

**Political leadership in environmental change: influences on local leadership in
Dutch water management**

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1. Introduction

Processes of transformation, aimed at adaptation of environmental change, are often initiated in informal arenas where forerunners meet and breed. In order to connect such transformations to the existing socio-political context an adequate form of environmental governance is needed. This implies a key role for public decision-makers as gate keepers that can link an innovative policy proposal to the existing complexities of the government context in which social barriers, democratic obligations and the representation of existing routines that might be challenged by this innovation play a role.

This paper will focus on a radical change in the water management strategies of the Dutch south western delta area and specifically the re-salinization of the Volkerak-Zoommeer. In the light of ecological rehabilitation and safety from possible flooding the need to restore this artificially maintained fresh water basin to its former state and allow influence of marine dynamics has been articulated. These adaptations provide several challenges for finding alternatives for the supply and use of fresh water to existing agriculture and industry.

The role of local political leadership in the process of combining and synchronizing existing routines with innovations that require a change of these routines is regarded as essential. These connective capacities of leadership are subject to various influencing factors such as personal characteristics, the local and supra-local environment and institutional arrangements. In this article we will explore these influences and drivers behind leadership behavior.

Two models will be used to describe and analyze both the exercise of leadership as well as the particular influences that shape the actions of leadership in three empirical cases of leadership concerning the project Volkerak-Zoommeer (VZ). The first model consists of a typology of leadership that was specifically conceptualized for describing and analyzing leadership exercise in the public domain. Connecting innovative content with a process of stakeholders and decision-making mechanisms in a highly complex and networked environment takes many skills and competencies but above that it requires a certain daring. The public leader needs to act without the certainty of attaining the required public and political support for the innovative proposal. We therefore have positioned a third ideal type, daring leadership, within the traditional intra-organizational dichotomy of transactional and transformational leadership in order to be able to describe the characteristics of inter-organizational leadership in the public domain more fully. The second model provides an overview of influencing factors that shape the leadership exercise in the context of innovative and sustainable water management.

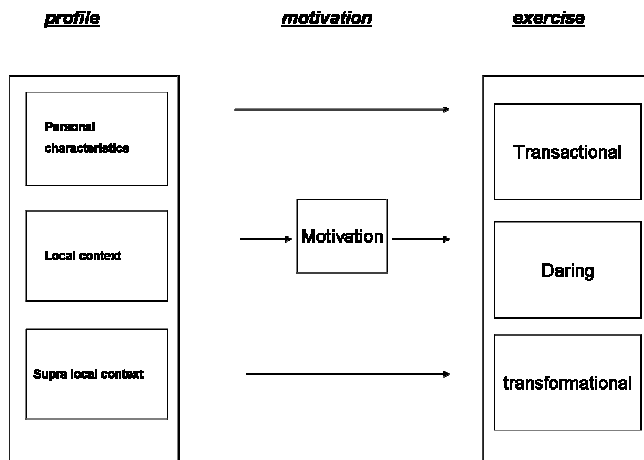
The goal of the paper is to identify key motivational elements that underlie specific leadership styles and behaviors in order to better understand the role of leadership in policy innovation, as well as its potential for the successful integration of innovative proposals into existing policy.

2. The exercise of leadership: A typology of transformational, transactional and daring leadership

In this section we will describe the different theoretical concepts that we have used to describe and analyze both the influences of leadership as well as the leadership exercise.

In figure 1 an overview of this framework is given. Roughly, the profile of leadership is formed by the personal characteristics of the specific leader and the contextual factors, both local and supra-local, within which the leader is operating. Leadership behaviors are then driven by these personal and contextual characteristics as well as by the motivations that are formed by these specific drivers.

Figure 1: general framework



In the description of the exercise of public leadership as it occurs in practice we make use of an ideal type classification of leadership behavior, the TDT framework. Based on the existing typologies used in descriptions of intra-organizational leadership (Bass, 1985, Bass & Avolio, 1994), this typology describes public leadership behavior in an inter-organizational context (Scholten, 2010).

The typologies of transactional and transformational leadership, described by Bass and Burns form a continuum in which a third type, daring leadership, is added. This type combines both transactional and transformational repertoires into a dynamic and daring form of leadership that attempts to connect new and alternative issues to existing processes of decision-making.

Based on several characteristics we will distinguish the three types of leadership behavior in detail. First a short description of the main characteristics of each type is given.

Transactional leadership is focused on marginal improvements, maintaining the quantity and quality of performance, how to substitute one goal for another, how to reduce resistance and how to implement decisions (Bass, 1985). This type of leadership is

essentially focused on the maintenance of the process of policy making. Activities are aimed at accommodating the current system and maintaining the existing status quo.

Transformational leadership is specifically focused on raising awareness about certain issues and convincing or motivating others to share the ideas on these issues. This requires a leader with vision, self-confidence and inner strength to argue successfully for what he or she thinks is right or good, not for what is popular or acceptable (Bass, 1985: 17). Apart from the strong association with proposals for change, this type of leadership seems to be more personal and value-driven. In terms of end and means, transformational leadership is generally more concerned about the ends in contrast to transactional leadership which is mostly concerned with the means.

Public leadership can play an important role in the process of pushing innovative proposals forward. Although a transformational style seems a convincing strategy to do this, in the context of public policy making, which is largely based on transactional processes, leadership styles that have a sole focus on the outcome have the risk of losing the connections with the processes through which decisions can be made. Especially in the case of inter-organizational leadership connections with the processes of decision making, the various actors in the process and the context within which policy proposals are to be embedded, need to be maintained. Connective capacities are therefore highly important in the public leadership role that is focused on combining existing processes of transaction with bringing in alternative issues that require adjustment of these processes. The necessity for such coupling abilities has been elaborated on by Uhl-Bien et al (2007) in the form of two co-existing types; adaptive and enabling leadership.

Capacities to create the stimulating environment in which connections can be made require a certain daring from the leadership position. This daring is needed to allow complexity and uncertainty into the policy system in order to enable possibilities for the development of creative and innovative solutions. Such an uncertain situation in the policy system is not without risk and can often be considered a bet on the public and political backing of the proposed plan. Marion & Uhl-Bien (2001) refer to this as: 'risking catastrophe to enable creativity and fitness.'

In creating a third type, daring leadership, a specific combination of transactional and transformational repertoires is combined with a bet on support in the coupling of alternative issues with the existing context of decision-making.

The three types are distinguished and described based on specific characteristics of the leadership exercise (see table 1).

Table 1: Exercise of Leadership in the TDT framework

| | Transactional | Daring | Transformational |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Focus of action</i> | Process | Connecting Content with Process | Content |
| <i>Main repertoire of activities</i> | Accommodating brokerage | Entrepreneurial brokerage & Advocacy | Advocacy |
| <i>Interaction form</i> | Cooperation | Coopetition | Competition |
| <i>strategies</i> | Dialogue, Decide and Deliver | Announce, Dialogue and Adjust | Decide, Announce and Defend |
| <i>Betting on support</i> | No | Yes | Yes |
| <i>Interest in the content of the decision</i> | Low | High | High |

Focus of action

In this category of leadership exercise we distinguish between actions that are primarily focused on either process (transactional) or content (transformational) or, in case of daring leadership, on a combining of both.

Transactional leadership is primarily focused on the maintenance of the decision-making process, the reduction of conflict and the following of procedures.

Contrary, transformational leadership is strongly content oriented and focuses primarily on the pushing of a proposal and the convincing of others.

In Daring leadership the focus of action is on combining the efforts to promote the preferred content with existing processes and deliberative routines. Actions are focused on influencing and directing toward certain policy content whilst simultaneously an openness and adaptability in the process of decision-making is created.

Main repertoire

The main repertoire of leadership activities in transactional leadership consists of accommodating brokerage. This type of brokerage has a solely facilitative role in the processes of decision-making. It is focused on maintenance of the policy process and keeping conflict levels low.

In transformational leadership the repertoire exists mainly of advocacy activities. Here, the leader is constantly trying to convince others that this is the most preferable option to address a specific issue of consequence (Scholten, 2010).

In a daring leadership repertoire iteration between process and content is central. Advocacy activities, used to promote the proposed policy direction and energize others to further develop ideas in the proposed direction, are combined with specific brokerage activities. These activities have a strong entrepreneurial quality based on pushing the proposal forward through cooperating and bargaining with other parties in the process. In contrast to accommodating brokerage which merely facilitates the various stakeholders in their mutual relation building and decision-making processes, this type of brokerage

actively uses stakeholder relations to enhance the position of the proposed policy and can therefore be labeled as entrepreneurial brokerage.

Interaction form

Transactional leadership structures the process of decision-making on cooperation and continuous interaction with the different stakeholders in which conflictive decisions are avoided by integrating all interests in a package deal. This interaction form often results in a compromise that addresses the various different opinions but risks a reinterpretation of the initial policy goals (Scholten, 2010).

The transformational form of interaction is characterized as competitive. A preferred proposal is pushed forward and put to compete with possible other ideas or interests (Teisman, 2001). The manager operates based on exclusion and avoids package deals because this makes things too (needlessly) complex (Edelenbos et al, 2009).

Daring leadership is attempting to create a balanced process of competition and cooperation in the interactions between stakeholders in which the policy direction is fixed beforehand but the various different aspects and ideas get room to compete in order to generate creativity and mutual understanding in a cooperative search for solutions that concur with the policy direction. Such a combined interaction form could be characterized as 'coopetition'.

Strategies of decision-making

A transactional communication strategy is strongly focused on dialogue between the different stakeholders in the project. Decisions are resulting only from the process of communication and need to encompass the views of all participants. This strategy can be characterized as a Dialogue, Decide and Deliver (DDD) strategy.

Transactional leaders focus on controlling the policy process and therefore apply regulated openness for the environment to their project. The process is open to all parties but the involvement of stakeholders is organized through strict procedures and rules of conduct. Decision-making in a transactional style is directed toward a compromise. The leadership role is focused on accommodating the discussion and debate between stakeholders eventually leading to a decision that is supported by the majority of involved actors (Edelenbos and Klijn, 2006), yet risks a reinterpretation of the initial policy goals.

A transformational communication strategy is characterized by the relative absence of dialogue. The desired solution is decided upon in a more or less unitary fashion, without consultation and deliberation. This decision is then announced to the environment and defended from opposing arguments or misgivings (Beierle and Cayford, 2002; Quah and Tan, 2002). This strategy can be characterized as a Decide, Announce and Defend (DAD) strategy. As a result the decision-making process in transformational leadership is closed for the whole range of stakeholders. Only those actors that have sympathy for the proposed policy or can be convinced to share the vision are actively involved. Although this can be convincing, a transformational orientation might push for a proposed solution too hard, and risk ending up with a lack of public and political support.

Combining both strategies in a daring leadership style leads to an advertising strategy that announces an issue of consequence in the form of an explorative proposal and invites to a dialogue between all stakeholders which can lead to an adjustment within the fixed boundaries of the proposed policy direction. Such a style can be characterized as an Announce, Dialogue and Adjust (ADA) strategy. In the combining of both repertoires daring leadership expresses a clear policy goal and accompanying direction and attempts to combine this with a joint effort of exploration with stakeholders to determine how the proposed concept can be brought further. In the decision-making process the leader alternates between moments of exploration and fixation. In such a combining of fixating achieved consensus on partial results and further exploration of the following steps, the decision-making is being shaped.

Betting on support

Betting on support is dimension of leadership that is specifically important in the public domain. When focusing on an issue of consequence and promoting a specific innovative proposal that combines the issue with the existing context of policy making a step beyond daily routine is taken. In an attempt to push the proposal further and connect the innovative ideas to the existing policy arena the role of public and political support is crucial.

In the initial phases of the policy process it is unclear whether the necessary support can be found.

A transactional approach leaves little room for pushing such a proposal. The process oriented transactional style can only function within the boundaries of existing commitment to a certain issue. Without the assurance of support a transactional leader can not initiate a process.

Leadership that goes beyond transactional behavior and focuses attention on a specific issue in the form of a proposal without the assurance of support for such ideas can be regarded as betting on public and political support. Such leadership exercise requires daring.

Interest in the content of the decision

Generally the transformational leadership type is accompanied with a high interest in the content of the specific outcome of the decision-making process.

Oppositely, the transactional type is mainly occupied with process maintenance. In this style the process is the denominator of the specific content.

A daring type of leadership is also accompanied by a high interest in the content of the proposed decision and specifically tries to connect this content with the existing context.

3. Influences on leadership

In the investigation of factors that influence or shape local leadership behavior, this article uses a conceptual framework based on an existing model to study local political leadership and map key elements that are of influence (Sweeting, 2002). We have enriched this model with valuable contributions from the works of various authors that have developed similar and related concepts on leadership and the motivational factors that influence specific leadership behavior (John & Cole, 1999; Taylor, 2008; Scholten, 2009). The framework consists of three major components; personal characteristics, the local environment and the supra-local environment. These components form a profile of influencing factors on the motivations and the actual behavior of the leader.

The package of motivations that partly shapes leadership behavior is characterized by great complexity. Before we describe these complex motivations, we will first have a closer look at the profile of influencing factors.

Personal characteristics

Personal characteristics form the first component. Psychological characteristics, personality, traits and skills are stressed as an important factor in many leadership theories and typologies (John & Cole, 1999; Burns, 1978; Kets-de vries, 1996). Firstly, this component is made up of the personal traits and *skills* to display distinct strategies and tactics in the policy process. Another important part of this component is formed by the individual leader's *preferences and priorities*. In this category we identify the personal drivers for leadership behavior that are dependent on personal commitment and corresponding values to the proposed policy (Taylor, 2009), personal views of managerial responsibilities and political ambitions (Schlesinger, 1966). In relation to this we examine whether these characteristics encompass a *propensity* for leadership behavior congruent with one of the ideal types.

Local environment

In this category we firstly identify the direct political environment. Direct influence can be expected in the close interaction with direct delegate colleagues, political parties, the provincial council and also other leading figures in the direct political environment. Local stakeholders that have a direct relation to the proposed policy are a second characteristic in this category. Furthermore, the local environment includes the specific characteristics of the region and the specific issues that are on the local agenda for which the leader is the responsible representative.

Supra-local environment

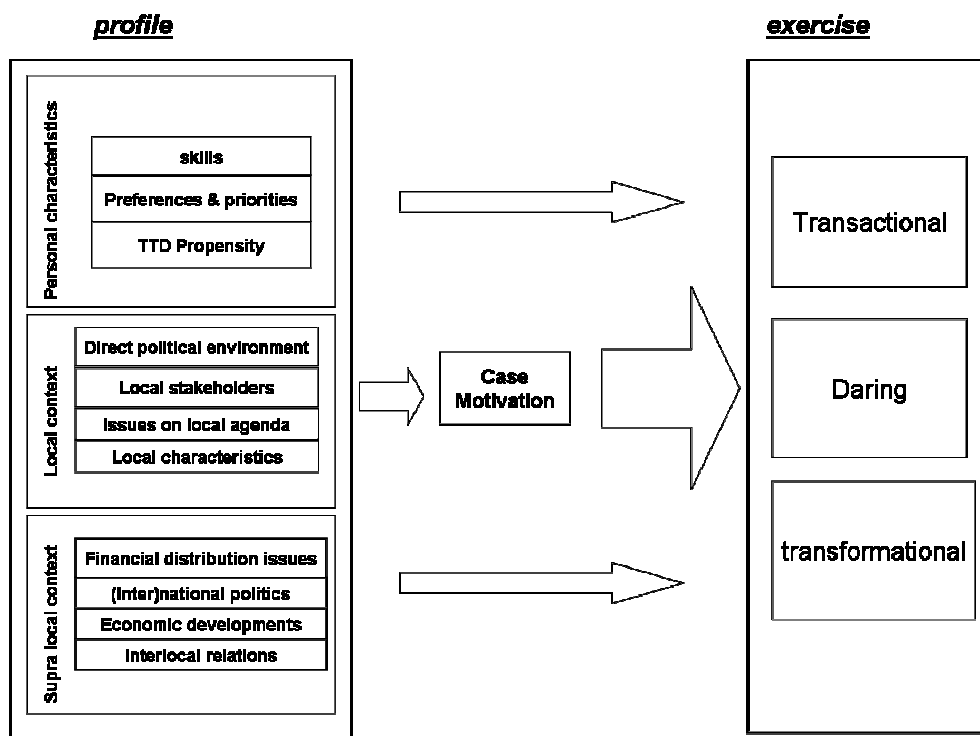
The supra-local environment consists of the broader context within which leadership is exercised. Policy decisions and happenings on the national and international level, economic developments, election results or developments in the public opinion are examples of the influential factors in this category. Another important factor is formed by the issues of financial distribution that concern public as well as private parties on local, regional and national levels.

Due to the interconnectedness of the water system, changes in the management scheme have an influence on a much larger scale. The project therefore involves three provincial governments as well as the National Government which has the ultimate responsibility for the specific water system. Apart from these public organizations, a multitude of other stakeholders are involved and may experience potential benefits from the implementation of the plans. It is expected that if benefits are shared, so are the costs. Yet, the identification and distribution of costs and benefits can be a difficult process that can have a profound influence on the implementation process and the role and subsequent exercise of leadership.

The interconnectedness of water issues is not only of influence on the financial distribution issues but has a profound influence on every step of the governance process. Inter-local relations between the various parties based on the interconnectedness of water are therefore also an important factor influencing the leadership exercise.

The three components described here form a constellation of influencing factors that shape the motivations of leadership as well as the actual leadership behaviors which are defined in TDT-terminology (figure 2).

Figure 2:



In the following sections we will use this model to describe and analyze the leadership of three provincial delegates in a multiple case study on water governance issues in the Dutch Southwestern Delta region. One of the main projects in the region concerns the Volkerak Zoommeer (VZ). The VZ is an artificial fresh water basin which suffers severe

ecological degradation. Proposed solutions to this problem are found in a salinization of the water, which has profound effects on the local stakeholders. Before giving a more elaborate description of the VZ project, we will first give an overview of the methods that were used to gather and analyze empirical data in the VZ project.

4. Methods

Three cases of individual leadership were selected based on the role of three provincial delegates in the project VZ: Zeeland, Zuid-Holland and Noord-Brabant. The three provinces are connected in the project VZ due to their location, adjoining the Volkerak-Zoommeer.

In the describing and analyzing of the three individual leaders and their specific contexts a qualitative multiple case study design is used. To capture the richness of individual settings and understand how actors act and think within their specific contexts, a case study approach is highly appropriate (Yin, 1994).

The empirical material in this study has been obtained from two sources. Firstly, the main part of the data has been obtained through semi-structured interviewing. This type of interviewing allows for openness and dynamics and is considered the most appropriate tool in explorative research designs (Babbie, 1995, Corbin & Strauss, 2008). These interviews have been conducted in two rounds. The first round focused on the direct circle of public servants, process facilitators and other colleagues in the project that surround the individual leaders in this study. Semi-structured interviews of one to one and a half hour were undertaken. The second round consisted of interviews with the three public leaders that are the focus of this study. A total of 14 qualitative in-depth interviews have been carried out.

Contributory to this, observations during public meetings concerning the decision-making process of the VZ project have been carried out.

Furthermore, a document analysis was undertaken. This included documents such as policy papers, technical reports and notes of meetings. This document analysis has been used to reconstruct the various events in the process and forms the basis for the case description in this article.

The interviews were recorded, transcribed and subsequently processed with the software package MAXQDA. The transcripts have been analyzed through selective coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The process of coding has been based on the conceptual model of leadership influences and exercise described in figure 2 and table 1. The various components of the leadership exercise as well as the profile of influential factors are used as codes to group and structure the utterances from respondents. In the establishing of patterns in the data using codes, special attention was given to the various factors that form the drivers and motivations for a specific leadership exercise. Text segments that give the most expressive, colorful or pronounced description of the component behind the code are also used in the empirical description that follows in the next section.

In addition to the codes that were derived from the conceptual model, alternative codes were created to capture possible other factors that popped up from the empirical research but were not preliminarily conceptualized.

5. Descriptions

5.1 The VZ case

The south western part of the Netherlands consists of a large delta area in which Europe's largest rivers find their way into the North Sea. In this densely populated area safety against floods has always been an important issue. The constant building and improving of storm and flood barriers proved to be difficult and expensive. A solution was found in the closing of the main river estuaries. This solution is widely known as the 'delta works'. Due to its enormous size the plan was intended to be implemented in phases, spanning many years. A hazardous flood in 1953 created a sense of urgency that led to a much faster implementation of the project.

The delta works were intended to protect large areas that had been prone to frequent flooding and soil salinization. All but one of the estuaries were sealed off by storm barriers, sluices and dams which created a highly compartmentalized, and highly controllable, delta area.

Besides the safety measures, the dams in the delta were functional in the controlling of the water levels in the Rhine-Scheldt connection, that formed a direct route between the ports of Rotterdam and Antwerp. They further functioned as means to stabilize the environment for agriculture in the provinces of Zeeland and West-Brabant. Due to the dam structure a number of fresh water basins came into existence. These basins formed a possibility for intensive agriculture in an area that had been historically unfit for cropping. The Volkerak-Zoommeer (VZ) is formed out of two of these basins which are connected through the Rhine-Scheldt corridor.

Problems

Although the delta works have been regarded as a wonderful piece of engineering, it appears that it is not the solution it once seemed to be. Over the past years a steady decline in ecological diversity and water quality have been identified in almost all parts of the delta region. Even the once so innovative sluice construction in the eastern Scheldt has resulted in an unforeseen decline of marine sedimentation. Apart from ecological degradation due to this decline, the process is also counterproductive regarding flood prevention since the natural accretion of land in a natural situation is now reversed into sand depletion due to the technical measures that have been implemented.

In order to create a more ecologically sound environment in the delta and enhance adaptive capacity to rising water levels due to climatic changes a change in the management strategy is needed. The former perspective of extreme control needs to be changed toward a management style that allows the return of estuarine dynamics in the Delta area.

In order to manage the problems in the delta an administrative body consisting of delegates of the three provincial governments directly affiliated with the delta, the local

water boards as well as the ministry of water. This body of public parties, supported by a project team, has created a management programme that should encompass solutions for all the major problems in the delta area. A very important part of this solution program is formed by the VZ. Since it is an area that connects the three provinces and local solution strategies in one province have possibly profound influence on the other provinces, the VZ project has become central in the dynamics of decision-making.

The VZ project

As a result of the deployment of storm barriers and dykes in the eastern Scheldt, two large fresh water basins connected by the Rhine-Scheldt corridor formed the Volkerak-Zoommeer. The basin receives fresh water from several rivers and canals. Due to the high concentration of nutrients in the water as well as the marginal outflow due to the dams the basin is highly eutrophicated. As a former estuary the bottom soil is rich in phosphates which flow into the water during the summer season (MER waterkwaliteit VZ, 2010).

These circumstances culminate in an immense outburst of algae during the summer period which severely destabilizes the ecosystem and creates a major impediment on the local communities. The decay of algae results in a toxic residue that leads to a high mortality of fish and bird species and results in skin and stomach problems for humans. The water is very low on oxygen and emits a horrible smell.

From 2002 onward the administrative council for the VZ together with the national water authority have investigated possible solution strategies with the ambition to have found and implemented a solution by the year 2015.

After intense research it appeared that a re-salinization of the basin in combination with a reintroduction of some of the original tidal flows would be the only viable solution. Such a solution strategy would be much more costly and intensive than what was initially hoped for.

However, the proposed solution fits very well with the changing paradigm in Dutch water management based on the idea that less human control and more space for water dynamics in riverine and maritime areas can provide more safety as well as a growth in ecological landscape quality.

Local agriculture is very dependant on the availability of fresh water in the region and uses the VZ as a source for fresh water. The re-salinization of the region could pose a threat to the agricultural industry on the islands. An alternative supply of fresh water is necessary to continue agricultural production in its current form.

In the period of 2005-2009 a decision-making process that involved a large group of stakeholders has lead to a proposal for re-salinization on the condition that alternative supplies of fresh water are being established (Stuurgroep Zuidwestelijke Delta, 2009). In 2009 the proposal faced a new challenge. The re-salinization of the VZ would pose a threath to the adjacent 'Hollands Diep' (HD), a large fresh water basin that forms a major source of fresh water for agriculture, horticulture and industry in the Rotterdam Harbor, all major players in the economy of the province of Zuid-Holland. Due to the frequent opening of the sluices in the Rhine-Scheldt corridor large quantities of salt water would flow into the HD. Above this, the HD has already been confronted with a project of its own. In the light of ecological rehabilitation of the delta area, plans are made to make a small opening in the storm barrier that separates the basin from the sea on the western

side. A controlled influx of maritime dynamics and possibility for fish migration would strongly enhance the regions vitality. However, an expected influx of sea water has resulted in the replacement of fresh water inlets toward the east. Now with a salty VZ a new influx of salt water is to be expected coming from the east and is experienced as a threat.

This has led to a further development of the proposal for the VZ in which a re-salinization can only be implemented after an establishment of alternative fresh water supplies as well as the implementation of technical solutions that reduce the eastern influx of salt water in the HD with at least 90 percent.

The proposal has been further developed and in cooperation with the Dutch national ministry of Water and public works in order to find solutions for both implementation demands. The leaking of salt water into the HD could possibly be prevented with an experimental design for regulating water flows and dynamics. This design is being tested and final results are expected in 2011.

In relation to the demand of an alternative water supply, both measures for water supply and measures to save water are being explored.

5.2 The role of individual public leadership in the Volkerak Zoommeer project

In this section we will describe the leadership behavior of the three provincial delegates that have a key role in the VZ project. A case description is given of every individual delegate based on the delegate's actions and behaviors within the context of decision-making concerning the VZ project. This so-called exercise of leadership is described and then further clarified through a conceptual lens using the TDT framework. Directly following the description of leadership exercise a description of the various personal and contextual opportunities and constraints is given in order to analyze the leadership exercise and shed a light on the motivations for the displayed leadership behavior.

Case 1

The exercise of leadership in the Volkerak-Zoommeer project

The leadership exercise of this delegate has been undergoing a radical change in recent years from a rather uninterested and inactive position toward a highly committed and decisive role in the process of the southwestern Delta and specifically the VZ project. In this moment of change the delegate has put in many efforts to gain the chair position of the committee that is responsible for the South Western Delta. The VZ project is one of the key projects in the proposed plans for this area.

This resulted in the fact that she is now a leading figure in the policy process. An administrator of the provincial government of Brabant remembers:

“In that specific week she has been calling our delegate almost every day to make sure that she would be getting the chair position”.

The delegate shows an intention to couple the plans for the VZ project with the interests of the larger delta area and specifically with the interests of the involved stakeholders in her province. As such the focus of her actions is on connecting the content of the VZ proposal with the existing processes, which is consistent with daring leadership behavior. Generally her leadership style can be described as trying to convince others with an energetic and dash leadership exercise.

She wants inspiring results and when she believes she knows the ins and outs, she starts to convince others. She has a lot of energy and inner drive.

Consequently, advocacy is a dominant factor in her repertoire. This tendency toward advocacy behavior sometimes has negative effects in the case of the VZ project where so many different opinions and interests collide. The delegate herself is aware of this and refers to this in the context of the VZ project as follows:

‘My personal weakness is that if I personally believe in a proposal I want others to believe in it too! But oftentimes that is not the case. This makes it very difficult to deal with.’

The difficulties of such as style were also experienced in the general interaction with other parties which is initially characterized by a competitive form. One of the informants points out that:

'The power in her style is more articulated through conflict than through connectivity'

It is important to note that, although in practice the delegate often has the tendency toward a competitive interaction and a Decide, Announce and Defend behavior, the overall aim and strategy in the VZ project can be characterized as a daring leadership style in which the announced and initially defended idea is eventually subject to dialogue and can as such be adjusted to the various different opinions within the parameters of the proposed policy direction. The delegate describes this as follows:

Communication in this process is in two directions. And those that object the proposed policy must eventually be able to find that their objections have had an influence on the process and are as such embedded in the eventual decision.

Furthermore, the delegate shows an intention to couple the plans for the VZ project with the interests of the larger delta area and specifically with the interests of the involved stakeholders in her province. In this process the delegate attempts to combine openness toward stakeholders with decisiveness.

"You need to always stay open minded to the ideas and input of others and to the fact that these might change the initial viewpoint or proposal, but this can not prevent the necessity of reaching a decision in a timely fashion.

A visualization of the exercise of leadership using the exercise table describes a hybrid leadership behavior which has a daring orientation but simultaneously involves many transformational elements in the practical outcome of the leadership exercise.

Table 2: the leadership exercise of delegate 1

| | Transactional | Daring | Transformational |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Focus of action</i> | Process | Connecting Content with Process | Content |
| <i>Main repertoire of activities</i> | Accommodating brokerage | Entrepreneurial brokerage & Advocacy | Advocacy |
| <i>Interaction form</i> | Cooperation | Coopetition | Competition |
| <i>strategies</i> | Dialogue, Decide and Deliver | Announce, Dialogue and Adjust | Decide, Announce and Defend |
| <i>Battling on support</i> | No | Yes | Yes |
| <i>Interest in the content of the decision</i> | Low | High | High |

With the sudden change in interest for the VZ project and the assuming of a leading role in the policy process, the delegate displays a daring attitude and takes a bet on support in the pursuit of success in this difficult project which is faced with a lot of opposition. Although her direct political environment is not all convinced of the plans for the VZ project, she continues to push forward and states that:

‘The mobilizing of power to convince them is needed.’

She also shows a high interest in the content of the proposed plan and uses this knowledge of the ins and out of the plan to ensure the interests of the stakeholders in Zuid-Holland are being looked after.

In the next section the context of leadership and its relations with the leadership behavior are elaborated further.

Influences

With a large urban area and many connections with other urban provinces in the so called ‘Randstad region’, the provincial government of Zuid-Holland is traditionally focused on the urban region whereas the VZ project is located in the periphery of the province. Above that, the provincial government had its hands full with a neighboring Delta project, concerned with the opening of the sea sluice in the waterway of the ‘Hollands Diep’. This explains the marginal initial interest in the project VZ.

Only recently the attention for the VZ project has awakened. Especially since predictions have shown that a salinization of the VZ would lead to a severe leaking of salt

water into the Hollands Diep fresh water area. In this area many of the fresh water inlets for local agriculture as well as the water supply for the more northern situated greenhouse industry. Apart from that the Rotterdam harbor industries also obtain their water from this area. With an opening of the sea sluices on the western side of the HD and the emerging possibilities of salt leaks at the eastern side of the HD, many stakeholders feared being caught in the middle. The local farming and glasshouse industry as well as the various other industrial activities in the harbor region are very strongly relying on the availability of high quality fresh water.

These developments lead to a heightened interest in the project and opposition came from many parties. Especially the agricultural organizations and water boards created a strong lobby that reached even to the national government. Also within the provincial government many parties felt that although the VZ project would contribute to the implementation of the ecological policy agenda and would solve a local problem, its disadvantages for the region were too big.

Furthermore there are many other projects that are considered to have a higher priority so the choices for projects and accompanying political priorities were subject to debate. This debate is accompanied by a lot of competition for projects, funds and fame within the board of delegates.

'In this situation I have to deal with my colleagues which are also my competitors. If you push for your ideas and have a little success and media exposure then this creates sentiments with the others that make things difficult.'

In this situation it is not easy for the delegate to obtain the needed political support in the pushing of the VZ proposal. When this article was written, two political parties (one of which is the delegates own party) were skeptically awaiting the test results of the technical measures to prevent salt leaking.

Despite the obstructions within the local environment, the delegate saw many opportunities to solve a problem for the local communities and make sure that the interests of the province and its stakeholders are being looked after. Apart from this motivation her personal preferences also play a role according to the interviewees:

'Personal ambition might also play a role here. In her last administration she was responsible for a major project with many challenges and lots of media attention. When she returned for a second period someone else already confiscated that project and so she searched for a new challenge. She found it in the chairmanship of the South Western Delta. As chair she is the one that can speak with the Minister. And the other two can't. These personal characteristics do play a role'

This high level of ambition and the desire to be a champion shows to be a strong driver for leadership behavior.

According to her direct environment the delegate has a strong, convincing and somewhat provocative style that enables strong leadership in the political sphere. However, such a style impedes the relations with local stakeholders. This is seen specifically in the interactions with the farmer community:

The delegate can't really relate to these people and vice-versa. The farmer organization in Zuid-Holland keeps its distance and remains skeptical

Nevertheless, a deliberative campaign in 2009 with many discussions amongst all stakeholders resulted in a situation in which the majority of stakeholders has agreed to possible salinization of the VZ provided that the salt leak is reduced to a minimum and alternatives for fresh water supply are accommodated.

The role of leadership is interpreted as a responsibility to contribute to society and not just be reactionary and conserving. With this interpretation of the leadership function in a very skeptical and unwilling local environment a bet on support is clearly taken. Also in the light of supra-local contextual factors such as financial distribution issues, a daring attitude is being displayed. The financial distribution issues play an important role in regard to the province of Zuid-Holland. The provincial government has a limited budget and many priority disputes. At the same time the project VZ has the least direct benefits for the province but the negative side effects of salt leakage are expected mainly on its territory. The province of Zeeland is also struggling with their financial issues and the province of Brabant is reluctant to contribute financially because in their view it is a national responsibility to finance this project. As we have seen the national economy is unstable and due to political changes it is unclear whether the innovation in the delta area will be a national priority.

The delegate has an ambiguous role in the processes related to the other provinces. As chair of the steering committee south western delta she has a much stronger focus on the process of decision-making making sure that all interests of all parties are articulated and accounted for. At the same time however she needs to act as the delegate of Zuid-Holland representing the interests of her province and prioritize these next to the interests and ambitions of the other parties in the policy process.

In the interaction with the other leaders that are involved in the VZ project, some difficulties can be indicated. Her dash and provocative behavior has proven difficult for the equally ambitious delegate of Brabant and their mutual relation is known to be somewhat tense:

They call each other very often but can't seem to get along very well. Of course they won't criticize each other in public but within the organization it might surface now and then.

Analysis

In case 1 we see a hybrid leadership behavior in TTD-terms. Here a difference exists between wanting and doing: the delegate would like to have a leadership style that is comparable with the daring type, yet is clearly aware of the fact that she often has a transformational tendency in her day to day leadership exercise. This is also the case in the specific leadership exercise concerning the VZ project.

Therefore it seems that personal characteristics of the delegate play an important role in this exercise of leadership and can be of stronger influence than the preferences she might have concerning this specific exercise.

From the interview data it can be concluded that a personal ambition and a desire to score and contribute to society as well as the desire for the accompanying public attention plays an important role in the specific leadership exercise of the delegate. The factor of ambition can thus be regarded as a strong driver in the leadership exercise of this delegate. It has been a motivation for daring decisions and an accompanying daring leadership style.

The ambitious move toward chairmanship of the Delta committee has proven to be a strong boost for her leadership position. However this move had its negative effects on the role of her colleague delegate of Brabant. In his case it is shown that ambition can also be a de-motivator in specific situations. We will illustrate this further in the following case of leadership.

Case 2

In the second case we have encountered a peculiar exercise of leadership in which ambition once again emerges as an important driver for leadership behavior. Yet, the empirical findings show that it can have both a motivating and demotivating effect. First a description of the leadership exercise is given. Then the personal and contextual background which forms the motivational foundations of the exercise are being explored and analyzed.

The exercise of leadership in the Volkerak-Zoommeer project

The leadership exercise in the project VZ of delegate Hoes has been far less intense compared to his colleagues in the project. Initially he put some effort in the project but later on his role has been overshadowed by absence.

His initial effort is characterized by a transformational style of leadership. During this phase a public meeting was held to discuss the problem of fresh water supply to the region of the VZ project. The delegate's repertoire of activities consisted mainly out of advocacy behavior in which a proposed solution was pushed forward. With the display of a decisive and convincing decision-making strategy it was hoped followers could be found and as such the meetings would give birth to immediate results.

He started the process of deliberation with stakeholders by announcing the results of research reports about the possible solution strategies concerning the alternative fresh water supply and attempted to push the proposal that was provided by his department based on these reports. One of the process facilitators during this period describes it as follows

“We wanted to start with an orientation of stakeholder opinions but Hoes had different ideas on that. He believed everything was sorted out and solution strategies could be presented and put into action. He wanted actions that lead to results. If there is no immediate result to focus on, he won't act.”

A transformational leadership style could also be found in the strategies of communication and the interaction with other parties in the policy process.

“In this case I think the delegate is not so interested in listening, he will be more apt to send out his message.”

This message contained the proposed solution strategy and was communicated in a style that can be characterized as a Decide Announce and Defend strategy. The proposal was treated as the preferable decision and as such announced and defended. In that specific exercise of leadership the involvement of stakeholders was closed for those that had possible other opinions. This competitive interaction form resulted not in the emergence of followers. The group of stakeholders that were present at the meeting didn't agree with the delegate and demanded a process of deliberation about the possible solutions.

With this outcome the delegate reoriented his focus and attention and decided to put little further effort in the project. This led to a period of absence of the delegate in the decision making process.

“..He thought it could be arranged in two meetings, but when it appeared to take longer, he sent his subordinate to attend the meetings. We haven’t seen him since.”

Summarizing the exercise of leadership using the exercise table we can clearly observe a transformational leadership exercise in this specific case.

Table 3: The leadership exercise delegate 2

| | Transactional | Daring | Transformational |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <i>Focus of action</i> | Process | Connecting Content with Process | Content |
| <i>Main repertoire of activities</i> | Accommodating brokerage | Entrepreneurial brokerage & Advocacy | Advocacy |
| <i>Interaction form</i> | Cooperation | Coopetition | Competition |
| <i>strategies</i> | Dialogue, Decide and Deliver | Announce, Dialogue and Adjust | Decide, Announce and Defend |
| <i>Betting on support</i> | No | Yes | Yes |
| <i>Interest in the content of the decision</i> | Low | High | High |

The element ‘focus of action’ remains empty. Due to the decision to refrain from an active involvement in the policy process it is concluded that the delegate’s actions were not convincingly focused on either facilitating the process or pushing for specific content. Efforts to connect process and content were also not undertaken.

‘I am more interested in the main issue. And others tend to focus on the problems and side issues. Well, that probably all needs to be solved but I leave that to others. I am holding on to the main issue.’

The delegate’s interest in the specific content of the decision is considered low. In the project VZ his attention has been focused on the possibilities for achieving direct results and making possible decisive moves.

‘Hoes doesn’t like to complicate things, he wants to reach decisions.’

When results were not directly available the delegate left the process in the hands of his subordinates and the process facilitators and concentrated his efforts on other things. A bet on support for the initially proposed content is therefore also not made.

Influences

The province of Brabant has been the initiator of the process concerning the VZ project. Two previous delegates have been involved in this process, before it became a responsibility of delegate Hoes. In the local environment years of policy preparation and participative processes have paved the way for a possible implementation of the VZ project. There is no substantial resistance against the plans and the arranging of a stable freshwater situation in the region is highly appreciated since the local agriculture depends heavily on the availability of high quality fresh water. The local stakeholders are participating in the process of finding suitable fresh water solutions.

In his previous administration delegate Hoes was responsible for economy. After elections in 2007 Hoes became responsible for ecology and subsequently the VZ project. In this moment the chair for the delta committee which is supposed to change every two years and had been held by the previous delegate of Zeeland, became available for new leadership. Delegate Dwarshuis claimed the role of chair and Hoes, who was new in the field and had no initial interest in the content of the plans, agreed to this. He also allowed Hamelink to be the chair of the BOKV. These developments lead to a less prominent position for Hoes in the policy process concerning the VZ project.

The delegate is known for a style of leadership that could largely be characterized as transformational. There is however an important difference with the transformational ideal type in the sense that this leader has no direct focus on the content of the VZ proposal. It is a style that uses transformational elements such as advocacy, strong persuasive skills and charismatic presentation but is generally focused on obtaining results in the policy process. The actions of this delegate are mostly focused on pushing a proposal and subsequently drawing the conclusions and making the last decisive move toward implementation. The specific content of a proposal is secondary to the achievement of results.

I am not at all interested in a discussion about whether a stream is supposed to pass a village on the left or the right side. Let others do that. I am interested in the main outline of a policy, not in the details.

This characteristic feature of his leadership style is well known in his working environment, especially concerning the VZ project.

I once heard him make the statement that he really wasn't interested in the VZ project. He was just interested in solving policy problems.

Another characteristic feature of this delegate is his tendency to eclectic leadership behavior. Today he can push a proposal very strongly into a specific direction whereas tomorrow he might make a complete opposite move. This specific behavior was

also encountered in a personal interview in which the delegate first stated that the salinization plans for the VZ project were highly important:

If I have one goal in this project, it is salinization.

But when asked later on if he could be an ambassador to the VZ plans, which are basically built on the premise of salinization, he stated:

No, because if I would say yes then I would imply to be able to defend a plan that I do not agree with.

This eclectic style makes him highly adaptable but also has a negative side because eventually it is said to lead to distrust and cynicism.

He has great skills to convince. Yet, some people in the provincial government are cynical about this because they feel that if push comes to shove in another arena, he might suddenly have a completely different story. They believe that what is achieved today might be broken down again tomorrow.

Personal ambition can be regarded as a major driver behind the day to day choices of the delegate as well as the specific leadership exercise in the case of the VZ project. With a less prominent position in the VZ project and the knowledge that the initial ambition for decisive action could not easily be reached without further deliberation, the project turned out to be a low priority for the delegate.

What I have noticed is that Hoes has many priorities which he finds more important than this project. Due to other priorities he has not attended meetings that were initially scheduled specifically based on his agenda.

There is some indication that the delegate's behavior and choice of priorities is based on a political ambition to become active on the national level. This became more eminent when the national government found itself in an impasse that led to new elections.

With the breaking of the national cabinet we have seen that the delegate's agenda became more and more preoccupied with national politics.

Just after the recent national elections in which the liberal party, of which Hoes is a member, received the majority of votes and were privileged to form a new national government coalition, the delegate has officially announced to decline participation in the upcoming provincial elections and as such make himself available for other responsibilities and challenges.

As we have already pointed out in case 1, the mutual relation with the equally ambitious and prominently behaving delegate of Zuid-Holland can be somewhat tense:

I find it difficult to work with leaders such as Dwarshuis. They keep bringing the whole world in the equation. And tell everyone how very difficult it is for the province of Zuid-Holland.

Analysis

A very remarkable detail in the leadership exercise of Hoes is the combination of a transformational style with a lack of focus on the content of the proposal. This can be explained when taking in to account the personal preferences and characteristics of the delegate.

Firstly, his personal preferences are more focused on economic developments and not at all on environmental policy and ecological rehabilitation. Above that the empirical material shows that regardless of content, the delegate is striving for decisiveness and has a strong ambition to score. Therefore his initial interest in the VZ project can be explained as reaching for a potential possibility to score. When it became clear that the process was still far from reaching a successful decision, the delegate turned his interest toward other priorities. Furthermore, Dwarshuis had been able to secure the most prominent position in the project which left Hoes with a relatively marginal role. So here the same ambition that initially lead to pushing the proposal and announcing the decision, finally turned into a de-activator in the project and a choice to put his energy in a more nationally oriented perspective.

Thus, the personal characteristic of ambition can be regarded as a main driver behind leadership behavior in this specific case. Above that the lack of a personal identification with the plan is an important factor.

Although the general local context shows hardly any signs of possible obstructions in bringing this proposal further, there are some other contextual factors that also play a role in the shaping of the leadership behavior. The motivational aspects of ambition interplay with contextual factors such as the interaction with the other delegates and in particular the division of roles in the decision-making process. A further contextual factor that had a combined influence on the leadership exercise is the need for more deliberation that was articulated by the stakeholders in the process. Also, the opening up of potential possibilities on the supra-local level played an important role.

It can be concluded that leadership behavior in this case is a result of the interplay between personal and contextual factors in which the personal characteristics can be identified as the main drivers for the leadership exercise.

Case 3

The exercise of leadership in the Volkerak-Zoommeer project

Hamelink is considered an important figure in the process of the VZ project due to his commitment to the content of the plans.

Hamelink is important because he strives for realization of this project. He sees an intrinsic need for salinization.

With his instatement as delegate of Zeeland, Hamelink took up the chair position of the BOKV and initiated the revival of this assembly in order to bring the VZ project further in a regional cooperation. His focus of action can be described as daring since he is focused on connecting the content of the proposal to the existing context and the mechanisms that are involved in the decision-making process. In a personal interview the delegate states:

Personally I would say that content should be primarily important, yet support for this content is indispensable. Therefore, the process is of great importance. So it is my goal to create a good balance between them.

In this act of balancing content and process a tendency toward accommodating brokerage behavior is recognized by several respondents in the interviews.

'Hamelink has a very careful and conscientious role in the process of decision-making.'
'He's a man who tends to seek the middle of the road'
'He is more reactionary than an innovator'
'He wants to keep everyone in the process on board'

Another example of this process accommodating style can be found in the interaction form. Here, this leader uses a non-competitive style, which is mostly focused on stimulating and preserving cooperation between the various parties in the process. Brokerage activities are not entrepreneurial but process facilitating. In the interactions with the neighboring province, he has already in a premature stadium declared that he will not push the proposal and strive for the chosen policy direction in case the experimental measures to retain the salt leak into the Hollands Diep would fail. It can be expected that re-salinization of the VK would then meet lots of opposition from neighboring province of Zuid-Holland. Here an emphasis on the content of the plan is considered less important than the process of decision-making and the preservation of a low conflict level in order to keep all parties involved in the interaction.

In his overall strategies this leader displays an openness and flexibility in the communication which is congruent with a daring leadership style. He doesn't push his own position at the costs of other arguments yet at the same time remains focused on a distinct policy direction. He puts in a lot of effort to engage stakeholders in the decision-making process.

'He took the initiative to ask the involved farmers what would be the best next step in their opinion'

'It was his idea to form alliances of stakeholders that can operate together and find possibilities to cover the costs for the planned innovations'.

However, it seems questionable whether a distinctively daring leadership moment of decisiveness in which a fixation of partial results is established, is reached as well.

'Hamelink has been a very good leader when it comes to the decision-making process and hearing all the stakes and opinions, yet I think it would be good if he would sometimes be a little more decisive.'

Generally Hamelink performs an important role in the process of the VK project. He puts in lots of energy to bring the process further. Characteristically this is not done with an advocating and energizing style but rather in an explanatory fashion, highlighting the substantive elements of the project and their necessity. As such he can sustain long in the processes of decision-making without taking the lead and display strong directive actions. With this process oriented and non-advocating style Hamelink has been able to influence the process.

Hamelink has had a great influence in his own and modest way.

Table 4: The leadership exercise of delegate 3

| | Transactional | Daring | Transformational |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Focus of action</i> | Process | Connecting Content with Process | Content |
| <i>Main repertoire of activities</i> | Accommodating brokerage | Entrepreneurial brokerage & Advocacy | Advocacy |
| <i>Interaction form</i> | Cooperation | Coopetition | Competition |
| <i>strategies</i> | Dialogue, Decide and Deliver | Announce, Dialogue and Adjust | Decide, Announce and Defend |
| <i>Betting on support</i> | No | Yes | Yes |
| <i>Interest in the content of the decision</i> | Low | High | High |

When summarized in table 4 again a hybrid description of the leadership exercise emerges. With a high interest in the content of the VZ proposal and a clear focus on combining this content with the existing context of policy-making, Hamelink's leadership can be initially described as daring. Yet, simultaneously in the day to day practice of decision-making Hamelink shows a strong tendency toward transactional activities and interactions. With the existing political and public support for the plans of the VZ project it is hardly a bet on support to promote the project, especially when this is done in a process accommodating fashion.

In a description of the personal and contextual characteristics we will analyze this ambiguous leadership exercise and attempt to indicate the main drivers for the specific leadership behavior that was found.

Influences

The project of VZ has the most clear and direct benefits for the province of Zeeland. Most of the Dutch Delta area is located within its borders. Therefore most of the issues related to the Delta have a direct influence on the province and the people living there. The VZ project is seen as a primary and essential project and its success or failure will have a great impact on the policy processes and consequently the success or failure of many other projects in the region. Therefore both public and political support for the VZ plan is large. The initial skepticism of the farmers association has turned into a constructive attitude in which the plans for salinization can be agreed upon providing that the alternative supply of fresh water has been arranged properly.

For the local stakeholders there is much to gain. There is a great chance that the fresh water situation for the local farmers will be improved with the new arrangements. Historically they are used to farming in a very salt environment, focusing on basic crops such as potatoes and sugar beets. Furthermore, salinization is a direct solution to the yearly problems with algae for those who live in the vicinity of the VZ. This provides possibilities for recreation, tourism and an improvement in spatial quality. A salty VZ would also provide more opportunities for the production of high quality mussels, a specialty that is the pride of the region and forms an important part of its cultural identity.

Obviously, the direct political environment of delegate Hamelink is largely supporting the plans in the VZ project:

Salinization is not an issue of discussion in the politics of Zeeland. This is not a difficult case for the delegate.

Thus, the delegate of Zeeland can count on both political and public support for the VZ plans in his local environment.

The personal characteristics of this delegate show an interesting mix of skills and preferences. His direct environment describes him as a competent and composed leader who can provide good arguments in a discussion but is by no means a charismatic and enthusiastic speaker. He has a strong focus on the process of decision-making and performs this transactional leadership role with carefulness.

Simultaneously he displays a strong substantive motivation to bring the proposal of project VZ further because it has many benefits for his province and he is convinced

that the proposed strategy is the best solution to the problem. This substantive driver is combined with an operational motivation to fulfill the representative tasks of a provincial delegate.

'He simply wants to arrange these things in a way that is orderly and beneficial for the province of Zeeland.'

He therefore tries to balance this focus on the content of the plans with the process orientation and the maintenance of support in the decision-making process. But maintaining a balance can be difficult:

'In the complexity of decision-making processes there is sometimes hardly a chance to make sure that the quality of the process and the content of the proposal remain balanced. If the creation of support becomes the foremost concern you might end up with a bad plan, so content should be leading. Yet, in our current political climate public support is indispensable. It is always a struggle.'

The struggle between content and process in the case of delegate Hamelink results in a difference between wanting and actually doing. Hamelink wants to balance content and process orientations yet in practice it often results in a stronger focus on the process.

Regarding the personal characteristics of political ambition delegate Hamelink shows a remarkable position. In his current situation political ambition is completely absent. Due to circumstances within the political party a candidate for the position of delegate could not be found and Hamelink, a party member with lots of managerial experience, was asked to postpone his retirement for one period and take the position. Due to these specific circumstances no political ambition other than doing what was asked to do for one administrative period plays any role.

On the supra-local level most important forces of influence are found in the financial issues. The province of Zeeland is highly dependent on other parties to (co-)finance the project. Most parties are very reluctant in their possible financial contribution to the implementation and point toward the national government to take responsibility for the plans. But with an abrupt change of government in an economic unstable period it is unclear whether there will be support for the VZ plans and more specifically the government's contribution in financing the project.

Analysis

It can be concluded that the local context in Zeeland provides a very positive climate for pursuing the proposed policies in the VZ project. Therefore a bet on public and political support is in this context for Hamelink didn't come up. Still, the specific personal situation of the delegate, which is unhindered by possible future ambitions, creates a certain conduciveness for daring in the decision-making as well as a display for non-transactional leadership behavior. Considering these characteristics it is remarkable that Hamelink shows a tendency toward transactional behavior even though he has outspoken desires to act with a stronger focus on the content of the proposal.

The question arises whether ambition is a driver specifically for non-transactional behavior and whether the absence of ambition in the case of Hamelink is therefore explanatory for the tendency toward transactional behavior.

Another possible explanation for this can be sought in the dominant culture of the region. In a comparison of leadership styles between Hoes en Hamelink one of the interviewees remarks:

‘The style of Hoes would probably not work in Zeeland, because there is a difference in culture. In Zeeland things are handled very quietly and well mannered in a process with lots of discussion’.

Regarding his skills and personal propensity Hamelink has a strong process accommodating characterization that fits very well with the description of the policy-making culture in Zeeland.

Comparable to the previous case, interplay between personal characteristics and contextual factors form a combined influence on the leadership exercise in this case. The question of what is the greatest determinant of the leadership behavior in this case seems a chicken and egg dilemma.

5. Discussion

In this article a description and analysis of leadership exercise in three cases of local leadership is given. From the empirical analysis can be concluded that the traditional dichotomy of transactional and transformational leadership, as it is used in organizational theory, does not sufficiently describe the leadership role in the inter-organizational, public domain. The daring leadership concept provides an alternative, based on the two types, that is applicable in the domain of public policy-making. This three-tier typology provides a means for coherent analysis of public leadership behavior.

The empirical reality expectantly shows that several incoherencies with ideal types can be found in the day to day exercise of the public leaders. Nevertheless, these conceptual incoherencies forma means to analyze the leadership situation. In case of leader one, the incoherence with daring leadership in the main repertoire often creates an undesired sphere of conflict that can hardly be prevented but often obstructs the process unintentionally. For leader 2 the incoherence with the transformational type makes his actions seem eclectic and untrustworthy and for leader 3 the incoherence with the daring ideal type leads to assumptions that the full potential of the situation is hardly ever utilized.

In two of the three cases of leadership in this study a discrepancy between wanting and doing is observed. It is concluded that the major explanation for the difference in the desired and the actual leadership behavior is found in the personal characteristics, the skills and character traits of a leader that shape the propensity for direct actual behavior and interactions with others. Although the exercise of leadership is influenced and motivated by a mixture of personal characteristics and contextual factors,

the empirical findings in this study lead to the hypothesis that personal characteristics play a crucial role in the shaping of local leadership behavior.

Our next hypothesis concerns the role of personal ambition. The urge to score and be a successful politician can be regarded as a positive driver to bring the content of a proposal further. This is clearly shown in the first case of leadership that we described. However, the leader's identification with the proposal as well as the perceived opportunities for success have shown to be indispensable conditions. In one of our cases we have observed that lack of identification with the plans, going hand in hand with a lack of interest in the content of the plans, and lack of possible opportunity to score worked as a strong de-motivator. Nevertheless, in both scenarios the fact remains that personal ambition is a main driver for leadership exercise in this study which leads to the hypothesis that another crucial role for the shaping of leadership behavior is the personal ambition of the individual in a leadership position.

Personal ambition of individual actors in a leadership position can thus be considered an essential ingredient in policy making and something to be reckoned with for those with a desire to instigate policy change and specifically promote a sustainable policy agenda.

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