based exploration", in Raelin, J.A. (Ed.), *Leadership-as-Practice: Theory and Application*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 91-109.

Case, P. and Sliwa, M. (2020), "Leadership learning, power and practice in Laos: a leadership-as-practice perspective", *Management Learning*, Vol. 51 No. 5, pp. 537-558.

Chia, R. (2004), "Strategy-as-practice: reflections on the research agenda", *European Management Review*, Vol. 1 No. 1, pp. 29-34.

Chia, R. and MacKay, B. (2007), "Post-processual challenges for the emerging strategy-as-practice perspective: discovering strategy in the logic of practice", *Human Relations*, Vol. 60 No. 1, pp. 217-242.

Collinson, D. and Tourish, D. (2015), "Teaching leadership critically: new directions for leadership pedagogy", *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, Vol. 14 No. 4, pp. 576-594.

Collinson, M. (2018), "So what is new about leadership-as-practice?", *Leadership*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 384-390.

Corradi, G., Gherardi, S. and Verzelloni, L. (2010), "Through the practice lens: where is the bandwagon of practice-based studies heading?", *Management Learning*, Vol. 41 No. 3, pp. 265-283.

Crevani, L. (2018), "Is there leadership in a fluid world? Exploring the ongoing production of direction in organizing", *Leadership*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 83-109.

Crevani, L. and Endrissat, N. (2016), "Mapping the leadership-as-practice terrain: comparative elements", in Raelin, J.A. (Ed.), *Leadership-as-Practice: Theory and Application*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 21-49.

Crevani, L., Lindgren, M. and Packendorff, J. (2010), "Leadership, not leaders: on the study of leadership as practices and interactions", *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, Vol. 26 No. 1, pp. 77-86.

Cunliffe, A. (2008), "Orientations to social constructionism: relationally responsive social constructionism and its implications for knowledge and learning", *Management Learning*, Vol. 39 No. 2, pp. 123-139.

Day, D.V. (2001), "Leadership development: a review in context", *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 11 No. 4, pp. 581-613.

Day, D.V. and Dragoni, L. (2015), "Leadership development: an outcome-oriented review based on time and levels of analyses", *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 2 No. 1, pp. 133-156.

Denyer, D.A. and Turnbull James, K. (2016), "Doing leadership-as-practice development", in Raelin, J.A. (Ed.), *Leadership-as-Practice: Theory and Application*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 262-283.

Efron, R. and Ruth, D. (2018), *Writing the Literature Review: A Practical Guide*, Guilford Publications, New York, NY.

Elsbach, K.D. and Knippenberg, D. (2020), "Creating high-impact literature reviews: an argument for 'integrative reviews'", *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 57 No. 6, pp. 1277-1289.

Eva, N., Wolfram Cox, J., Tsea, H.H.M. and Low, K.B. (2021), "From competency to conversation: a multi-perspective approach to collective leadership development", *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 32 No. 5, art. no. 101346, doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2019.101346.

Gergen, K.J. and Hersted, L. (2016), "Developing leadership as dialogic practice", in Raelin, J.A. (Ed.), *Leadership-as-Practice: Theory and Application*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 178-197.

Gurdjian, P., Halbeisen, T. and Lane, K. (2014), "Why leadership-development programs fail", *The McKinsey Quarterly*, Vol. 1, pp. 121-126.

Harrison, R. (2017), "Leadership, leadership development and all that jazz", *Leadership*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp. 81-99.

Kempster, S. and Stewart, J. (2010), "Becoming a leader: a co-produced auto ethnographic exploration of situated learning of leadership practice", *Management Learning*, Vol. 41 No. 2, pp. 205-219.

Kempster, S. and Iszatt-White, M. (2013), "Towards co-constructed coaching: exploring the integration of coaching and co-constructed auto ethnography in leadership development", *Management Learning*, Vol. 44 No. 4, pp. 319-336.

Kempster, S. and Gregory, S.H. (2017), "'Should I stay or should I go?': Exploring leadership-as-practice in the middle management role", *Leadership*, Vol. 13 No. 4, pp. 496-515.

Kempster, S., Parry, K. and Jackson, B. (2016), "Methodologies to discover and challenge leadership-as-practice", in Raelin, J.A. (Ed.), *Leadership-as-Practice: Theory and Application*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 242-261.

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991), *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Lichtenstein, B.B., Uhl-Bien, M., Marion, R., Seers, A., Orton, J.D. and Schreiber, C. (2006), "Complexity leadership theory: an interactive perspective on leading in complex adaptive systems", *E:CO Issue*, Vol. 8 No. 4, pp. 2-12.

McCauley, C.D. and Palus, C.J. (2021), "Developing the theory and practice of leadership development: a relational view", *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 32 No. 5, art. no. 101456, doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2020.101456.

MacGillivray, A. (2018), "Leadership as practice meets knowledge as flow: emerging perspectives for leaders in knowledge-intensive organizations", *Journal of Public Affairs*, Vol. 18 No. 1, p. 1699, doi: 10.1002/pa.1699.

Probert, J. and Turnbull James, K. (2011), "Leadership development: crisis, opportunities and the leadership concept", *Leadership*, Vol. 7 No. 2, pp. 137-150.

Raelin, J.A. (2011), "From leadership-as-practice to leaderful practice", *Leadership*, Vol. 7 No. 2, pp. 195-211.

Raelin, J.A. (2016a), "Introduction to leadership-as-practice: theory and application", in Raelin, J.A. (Ed.), *Leadership-as-Practice: Theory and Application*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 1-17.

Raelin, J.A. (2016b), "It's not about the leaders: it's about the practice of leadership", *Organizational Dynamics*, Vol. 45 No. 2, pp. 124-131.

Raelin, J.A. (2018), "What are you afraid of: collective leadership and its learning implications", *Management Learning*, Vol. 49 No. 1, pp. 59-66.

Raelin, J.A. (2020), "Toward a methodology for studying leadership-as-practice", *Leadership*, Vol. 16 No. 4, pp. 480-508.

Raelin, J. and Trehan, K. (2015), "Action learning and the new leadership as a practice", *Action Learning: Research and Practice*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 127-130.

Raelin, J.A., Kempster, S., Youngs, H., Carroll, B.J. and Jackson, B. (2018), "Practicing leadership-as-practice in content and manner", *Leadership*, Vol. 14 No. 3, pp. 371-383.

Ropo, A. and Salovaara, P. (2019), "Spacing leadership as an embodied and performative process", *Leadership*, Vol. 15 No. 4, pp. 461-479.

Salicru, S. (2020), "A new model of leadership-as practice development for consulting psychologists", *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, Vol. 72 No. 2, pp. 79-99.

Schweiger, S., Müller, B. and Güttel, W. (2020), "Barriers to leadership development: why is it so difficult to abandon the hero?", *Leadership*, Vol. 16 No. 4, pp. 411-433.

Schyns, B., Tymon, A., Kiefer, T. and Kerschreite, R. (2013), "New ways to leadership development: a picture paints a thousand words", *Management Learning*, Vol. 44 No. 1, pp. 11-24.

Sergi, V. (2016), "Who's leading the way? Investigating the contributions of materiality to leadership-as-practice", in Raelin, J.A. (Ed.), *Leadership-as-Practice: Theory and Application*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 110-131.

Smith, S., Kempster, S. and Wenger-Trayner, E. (2019), "Developing a program community of practice for leadership development", *Journal of Management Education*, Vol. 43 No. 1, pp. 62-88.

Snyder, H. (2019), "Literature review as a research methodology: an overview and guidelines", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol. 104, pp. 333-339.

Torraco, R.J. (2005), "Writing integrative literature reviews: guidelines and examples", *Human Resource Development Review*, Vol. 4 No. 3, pp. 356-367.

Torraco, R.J. (2016), "Writing integrative literature reviews: using the past and present to explore the future", *Human Resource Development Review*, Vol. 15 No. 4, pp. 404-428.

Wolfram Cox, J. and Hassard, J. (2018), "From relational to relationist leadership in critical management education: recasting leadership work after the practice turn", *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, Vol. 17 No. 4, pp. 532-556.

Youngs, H. (2017), "A critical exploration of collaborative and distributed leadership in higher education: developing an alternative ontology through leadership-as-practice", *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 39 No. 2, pp. 140-154.

Further reading

Endrissat, N. and von Arx, W. (2013), "Leadership practices and context: two sides of the same coin", *Leadership*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 278-304.

Raelin, J.A. (2007), "Toward an epistemology of practice", *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, Vol. 6 No. 4, pp. 495-519.

Appendix

Paper	Type/methodology	(Main) Level investigated	Main site discussed	Leadership development methods suggested
Carroll et al. (2008)	Conceptual	Multilevel	Multisite	N/A
Kempster and Stewart (2010)	Empirical, co-produced autoethnography	Individual	Workplace	Observation (through access to various notable people through legitimate participation) Participation Co-produced autoethnographic exploration
Raelin (2011)	Conceptual	Multilevel	Workplace (multisite)	Action learning Coaching
Kempster and Iszatt-White (2013)	Conceptual	Individual	Multisite	Co-constructed coaching
Carroll and Simpson (2012)	Empirical	Collective	Programme	Virtual learning sites as liminal spaces to invite community formation, collaborative and relational dynamics and processes that connect to work
Raelin and Trehan (2015)	Conceptual	Collective	Workplace	Action learning
Raelin (2016a)	Conceptual	Collective (multilevel)	Workplace	Cognitive apprenticeships Understudy CoPs, reflective communities Action learning Action research, action science Cooperative inquiry Participatory (critical) research
Carroll (2016)	Empirical, ethnography	Collective (multilevel)	Workplace	Using actual spaces, routines and artefacts to make the leadership visible and to enable discussion on it Experimenting with other spaces, routines and artefacts to craft novel practices with support of "identity scapes"
Denyer and Turnbull James (2016)	Conceptual	Collective	Programme	Collaborative leadership learning groups
Gergen and Hersted (2016)	Conceptual	Multilevel	Programme	Rehearsal and reflection Role-play in polyphonic reflecting teams (to learn dialogue, get multiple perspectives and expand relational awareness of participants' practices)

(continued)

Table A1.
Overview of L-A-P development studies

Paper	Type/methodology	(Main) Level investigated	Main site discussed	Leadership development methods suggested
Raelin (2016b)	Conceptual	Multilevel	Workplace	Critical reflection Apprenticeships Group process reflection Action learning Reflective dialogue Peer mentoring Coaching
Harrison (2017)	Conceptual	Collective (multilevel)	N/A	Reflection and reflexivity Apprenticeships Communities of practice
Kempster and Gregory (2017)	Empirical, co-constructed autoethnography	Multilevel	Workplace	Co-research (e.g. co-constructed autoethnography)
Crevani (2018)	Conceptual	Collective	Workplace	N/A
Raelin (2018)	Conceptual	Collective	Workplace	Coaching Peer mentoring Apprenticeship Group process reflection Action learning using learning teams
Smith et al. (2019)	Empirical, grounded theory	Individual	Programme	Program community of practice (PCOP)
Case and Sliwa (2020)	Empirical, co-constructed autoethnography	Individual	Workplace	Observation Experimentation Conscious reflexivity
Salicru (2020)	Conceptual	Collective	Programme	Action learning The Tavistock method Case-in-point (CIP) method Sociometry and sociodrama Open space technology Facilitation

Table A1.

About the authors

Salla Lehtonen is a doctoral student in management and organization at the University of Turku, School of Economics. Her research interests include leadership development, collaborative learning and development of leadership practice. She gained hands-on leadership experience and a keen interest in leadership and learning during her earlier career in a multinational consulting company. Currently, she teaches topics related to leadership and organisational learning and development and helps organizations in facilitating leadership programmes. Salla Lehtonen is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: salla.lehtonen@utu.fi

Hannele Seeck is a Professor of management and organisation at the University of Turku. She is also permanently affiliated with University of Helsinki, Faculty of Social Sciences, as an Adjunct Professor. She has a PhD from the London School of Economics. Her work intersects social theory, communications, history and organisation studies. Her research concentrates on Foucault, governmentality, the global travel of ideas and HRM. She is the author of several books. Recent publications include contributions to *Organization*, *IJMR Management Learning*, *IJHRM* and *Business History*.