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Meanings of management development

We educate children. We train monkeys, dentists and doctors. But we develop managers and there are important differences between these three verbs. (Paauwe and Williams, 2001: 91)

After reading this chapter you will be able to:

- **Problematize the distinction between managers and leaders**
- **Define what is meant by management development and how it relates to the fields of management training, education and management learning**
- **Identify some contrasting historical/cultural conceptions of managers and leaders and the implications of these for management development**
- **Explain why the development of leaders and managers is so important**
- **Describe a number of guiding principles that are needed to deepen our understanding of management development**

Introduction

In the first chapter we established that due to the fascinating confluence of several historical debates and current trends, management and leadership development has become a centre-stage activity or project for those working in and researching organizations. We went on to propose an analytical strategy for examining this project in more depth, a strategy that does justice to the subtle and shifting nature of how, why and to what effect managers are developed. Before we get started on this quest in earnest, we need to define terms. Many make a point of differentiating between the development of leaders and managers. This supposed distinction deserves explanation and we deal with this issue first. Next, given the burgeoning fields of learning, education and training, we need to be clear how we are using the concept 'management development'. The term 'manager' also requires some scrutiny as this too means different things to different audiences. Assisted by these reference points we can begin to examine management development more precisely. In addition to the value gained by taking a multi-discourse approach, the third section in this chapter outlines four further principles which we believe should guide such analysis.

Management and leadership: a dubious dichotomy?

Where does the science of management stop and the art of leadership begin? For every article or book on management development there are probably 20 devoted to identifying and developing leaders. The idea of separating the qualities of leaders and managers can be traced back to an influential paper by Zaleznick (1977), in which he depicts the manager 'as a rational, bureaucratic, dutiful, practical and unimaginative dullard but the leader as a visionary, restless, experimental, even twice-born dynamo' (quoted in Raelin, 2004: 132). Kotter (1990) is one of many writers who have reinforced this distinction, extolling good management as necessary to bring order, consistency and quality to otherwise chaotic organizations and contrasting this with leadership which is about preparing the enterprise for change and helping employees cope as they struggle through it. While such ideas were still felt to have currency a decade later when the same paper was reprinted in *Harvard Business Review* in 2001, the basis of this dichotomy has to be questioned on several grounds.

Delaying of organizations

First, these characterizations were predicated upon large, hierarchically structured and bureaucratized organizations where managers had responsibility for well-defined roles such as planning, budgeting, controlling, staffing and problem-solving. Far fewer organizations fit this description of predictability now. The decreasing numbers employed in workplaces, and the decline in the number covered by systems of consultation and negotiation, has shifted the manager's power base from positional to personal. The increasing fragmentation of the workforce, with differing patterns of working, contractual forms, outsourcing and homeworking, calls for a more flexible management style, as does the need to manage their own and others' work-life balance. All of this is happening in an human resources management (HRM) context which is increasingly moving towards individualized employment contracts. The capacity to scan boundaries, to establish strategic direction and to inspire others to follow are no longer the exclusive preserve of those at the top of organizations. Most staff with responsibility in organizations, whether they be entrepreneurs in a small or medium-sized enterprise (SME), project managers in a matrix structure, supervisors with remote working staff or those part of a virtual, international team, will be called upon to lead – and follow – at different times in their working week, irrespective of their job title.

Eclipsing of leadership theories

Second, studies of leadership have moved on. Trait theory pointed to a set of intrinsic qualities possessed by some individuals and not others. Although largely discredited for failing to account for social, historical or situational variables, the idea that leaders are born not made and possess an indefinable X-factor persists (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1991). Contingency theories and leader-member exchange theory finesse this idea by elevating the importance of considering the

relationship between the leader, and their environment (Fiedler, 1996) and their followers (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995) respectively. However, these theories remain fairly prescriptive and individualistic in their focus. More recent leadership development approaches have emphasized the relational element of leadership residing in the networks, commitments, trust and mutual exchange between members of a community, which collectively create social capital (Day, 2001). Here leadership is emergent rather than prescribed, self-evident rather than appointed. As Paauwe and Williams (2001: 94) point out: 'Management in the sense of controlling what people do is hardly useful when dealing with knowledge workers. They have to be rather supported and defended. They cannot really be managed. They can only be led.' So again, the distinction of leader and manager becomes immaterial, where everyone is potentially a leader (or indeed a manager (Grey, 1999)) and leadership is seen as an effect not a cause. While this concept of dispersed leadership is appealing, it can underestimate the power dynamic in organizations. Those in privileged positions as a result of historical antecedents will rarely relinquish their differential status. And even if they do, followers may react by swiftly replacing them with traditionally oriented alternative leaders, such is the natural superiority of the leader in the collective psyche (Ray et al., 2004)!

Culture-bound concepts of leadership

A third reason for caution is that much of the theorizing about leadership has taken place either in a Western context (e.g. Trompenaars, 1994; Yukl, 1998) or from a masculine perspective (Olsson, 2002; Vinnicombe and Singh, 2002) or indeed both (van der Boon, 2003). An in-depth analysis of leadership across 62 different countries called Project Globe is seeking to understand if and how leadership varies across different cultures (House et al., 2002). Certain attributes associated with charismatic leadership, for example, may be important for successful leaders worldwide, but the expression and meanings of such attributes may depend on cultural context (Von Glinow et al., 1999). So, although concepts such as transactional and transformational leadership may be universally valid, specific behaviours representing these styles may vary profoundly. Indonesian inspirational leaders need to persuade their followers about the leaders' own competence, a behaviour that would appear unseemly in Japan. Vietnam, like its Chinese neighbour, is a society based on Confucian values, such as harmony, hierarchy, collectivism and personal relations. Thus, developing long-term relationships is seen as critical for management success in Vietnam (Berrell et al., 1999). In such contexts, hierarchy means the complete acceptance of the authority of leaders by subordinates in order to maintain harmony; in other cultures, individuals have to earn their right to lead.

Corporate convenience

A fourth reason to be suspicious of the leader–manager split is the convenient way it elevates the self-importance of corporate leaders. Popular management theory,

and again this originates primarily in the West but is readily available at the book shops of international airports, is redolent with values that appeal fundamentally to managers aspiring to be leaders. Clark and Salaman (1998) argue that there is a very good reason for the enormous success and impact of this literature. This is the fact that it appeals to managers, not simply because it displays qualities managers themselves value and use, but because it enhances their confidence in performing their role as corporate leaders through their mythic story-telling. Whether self-help business handbooks, case accounts of successful turn-arounds or cult biographies of successful CEOs, such literature 'defines' the qualities necessary for effective leadership in the contemporary organization. The cumulative effect is to characterize and ultimately legitimize the 'otherness' of leaders. Alvesson (1990) argues that part of the corporate attraction of these texts is that 'the questions formulated and answered, the perspective taken, the sectional interests supported etc. are grounded in a world view, a set of beliefs and values, which indicate that the top managers of corporations and other organisations are a highly important group' (1990: 27). The danger of course, is that such leaders come to be seen, and come to see themselves as above criticism, immune to dissent. The mystique becomes a defensive device. But leadership is not an inherently moral concept. As Kellerman (2004) points out, some leaders are trustworthy, courageous, generous; many are not. And even 'successful' leaders are not necessarily good people, as reports of corporate scandals and exploitation of privilege constantly remind us. In Box 2.1, Mangham reflects on the changing face of business leadership in the the City of London.

Box 2.1 The changing face of leadership

The ethos of managerial or gentlemanly capitalism has been replaced by an emerging individualistic, less community-centred set of explanations and values, and a brasher, harsher, more exploitative variety of interaction. This ethos demands a new type of leadership. In the brave new Darwinian world of shareholder capitalism there is a greater focus on the individual leader. He or she is no longer a professional manager. His/her role is to set the direction for the company, to motivate and energize the employees, but primarily to deal with the analysts, the accountants, the banks, the government authorities, the media, the public and – above all – to deliver ever richer dividends to the shareholders. Becoming a leader in this day and age is seen to be a matter of 'communicating an essential optimism, confidence and can-do attitude' (Khurana, 2002: 71). Leaders have become much more visible, subject to much more comment from analysts, the business media and the gossip sheets; some, for example Richard Branson in the UK and Bill Gates in the US, have become celebrities. Some have become important players whose advice is sought by governments, and some pontificate at international

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economic forums. A specialized market has arisen for such people. They are induced to take on the responsibilities by very large salaries, substantial bonuses and extensive stock options, as well as guaranteed redundancy/pension rights. Personality, image, dynamism and charisma are now the attributes that are seen to be the key criteria in selecting a leader. (Mangham, 2004: 49–51)

However, although the cult of the individual, flamboyant leader is still alive, Mangham predicts that interest in the long-term growth of companies will become fashionable once more, and consequently, there will be a return to a measured style of business leadership at the top of our organizations. There may well be, he proposes, a return to ‘managers’ rather than ‘leaders’!

So in the context of management development, what are the implications of saying that managers are one thing and leaders another? It is true that managers are often bureaucratically appointed and thus have a mandate to get things done in their part of the organization. It is equally evident that in some cultures, inviolable respect is invested in leaders. But as Raelin (2004) reminds us, managers:

...don’t have to be ‘hired hands’ ... who are condemned to a life of unimaginatively carrying out corporate goals or endorsing the status quo. Managers [or indeed, we might add, non-managers] are hardly excluded from leadership. They need to work with their peers, bosses, subordinates, and others, and in this constant interaction, there is opportunity for leadership to emerge from anyone. What might be most impressive about the manager is not taking the reins but supporting others to take them as the situation warrants. ... Might our leadership development efforts be better directed toward the role of leadership as a mutual social phenomenon rather than as a position of authority? (Raelin, 2004: 132)

Another perspective from which to challenge the management/leadership divide follows from our introduction of the notion of ‘discourse’ in Chapter 1. This directs our attention away from ontological debates concerning what management ‘is’ or ‘is not’ in relation to leadership (and vice versa). Instead, it directs us towards an examination as to how both terms might serve as discursive or linguistic resources in the construction of social reality, including the social negotiation of identity (see Box 2.2).

Box 2.2 Management competencies or leadership capabilities?

A study by Finch-Lees et al. (2005) sought to evaluate a programme of management development based around a framework of leadership capability statements within CapCo, a UK multinational. The study included a tracing of the processes by which the capability statements were originated within

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the company. It was explained that they came into being as a result of the need to forge a common identity, subsequent to a series of mergers and a major business reorganization. The 'leadership capability' statements themselves were originated and developed using, among other sources, the various 'management competency' profiles existing within the disparate parts of the business prior to the reorganization. No employee was able to offer any convincing explanation as to the difference between a management competency and a leadership capability. Indeed, the two terms were often used interchangeably in their talk. Alvesson and Willmott (2002: 629) point out that 'defining the person directly' (a form of control through the regulation of identity) serves to 'suggest expectations for people who occupy the social space that is thereby defined for them'. In this sense, the very label of leadership capabilities for something that could equally have been called a set of management competencies serves to redefine the person and set correspondingly aspirational expectations. No longer is 'competent management' sufficient. From henceforth, what the company expects is 'capable leadership'. This also serves to differentiate CapCo employees identity-wise from those of other organizations (who might typically employ the vocabulary of management competency) and also by differentiating the 'new' CapCo from previous incarnations of itself (which certainly did employ the vocabulary of management competency).

To conclude, in this book we choose to use the term 'management development' but for the reasons given and unless otherwise stated, we take this to include the development of leaders in an organizational context also.

What do we mean by management development?

From a functionalist perspective, it is generally agreed that management development refers to the process by which individuals improve their capabilities and learn to perform effectively in managerial roles (Baldwin and Padgett, 1993; Mumford, 1997; Thomson et al., 2001). The enduring simplicity of this definition is deceptive, however. Each element attracts controversy. For instance, what exactly is included in the term *development* and how is this to be distinguished from management training, education and learning? Why should we focus exclusively on *managers* and managerial roles? What is meant by effective *performance* and how is this to be interpreted and measured? What other motives or interests does such a unitarist definition obscure?

What is distinctive about management development?

In a study of four European countries, nearly 500 managers were asked the question: 'What was your most developmental experience last year?' These are some

of their responses: 'Being given the responsibility to implement redundancies; setting up a new business unit; having to grapple with an ambiguous management strategy; coping with the loss of an excellent colleague; opening an office in a new country; involvement in an industry think-tank; managing a multi-racial work group' (Tamkin et al., 2006). Do these examples constitute training, education, development, learning or all four?

Management development and management training

Training and development tend to go hand in hand in organizational terminology and are difficult to disentangle at a practical level. However, they arise from distinct theoretical perspectives. According to Warr (2002) in the UK and Laird (1985) in the US, training refers to job-specific skills improvement in a current job role and is associated with the traditional, stable and long-term psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995). Here the onus rests with the employer to train their workforce and address their skills gaps. Training is a widely researched area within occupational and organizational psychology because the instruction and acquisition of job-specific skills is seen as crucial to both organizational and individual effectiveness (Goldstein, 1993). To illustrate, some studies have focused on the impact of training at the individual level, showing that training results in enhanced learning, increased motivation and positive work attitudes (Tannenbaum and Yukl, 1991; Colquitt et al., 2000). Other studies have pointed to the important role of a supportive environment to facilitate the effective transfer of learning (Rouiller and Goldstein, 1993; Tracey and Hinkin, 2001). Because training is job-specific, it generally relies on a predictivist perspective, which views jobs as relatively stable to which certain skills need to be matched. By contrast, the wider-ranging objectives of development invoke a more mutual perspective. Here the organization is seeking to cultivate leadership talent and the manager is taking increasing responsibility for engaging in life-long learning and possibly developing multiple careers. This has resulted in a growing body of research on employee and management development, which has sprung from a range of theoretical orientations, such as organizational and individual competence, adult learning and the efficacy of different off-the-job and on-the-job development approaches. For all this, we still know little about the effects of a diverse range of development activities, such as development centres, developmental appraisals, multi-source feedback, coaching and mentoring on individuals and organizations (McDowell, 2005). Clearly, the fields of management training and management development, while different in emphasis, overlap considerably.

Management development and management education

Another sister discipline to management development is that of management education. Fox (1997) writes of two contrasting approaches to the development of managers that have emerged since the 1960s. The first is management education, which is largely provided by university and management schools. As such it is subject to the critical rigours of the wider academic and research community. The second is management development driven more by market mechanisms. This is a subset of human resource development (HRD) and largely provided by

the private sector in the form of in-house training and development and/or assisted by freelance consultants and training agencies. Of the two, management education tends to be more theoretical, emphasizing a body of knowledge in the academic disciplines relevant to management and is predominantly delivered by classroom and distance learning methods. Individuals usually exercise a good deal of discretion over which courses to pursue. By contrast, management development tends to be more practitioner focused, aimed at developing personal knowledge and a repertoire of skills. Although this may involve classroom tuition, the range of methods for developing managers is far more diverse.

Nevertheless, there has been a blurring of boundaries between management education and management development, certainly in the USA and Western Europe. Several factors have prompted this (Fox, 1997; Latham and Seijts, 1998). For example, there has been a growing acceptance, from the 1980s onwards, of business and management studies as a mainstream subject within the university curriculum. The same period has also witnessed the growth in the postgraduate and post-experience market for Masters-level courses, which has required management schools to move closer to corporate expectations in terms of style and syllabus. These two factors have increased the number of academically qualified managers who in turn expect management development practitioners to be appropriately qualified. Fox also refers to the demand for new Masters degrees from independent consultants (especially in areas like training and development, management development, HRD and change management) wishing to maintain their client credibility and professionalism in an ever more competitive market place. Alongside this, more university faculty are offering bespoke consultancy, executive programmes and virtual learning partnerships with private and public sector organizations. Corporate universities, with their concern for high-quality tuition, tailored learning and corporate consonance, are perhaps an epitome of this convergence between management education and development (Paton et al., 2004).

Management development and management learning

A third discipline of relevance to management development is management learning. This has been characterized as a new disciplinary area of knowledge and practice, which is both a subject area and a research community (Fox, 1997). It encompasses management education, training and HRD, as well as informal managing and learning processes. This perspective is helpful in highlighting that 'formal education and development activities are merely the tip of a learning iceberg' (Fox, 1997: 25). It shifts the focus away from a set of practices to be learnt, what Lave and Wenger (1991) term intentional instruction, to understanding the processes by which managers (and indeed, people generally) learn. Management learning also emphasizes the role of the group in learning. This is something which an individualized approach to management education and development often overlooks. By removing individuals from the fabric of their everyday working-learning contexts, off-the-job training maroons them from the very communities of practice which provide such a rich source of experimentation, reflection and learning in the workplace. Viewing management development through the prism of management learning also alerts us to wider institutional, cultural and political cross-currents

which influence the definition and formation of management capabilities in a given regional context or knowledge domain.

So while the primary focus of this book is upon the training and development of managers as a corporate activity, understanding the way management development is undertaken and evaluated at an organizational level will necessarily invoke research from other arenas of management learning (Easterby-Smith and Thorpe, 1997). For example, local training delivery cannot be divorced from wider institutional factors like national policies of skill formation and government intervention (policy-education level). The design of firm-level management development will be influenced by industry or sector-specific qualifications' structures (policy-corporate level) and informed by the fruits of research in the fields of training methods, transfer of learning, training and the like (operations-education level). Easterby-Smith and Thorpe conclude that the overall coverage of research in the various dimensions of management learning is 'variable' and 'thin' (1997: 50). Sponsors, whether governments or corporations, have tended to dictate the questions being asked and dominate the methods being used, leading to outputs which bolster establishment thinking. The possible exception is management learning research at the operations-education level: here the focus on the effectiveness of various teaching/learning processes has ushered in more critical and discursive approaches and methodologies. These bring into question the functionalist treatment of management development as an activity that exists primarily, or even exclusively, to build the knowledge, skills and abilities of managers with a view to ultimately enhancing 'performance' at the organizational and the macro-economic levels of analysis.

For the purposes of this book, then, we use management development to refer to the way it is structured, its mode of delivery and its underlying morality.

By *structure* we refer to the means by which organizations devise strategies and establish internal systems for developing managers, including such activities as career planning and arrangements for diagnosis and review of development. Depending on the country concerned, this will be influenced, possibly constrained, by sectoral, professional and governmental policies.

The *delivery* dimension concerns the actual methods used for developing managers, whether formal or informal, whether on-the-job or off-the-job, whether internally or externally delivered. Whereas development of managers is the focus, we take this to largely incorporate management training, to overlap considerably with management education and to be located within the wider domains of management learning (see Figure 2.1). This figure also reminds us that management development is often a key element of wider organizational learning (Starkey, 1996) and organization development (OD) interventions (Oswick and Grant, 1996).

The *moral* dimension is far more implicit. It refers to the capacity for management development to simultaneously promote diversity and discrimination, empowerment and exploitation, inclusion and marginalization.

Although we locate management development in this way we are not discounting a good deal of management learning which takes place incidentally, experientially and/or beyond the boundaries of formal and informal development

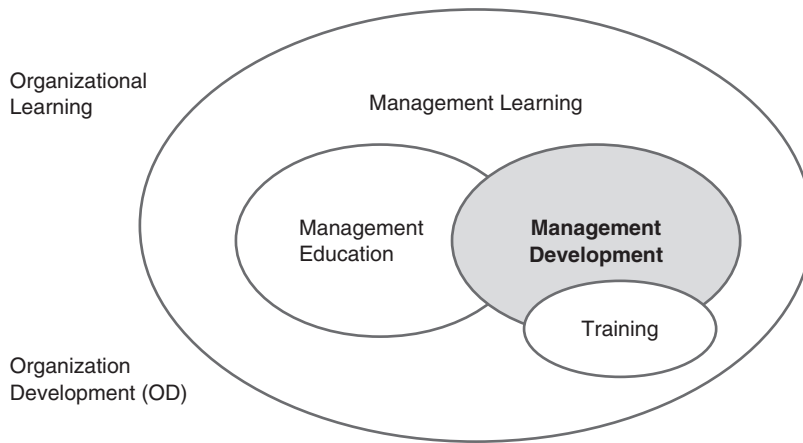


FIGURE 2.1 *The domain of management development*

arranged by the organization. Nor do we imply that training and development activities automatically result in an organizationally, or even personally, productive learning experience. Indeed, these are crucial issues which thread their way through the book.

Why focus on managers?

In one way the task of management might be regarded as a trivial and inglorious occupation, hardly meriting sustained analysis. The profession of management has a serious identity crisis. Other professions have established national if not international credentials, sophisticated routes for continuous professional development, powerful lobbies for policy-making and assessment processes for monitoring quality, standards and accreditation in their respective fields. 'Management' struggles on all these fronts. In the UK, for instance, the last 20 years have seen a succession of ambitious attempts to establish a coherent and credible national approach to improving management and leadership capability. None appear to have had an enduring impact. There is a similar though not identical story in the rest of Europe. European Union (EU) environments are increasingly influenced by a series of general directives on academic and professional recognition; to date, management education and development has remained largely outside this regulatory framework. Especially pressing is the perceived need to create future accreditation mechanisms for management practice for present and future member states, in a manner which supports cultural diversity, subsidiarity and market transparency.

Yet, despite this identity crisis, it could be argued that managers are a pivotal part of the workforce. Let's briefly consider three examples.

Managers as brokers of knowledge. Broadly speaking, intellectual capital refers to the way an enterprise acquires, creates and utilizes specialist knowledge and expertise. One challenge for managers is to make such tacit knowledge meaningful.

Astute management development can help. Perhaps by exploring the necessary skills to systematize and facilitate knowledge-sharing behaviours, by creating conditions of trust for this to happen and by building communities of practice where diversity is celebrated, not ignored, and where non-conformity is valued, not penalized.

Managers as lynchpins of learning. If management can be learned, can learning be managed? A related pivotal role for managers is to help construct a meaningful learning environment around them. Some international firms use their multicultural environment as a growth opportunity. For instance, they plan strategic secondments to promote learning, especially between different countries, areas of technology and between functions such as R&D and marketing, to help their staff to understand the organization from a multiplicity of cultural and functional perspectives.

Managers as makers of meaning. The character and morality of the employee have always been central concerns of managers as they seek to govern and structure organizational life. Thus, under the banner of management development, such 'tools' as ability tests, assessment centres, performance-based reviews, competency-based development programmes may be enlisted. Despite the claims of organizational initiatives to be about improving efficiency, interventions like these often studiously ignore certain key elements of organizational structure and process – the nature and role of power, of conflicts, of exploitation, of difference (Townley, 1994; Bartram, 2005). This, of course, places invidious demands upon middle managers. They may be uneasy about the role cast for them as managers of (new) meaning, but find themselves unable to resist or contradict the rhetoric they find themselves part of. Potentially, management development has a role here to facilitate debate and critiques of 'the way we do things around here'. This calls for courage because of the way senior teams look to such training programmes as the means to usher in, exemplify and legitimize a new cultural order (Kamoche, 2000).

As brokers of knowledge, as lynchpins of learning, as makers of meaning, managers represent a key constituency and their sustained development comprises an activity of supreme significance.

What is 'effective performance'?

The last part of our working definition is that management development will enable individuals to 'perform effectively' in their managerial roles. When presented with a management development activity most of us would have a clear picture of successful outcomes.

Reflection point

Consider a development activity in which you have been involved or one which you have observed recently. What were the expected outcomes? What, for you, were the real benefits, if any? Who were the real 'winners' and were there any 'losers'?

The discussion so far has emphasized that it is easy to presume our personal success criteria will be shared by others (see Rees and Garnsey, 2003). In particular, due to their dominant position in organizations, structurally, ideologically and gender-wise, top teams have a way of galvanizing opinion about the value of a given development intervention around their own interests and drowning out contrary views. But there are a variety of stakeholders: participants, their subordinates, peers and line managers (all of whom will be members of either majority or minority groupings), human resources (HR) professionals, senior managers, business planners, external consultants and government funding agencies. Each has a different interest in, influence over and ownership of, training and development interventions (Garavan, 1998; Mabey et al., 1998: 380). Indeed, given the actors involved, the reputations at stake, the budget invested and the proximity of most management development activity to the power nexus of the organization, it is no wonder that it remains one of the most contested of human resource interventions.

Burgoyne and Jackson (1997) discuss the example of a competency-based leadership programme, describing how hierarchically defined stakeholders might support or block the programme for contrasting and congruent reasons. This reminds us that, depending on the particular management development activity, a varying constellation of constituencies will coalesce around a particular issue or group of issues, each with different objectives in mind. 'Different factions can support the same action for entirely different reasons. Support for a particular initiative can be garnered from a plurality of purposes and, therefore, does not have to conform to the same unitarist definition of its purpose' (1997: 63).

Certainly this begins to explain how the very same management development intervention can come to be evaluated quite differently by a range of stakeholders. What it possibly overestimates is the freedom with which these differing views can be expressed and achieve currency. As discussed in the previous section, the degree to which such constituencies are free to act, intervene and shape outcomes will be subject to the prevailing discourse.

Who are managers?

So far we have been talking about managers in the context of development as though they represent a commonly understood, circumscribed and homogeneous group of employees. This is clearly not the case.

Historical conceptions of what it means to manage

In the same way that the definition of management development is not self-evident, neither is the notion of management itself. The roots of the concept are revealing. The French verb *ménager* connotes the comparatively humble role of housekeeping (Grey, 1999), the Italian term *menaggiare* refers to the idea of handling or training horses (Willmott, 1997) and the original Latin word *manus* means a 'hired hand' (Raelin, 2004). The term 'manager' was later extended to war and to a general sense of taking control, taking charge and directing. As Willmott

observes, this semantic root is instructive because it conveys 'the social divisiveness of management as a contradictory process – a process in which a person simultaneously takes responsibility for and seeks to control a valuable, yet wilful and potentially resistant resource' (1997: 163). This social division of labour, he argues, is neither universal nor inevitable, but owes its existence to historical and political processes through which managerial work comes to be defined and ascribed to a privileged social group. Grey (1999) also alludes to the distinction between management as an activity and management as a (privileged) category of person. Several writers, keen to become liberated from such modes of colonialist discourse and speech, whether this occurred in the distant past or continues in the present, have critiqued the Western/non-Western divide in management thinking (see Box 2.3).

Box 2.3 Colonialism in management thinking

Colonial theories cast management as a distinctly Western concept. A clear exponent, according to Frenkel and Shenhav (2006: 867), is Drucker, who in his early work argues that management 'is not only a salient product of Western thought, it is also one of the factors that distinguishes the West from other civilizations, and accounts for the West's economic and social superiority'. Like many other 'one best way' theorists, Drucker sees 'other' cultures as exotic and inferior, identifying universalism with Westernization.

Postcolonial theories point out the ethnocentric bias of management practices. Because such ideas were and are shaped in a colonial context, 'they define the West directly or indirectly as modern, rational, and homogeneous, whereas the "other" (the "East", the "Third World", the "native", and the "ethnic") is perceived as less progressive and rational. ... Much like the "classic" colonial project, the neo-colonial project of Americanization meant the introduction of a colonial productivity discourse and its practices in an attempt to bolster and legitimize a cultural and economic hegemony around the globe' (Frenkel and Shenhav, 2003: 1540, 2).

Hybrid theories are a particular stream of postcolonial research which has sought to demonstrate that the binary distinction between Western and non-Western (whether Orientalism or any other) is not sustainable. Rather, it is argued, management discourse should be seen as a hybrid product of the colonial encounter. 'A non-binary epistemology suggests collapsing the boundary between West and non-West and allowing a hybridity to filter in, without denying the asymmetrical power relations between them. From a non-binary perspective we need to show, therefore, how Western and non-Western experiences (and representations) are inseparable; and how binary perspectives may purify the colonial practice and mask its hybrid history. We submit that the binary distinction between the West and the Orient employed by organization and management theorists often masks the hybridity of their origins' (Frenkel and Shenhav, 2006: 860).

What are the implications of this critique for management development? First, it encourages us to explore historical and cultural conceptualizations of who managers are, what they do and how, therefore, they can best be developed. This we consider in a moment.

Second, it alerts us to the way management development activities, perhaps more potently than most other HR practices, can serve to legitimize established priorities and values in the enterprise concerned. Deetz (1985: 127) refers to *legitimation* as the process by which decisions and actions that distort communication are rationalized by invoking 'higher-order explanatory devices'. So, for example, the need for a leadership programme might be justified in relation to a set of core competencies for aspiring managers to become more results-oriented and customer-aware. Quite apart from the potential contradiction in behaviour and psychological stress these two goals may induce for the individual manager, the point about legitimation is that the competency framework becomes an explanatory device and remains beyond examination or question. In a similar vein, Frost (1987) describes *socialization* as a mechanism of learning and orientation that directs and shapes desired attitudes, behaviours and interpretative schemes of some players to the benefit of others. Most of us can identify with this dimension of management development, which is encountered most vividly when newcomers arrive at an organization. Whether explicitly in the guise of training programmes or more subtly in the form of mentoring, buddying and modelling, we discover what is acceptable, tolerated, overlooked and outlawed (Preston and Hart, 1997; Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2002).

Third, and following on directly from the idea that managerial knowledge is historically sectioned and situated, we note that management might also be regarded as a predominantly masculine and Western form of constructed knowledge, or discourse. Since management development is a prime diffuser of such knowledge, its ability to promote diversity must be seen as suspect. We take up these issues more fully in Chapter 9.

Cultural views of what a manager should do and be

The North American model of management has been traced back, not uncontroversially, to the frontier mentality of the early settlers (Prasad, 1997). By contrast, the attributes necessary for senior management and leadership in South East Asia include patience, sincerity, honesty, consensus, flexibility and a willingness to learn. This finding leads van der Boon (2003: 141) to conclude that in the Asian business environment, the 'best man for the job is a woman', noting that women hold key management and political positions, particularly in the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore. Meanwhile, leadership and management in Japan are 'predicated on power and knowledge relations in which the "common instinct" that is generated by long-term interaction amongst insiders guides practice with an elegant simplicity (*wabi-shabi*) that is not commensurate with precious displays of individualism and Anglo-Saxon models of leadership' (Ray et al., 2004: 325).

Even to talk about European models glosses over important differences. For example, while British managers may emphasize the need for communication and

interpersonal skills and see the organization primarily as a network of relationships demanding negotiation, influencing skills and image promotion, German managers may be more likely to emphasize individual creativity and to see the organization as based on competence, rationality, knowledge and technical expertise. In contrast, French managers may emphasize the importance of being recognized as 'high potential' and see the organization as based on power, authority and political trade-offs (Laurent, 1986).

Attitudes towards management are naturally forged from political processes and cultural values. For example, Hofstede (1980) describes Turkey as being 'medium high' on the uncertainty avoidance index. He describes how young democracies (which he defines as being those which have developed their forms of government since the First World War, such as Turkey) tend to show higher uncertainty avoidance than older democracies. This notion fits with Ataturk's reforms, which coincided with a Turkish republic salvaged out of the Ottoman Empire in the years following the First World War. A Romanized alphabet, Western dress, and a society no longer founded on religion but on secular values, were among the sweeping changes that patriotic, forward-thinking Turks were expected to embrace. Yet traditional Turkish values, especially around status, remain (see Box 2.4).

Box 2.4 Turkish conceptions of management

The cultural syndrome of status identity embodies the notion that cultural members are stratified into hierarchies or groups based on culturally relevant information. Turkish organizations are distinguished by central decision-making, highly personalized, strong leadership, and limited delegation (Ronen, 1986), together with steep hierarchies indicating the subordination of employees to their leaders; yet also described as 'families' (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998). Turkish leaders are characterized by paternalistic attributes (Kanungo and Aycan, 1997). Within this notion of hierarchy versus egalitarianism, Brett and Okumura (1998) inform us, hierarchical cultures like Turkey's favour differential social status, implying distributions of power. Within hierarchical cultures lower-status individuals are respectful and defer to higher-status individuals. Kanungo and Aycan (1997) describe how this status identity syndrome manifests itself in the Turkish context with paternalistic leaders demonstrating parental consideration towards their subordinates (from Ashford, 2005).

This glimpse into the way managers manage in one culture suggests that different countries will have distinctive ways of identifying, grooming and developing their managers. This is partly driven by educational priorities, corporate strategies, historical legacies and cultural values.

What is needed to deepen our understanding of management development?

So far in this chapter we have used a functionalist definition to clarify what is commonly meant by the term 'management development'. But we have also critiqued such a definition from a variety of alternative perspectives. We prefer not to see managers and leaders as distinct entities, but rather to see them on a continuum, with any responsible employee potentially able to operate as a manager and exercise leadership as circumstances demand. We have proposed that to focus on development does not preclude reference to related fields of management learning, education and training, because the boundaries between these domains are relatively permeable anyway. We have also suggested that an elastic use of the term 'manager' is called for, partly because being a 'manager' has quite different cultural connotations in different parts of the world, and in particular, it is helpful not to be constrained by the politico-historical undertones peculiar to the West. For a number of reasons, we believe that managers play a pivotal role in organizations and that a systematic, critical study of the way they are trained and developed is overdue. Finally, we have noted that despite being a hot topic for governments, enterprises and individual managers alike, much remains to be discovered about how and why managers are developed or indeed how and why they even exist (or are socially constructed) as a distinct employee category. In the first chapter we made the case for a multi-discourse approach to the study of management development. Here in the final section we outline four further principles which we believe should guide such an exploration. In order to chart the territory of management development more comprehensively, we propose that such an analysis needs to be international, meso-level, diversity-sensitive and empirically-driven.

International

It is clear that any study of the ways managers and leaders are developed would benefit from an international approach. Not only does this hopefully minimize (if not avoid) ethnocentric bias and assumptions, it also offers the possibility of rich, cross-cultural insights. It might be argued that although governments in different countries pursue quite different goals in their early education systems (Geppert et al., 2002) and adopt varying levels of corporate intervention at a policy level (Noble, 1997), there is a general trend towards regarding management development as market-driven. Globalization and the increasing reach of multinationals are creating common expectations of managers across the world, and corporate cultures are arguably becoming more influential than national cultures. For example, having examined the particular historical emphases of management models in Germany, France, Japan, the UK and the USA, Thomson et al. (2001: 61) note that:

the general trends are similar. All the models expect something from the individual manager in terms of self-development over and above what might be done by the organisation. All five countries favour development beyond the initial education and induction; in Germany and Japan it is

more formalised, especially in the large companies, than in France, the United States, and Britain. All the countries have problems with management development in small businesses...

But this idea of convergence in the realm of management development, fuelled by the inexorable diffusion of best-practices, has been questioned (Marchington and Grugulis, 2000), particularly where it is assumed that global HR practices are inevitably converging on a US model (Gooderham and Brewster, 2003). Based on extensive survey data gathered over the last decade, Brewster et al. (2004) reach a more nuanced conclusion concerning 23 countries in Europe. They point to directional convergence of HR practices, with increasing training and development as one example of a generic trend. However, they differentiate this from final convergence, noting that there is very little evidence that countries are becoming more alike in the way they manage their human resources. If this is true in the relatively homogeneous arena of the European Community, it is even more starkly the case when we consider approaches to developing managers and leaders in other continents (see Box 2.5).

Box 2.5 Developing managers in China

To understand the nature of management development within Asia, it is important to consider the historical and cultural influences that have formed the system of personnel practices used to ensure the availability of qualified employees for key positions. For countries like Singapore and China, where there is a deep collectivist orientation influenced by Confucian values, the evolution of management development has been heavily guided by planned economies controlled by the respective governments. As Singapore became a self-ruled country under the influence of Lee Kuan Yew and as China emerged after the death of Chairman Mao Zedong in 1976, these governments have aggressively focused on how to ensure adequate managers to support the success of these societies.

The implications on the planned economy within China can be most clearly evidenced through the growth of MBA programmes which are relevant as business schools have become increasingly focused on corporate management development (Beeby and Jones, 1997). In China and Singapore, this focus on business schools by the government has had a significant impact on the practice and policies of management development (Wang, 1999). As the graduates of these programmes facilitated the rapid development of joint ventures and high technology with China, these massive corporate transformations profoundly influenced the structures, social processes and individual behaviours within these firms (Tsui and Lee, 2003). For example, some of the trends reported within management development in China have included a shift from an academic to professional orientation, from general knowledge learning to competency development, from technical orientation to managerial focus, from a common programme to an adaptive curriculum planning and from 'one-shot' training to strategic distributive development (Wang, 1999).

Meso-level

What the example above (Box 2.5) also demonstrates is that to reach an adequate understanding of management development, we need to engage with and seek to integrate different levels of analysis incorporating both individual and contextual factors (Rousseau and House, 1994). This so-called meso-level analysis indicates a desire, particularly by policy-makers, to move beyond the more traditional macro and micro thinking that has dominated organizational analysis in the past. As Evans (2001: 542) puts it: 'Experience has shown that macro level theories are often too abstract and frequently applied to concrete situations with little attention to the mediating processes, while micro level theories tend to ignore the impact of broader structural factors on micro level decision-making settings.' In fact, theorists in the field of international human resource management have been seeking to address such issues for some time (Harzing and Ruysseveldt, 1995). Jackson and Schuler (1995) propose an integrative framework of international HRM in multinational corporations which maps the twin influences of exogenous factors (industry/regional characteristics and country culture) and endogenous factors (structure and orientation of parent company and competitive strategy) upon human resource management issues, functions and policies. Subsequent attempts have been made to simplify this framework (De Cieri and Dowling, 1999). However, such accounts tend to focus entirely on the multinational corporate experience and lack worked examples. In this book we apply meso-level thinking as an analytic tool for tracing the intricate web of institutional, cultural, structural, organizational and micro-political/agential factors which shape the priority, content, impact and significance of development activities in different parts of the world.

Diversity-sensitive

The notion of diversity management rose rapidly to prominence during the 1990s and continues to gather momentum today. We are now at a point where many organizations devote significant resources aimed (ostensibly) at valuing and leveraging diversity to the benefit of both individual and organization. In many cases, this involves the training and development of managers with a view to sensitizing them to the benefits of diversity and then providing them with the apparent wherewithal to 'manage' it. However, diversity-specific interventions will most likely form only a very small part of a typical manager's development experiences. This begs the question as to how *mainstream* forms of management development (being the main focus of this book) fare when it comes to their impact on diversity. We consider such a question to be all the more pertinent, given that most analyses of *management* (let alone management development!), tend implicitly to take a neutral stance when it comes to diversity and inclusion, which is a polite way of saying that they typically ignore such issues altogether.

At this juncture, we should be clear as to exactly what we might mean when we refer to diversity. This is less straightforward than it may seem. Not only is there much controversy on the issue, certainly within academic circles, but any particular definition will have political consequences for the very people that diversity might be expected to impact (Litvin, 1997; Linnehan and Konrad, 1999; Janssens and

Steyaert, 2003). From a practitioner's point of view, however, the typical pragmatic stance is to adopt a notion of diversity based around essentialist forms of group difference, expressed in terms of, for example, age, disability, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation.

There are many indications to suggest that management development frequently struggles to provide a 'level playing field' with regard to difference along such dimensions. In a sense, this should come as no surprise. Indeed, there are powerful theoretical reasons for a degree of scepticism concerning management development's alignment with diversity. The few authors who have explored the origins and evolution of management have found its knowledge and practices to be dominated by influences that are variously: white/Western (Frenkel and Shenhav, 2003); heterosexual (Parker, 2002); Christian/protestant (Prasad, 1997), able-bodied and hegemonically masculine (Collinson and Hearn, 1994; Kerfoot and Knights, 1998; Grey, 1999; Vieira da Cunha and Pina e Cunha, 2002). And all this despite the overwhelming tendency for management to be represented as a scientific and value-neutral activity (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000). Theoretically, then, if we consider management development to be a prime diffuser of knowledge and practice that is inherently sectional, should we really expect it to provide equality of opportunity for all demographic groups? An emerging body of empirical evidence supports the view that we should not, and we explore this evidence in Chapter 9. As such, management development might usefully be held (at least partly) accountable for the continuing and lamentably low representation of minority groups within the upper echelons of management (EOC, 2005; Singh and Vinnicombe, 2005). However, we do not wish to imply that all management development deserves automatically to be tarred with the same brush on this issue. As such, our approach throughout the book will be to endeavour, wherever possible, to interrogate management development (on both theoretical and empirical grounds) for its alignment with the assumed interests of those that are traditionally underrepresented within the ranks of management.

Empirical

In its early days, the literature of management development attracted more than its share of prescription, with varying degrees of rigour. In the UK we saw national manifestos and critical success factors for management development being proposed (Holland, 1986; Fonda, 1988; Sadler, 1988; Margerison, 1990), along with typologies of effective and less effective approaches to management development from both British (e.g. Burgoyne, 1988; Wille, 1990) and North American authors (e.g. McLagan, 1989). The following decade saw a growth of more empirically based work, focusing on the education sector and the corporate sector at both policy and organization levels. But as discussed above, this research was variable in quality, tended to have a strong establishment bias and was invariably conducted to make a political point. Where the focus was on development in the workplace, it was usually descriptive. In order to navigate our way around management development, we are presented with an incomplete map. This is evident from Box 2.6, which briefly traces the contours of European research,

Box 2.6 European research on management development

In Europe research into the education and development of managers is less advanced than research into general education and higher level, technical education and training (Nyhan, 1998). Current knowledge on what constitutes good practice in Europe is inadequate in five respects.

- First, it often deals with training generally (without separating out managers) and is uncontextualized, telling us more about the quantity and types of training undertaken than explaining its quality and effects (CVTS, 1994/1999; Larsen, 1994).
- Second, the few previous studies which have focused exclusively on training for managers have tended to examine specific issues, like the development of competences (Winterton and Winterton, 1997), or the usage of training procedures and practices in different countries (Bournois et al., 1994), rather than the overall significance of management development.
- Third, the favoured methodology has been the use of broad-brush surveys (Brewster and Hegewisch, 1994; Gudic, 2000; Brewster et al., 2004) which lack analytical detail. Exceptionally, in-depth case studies of a few organizations have been conducted (e.g. Storey et al., 1997): these are rich in detail but limited to a small range of sectors.
- Fourth, there have been several country-specific studies of management development, for example in the UK (Thomson et al., 2001); in Ireland (Graham et al., 2000); in Romania (Cseh, 1999); in the New Independent States (ETF, 1997); in Holland (Pauwe and Williams, 2001); as well as non-European studies (e.g. Branine, 1996). Yet cross-national comparative research remains rare.
- Finally, a number of studies have analyzed management training and development from an international perspective, but the chosen lens has invariably been that of the multinational corporation (MNC) (Noble, 1997; Tregaskis, 2001).

In many ways, this sets the research agenda and the challenge for this book. We need to move on from descriptive data and prescriptive advice. We need to understand more fully what is happening in the realm of management development by discerning and making more visible the theory/assumptions underlying such policies and practices. To achieve this, what is required is more thorough theorizing and empirical substantiation, preferably in an international setting.

Conclusion

We began this chapter by challenging the dichotomy between management and leadership. We did so by problematizing the essentialist kind of thinking that attributes certain traits or characteristics to managers and others to leaders. Instead, we

characterized the divisions between the two notions as discursive or linguistic constructions that can serve a variety of social purposes, not least the differential construction of identity. We then turned our attention to what we will mean by management development as we move through the book. We offered a working definition of the notion, while highlighting and critiquing its functionalist underpinnings. We then explored the distinctions and overlaps between management development, training, education and learning, before asking ourselves why we should focus on managers at all as opposed to the general organizational population. We explained our rationale for doing so as being far less to do with elitist or status-oriented concerns. Managers are in our view no more or less important than any other category of employee. However, they frequently find themselves at pivotal intersections when it comes to brokering knowledge, the diffusion of learning and the manufacture of meaning. We followed this up with a historical exploration of where and how the very notion of management emerged, complementing this with a geographical and cultural analysis of the different meanings it has come to have. We finished the chapter by outlining four overarching principles that will be guiding our exploration of management development as we move through the book. In doing so we align ourselves with Schuler et al. (2002), who call for more qualitative research to study the processes by which international HRM policies (including training and development) evolve, diffuse and become institutionalized. If this can be done in a way which gives equal weight to both macro and micro factors in a given country or region, gives due consideration to issues of diversity, then we will have made real progress in illuminating the arena of management development. As will become clearer, such concerns will come to interpenetrate the multiple discourses (both Grand and meso-level) that we invoke as our analysis proceeds. It is to our four Grand Discourses of management development that we now turn as we move into Part 2 of the book.

Summary

- **For a number of reasons, distinctions between leaders and managers (and their development) can be critically challenged. Their substance may lie far more in their rhetorical or discursive effects than in any ontological consistency.**
- **Management training, management education and management learning are separate fields of enquiry to that of management development but, in practice, the boundaries are becoming increasingly blurred.**
- **The label 'manager' varies widely in its meaning according to context and, certainly in the West, comes with a good deal of historical baggage.**
- **Whatever the cultural and historical expectations of what managers should do, they play a pivotal role in organizations and their development needs to be taken seriously.**
- **In research terms, the field of management development is relatively immature and would benefit from cross-national, meso-level and multi-discourse analysis.**