

# Considering leadership pedagogy in creative arts education

Leadership  
pedagogy

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91

## Abstract

**Purpose** – In the following theoretical article, the author generates a theory of Leadership Pedagogy and its connection to Creative Arts Education.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The article analyzes Leadership Theory across three pillars: Socio-relational, Cognitive and Creative, and how these areas underscore thoughtful and caring pedagogy and inclusive teaching in undergraduate education.

**Findings** – Drawing on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), the article advocates for a flexible, multifaceted approach to curricular design rooted in theoretical pluralism, prioritizing interdisciplinary methods to bridge theory and practice in Creative Arts Education.

**Originality/value** – The article concludes with implications for future research and collaboration connecting Leadership Studies and the Arts.

**Keywords** Leadership, Pedagogy, Creativity, Theoretical pluralism, Scholarship of teaching and learning, Cognition, Socio-relational

**Paper type** Theoretical manuscript

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## Introduction: Theoretical pluralism in leadership and the creative arts

Creative Arts Education and Leadership Studies share many similarities. Both disciplines employ creative and cognitive thinking processes and consider social structures and organizational hierarchies. Additionally, success in both fields is measured by various interpersonal factors, partnerships, and a combination of formal and informal leadership structures. As both fields are highly interdisciplinary, generating a theoretical framework for building Leadership Pedagogy necessitates a flexible model that empowers educators to implement teaching ideas that suit their needs. Theoretical pluralism considers multiple research methodologies and cultural influences and is particularly useful when generating theory that reflects multiple disciplinary perspectives (Lowe, Magala, & Hwang, 2012). Griffiths (1997) argues that educational research is often disconnected from the day-to-day activities in classroom settings; theoretical pluralism considers the social context of educational research and emphasizes practice.

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) research in both Leadership Studies and the Creative Arts suggests that educators and students develop leadership capacities through a combination of individual traits (intellect, personality), social environments (classroom, online, community) and learning strategies (planning, troubleshooting, honing one's craft). The many factors that inspire leadership, formally and informally, are highly adaptable and not limited to one specific style. Further complicating the issue is that Leadership Studies have generally lacked consensus on how to apply and interpret theory, necessitating multiple interpretations and mechanisms (Glynn & Raffaelli, 2010).



There has been a longstanding debate about whether leadership capacity is something people are born with or can be learned through mentoring and experience. Some refer to this as the “nature or nurture” leadership conundrum (Johnson *et al.*, 1998; McDermott, Kidney, & Flood, 2011; Turner & Tsang, 2023). Similar debates have long existed in the creative and performing arts. What is clear is that organizations are increasingly turning to the leadership traits of artists to drive change in management approaches, including those from the visual arts (Adler, 2006; Kakim & Priest, 2020). Leadership is a broad concept, and scholarship on the pedagogies of leadership, or *Leadership Pedagogy*, emphasizes building individual capacities for growth and learning in various communities (Sergiovanni, 1998).

Emerging from a global pandemic, many in the Creative Arts have collaborated, rebuilt and moved forward with a renewed sense of urgency as multiple sectors try to make up for lost revenues and time (Rich, 2023). Likewise, many aspects of the Creative Arts sector are still struggling to recover (Acharya, 2023; Dinardi, Wortman, & Muñoz Hernández, 2023; Nixon & Davis, 2023). And while it will take years to analyze the effects of an extended global lockdown comprehensively, there are valuable lessons educators can apply as they work with the next generation of content creators, musicians, performing artists and entrepreneurs in colleges and universities. Though intrinsically rewarding, pursuing an artistic career path is unpredictable, even with supportive mentoring (Larson & Walker, 2006). Competition is fierce for performance opportunities, exhibitions, commissions and opportunities to showcase one’s craft. Embedding high impact practices (HIP) with undergraduate arts education provides fertile ground to engage students in conceiving their artistic pathway across multiple domains, community engagement, improved learning outcomes and potential employment after graduation (Miller, Martin, & Frenette, 2022). Indeed, the priority for many is to hone their craft and learn as much about it as possible—whether photography, graphic design, animation, painting, sculpting, theater or musical composition.

Any suggestion on monetizing one’s art may seem contradictory to the larger goal of providing students with a high-quality, well-rounded education (Dimitriadis, Cole, & Costello, 2009). However, the point here is not to disregard the principles of a liberal arts education but rather to consider how we can help students cultivate additional skills to help them create a longer-term plan and focus on their careers after graduation and provide educators with additional teaching and mentoring tools. This article explores the potential leadership skills poised to assist Creative Arts students better navigate an increasingly tenuous career path, and the aspects of Leadership Pedagogy educators might incorporate into their practice as they mentor students in university settings.

In the sections below, I outline three pillars of Leadership Pedagogy and their connection to Creative Arts Education. The pillars discussed are Social-Relational, Cognitive and Creative. Each pillar considers leadership styles and approaches through a creative blend of theory and practice. Data and conceptual analyses include a literature review emphasizing the SoTL from Leadership Studies and Creative Arts Education. Additionally, the article considers how careful application of theoretical pluralism yields interdisciplinary connections between Leadership Studies and Creative Arts Education (Griffiths, 1997; Hutchings & Taylor Huber, 2008; Midgley, 2011).

For the purposes here, I frame “the Creative Arts” based on the description put forward by Alter, Hays, and O’Hara (2009):

While uniquely different in appearance and method to each other, the Creative Arts employ similar cognitive processes, ultimately allowing language and thought to be expressed through a variety of representations. These disciplines represent forms of communication that allow people to experience the challenges of the artist as an actor, dancer, visual artist, or musician (p. 2).

The aim is to have a flexible conception of these varied disciplines and extend that definition to include related areas in new media and the creative and cultural sectors. Throughout the article, I review Leadership Pedagogy and its connection to Creative Arts Education. This process aims to cultivate a broader understanding of leadership in the Creative Arts and how educators might apply such concepts to their teaching practice. By synthesizing scholarship from various academic fields, I aim to generate a working theory on the aspects of Leadership Pedagogy that advance teaching and learning in Creative Arts Education and related fields.

A note on terminology. For the discussions outlined throughout the article, I initially frame Leadership Studies and the Creative Arts separately. This is intentional and is meant to position both fields as engaging multiple domains of experience, learning and communities. More importantly, in attempting to generate a practical theory on pedagogy that bridges these academic disciplines (rather than pit them against one another), a concept that Jones (2011) defines as “[a] messiness of academic practice” emerges (p. 109). Teaching, by its nature, is deeply personal and intricate, just like Leadership and the Creative Arts professions, which at times have struggled to be defined and understood concisely (Counts, Farmer, & Shepard, 1995; Hay, 2016). On the contrary, the goal of presenting Leadership Pedagogy is not to create a singular definition but rather to adopt a flexible model that stakeholders can use to improve their practice in the future and promote interconnectivity among multiple academic fields.

### What is leadership pedagogy?

Rosch and Anthony (2012) describe Leadership Pedagogy below:

The emphasis on leadership as the foundation of successful pedagogy, then, means educators should conceptualize pedagogy as larger than teaching strategies, where educators serve as leaders themselves in helping students learn and grow (pp. 37–38).

Leadership Pedagogy is frequently covered in business schools. Though this is beneficial in some ways, the teaching approach stresses personality traits rather than considering organizational structures, resistance to change and stakeholder power dynamics (Collinson & Tourish, 2015). Leadership Pedagogy is embedded in research methods in the social sciences, as researchers and practitioners with broad expertise provide insights on curricular decisions and culture that promote reflection and research insights (Lewthwaite & Nind, 2016). Likewise, STEM Educators in urban schools have focused on building leadership capacity emphasizing social justice and equity in K-12 students.

Central to understanding Leadership Pedagogy is identifying those who work in the broader arena of Leadership Education. Jenkins and Owen (2016) explain that educators working in Leadership disciplines comprise a broad cross-section of experts from myriad academic and professional backgrounds working in multiple roles in university settings. At hand is understanding the multiplicity of experiences and perspectives that underscore what leadership is and is not—which has evolved into a robust academic field over the past thirty years with theoretical and practical implications for educators (Guthrie & Jenkins, 2018; Watt, 2003).

In educational settings, organizational culture is crucial in determining formal and informal leadership structures, with teachers often occupying multiple roles beyond classroom instruction (MacNeill, Cavanagh, & Silcox, 2003). Rosch and Anthony (2012) argue that successful Leadership Pedagogy means supporting students throughout their studies by building supportive learning communities focused on a shared vision. Additionally, educators have drawn on multiple leadership theories to build course assignments that bridge theory and practice, multiculturalism and a model of effective leadership (Mello, 1999).

Male and Palaologou (2015) note that the relationship between the two words (Leadership and Pedagogy) is only sometimes apparent. While pedagogy describes the specific aspects of teaching and learning to meet required course objectives, leadership describes the broader execution of such initiatives in educational settings (Male & Palaologou, 2015). The issue is that departments with arts-based degrees (ex: visual and performing arts in universities) must fulfill specific requirements set forth by their accreditation bodies. The term pedagogy must adequately reflect the broader social community in education (Male & Palaologou, 2015).

Just as the field of Leadership Education is multifaceted, so too are the pedagogical approaches required to reach students, particularly those from underserved communities that require remediation and additional preparation to be successful in college (Nix, Jones & Hu, 2021b). Pedagogy extends beyond specific teaching and learning strategies; faculty, staff and administrators are often tasked with addressing crises outside the classroom, including food insecurity, economic precarity and health issues (Nix, Jones, Daniels & Hu, 2021a). McCarron and Yamanaka (2022) outline the breadth and scope of leadership pedagogies in online communities, especially during the novel coronavirus pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Underpinned by the reflective “duty of care” ethos described by Green, Anderson, Tait, and Tran (2020), the strategies aimed at cultivating communities detailed by McCarron and Yamanaka (2022) mirror those undertaken by Creative Arts Educators to reinvent musical communities that emphasize Trauma Informed Care and a willingness to quickly learn new technology (Walzer, 2021, 2023).

Leadership Pedagogy is broadly applied arts education. With ongoing funding cuts and loss of autonomy in curricular decision-making in arts and humanities programs, Smilan and Miraglia (2009) argue that an arts-focused Leadership Pedagogy recognizes teachers’ content knowledge, promotes critical thinking and builds creativity through connected learning communities. Another aspect of Leadership Pedagogy is that it extends the possibilities of learning beyond the required course content, giving educators more creativity to implement projects that promote growth for the teacher and student alike (Webb, 2005).

Educators have used several teaching strategies to address leadership in interdisciplinary art coursework, including literary theory (Rodgers, Bradley, & Ward, 2010), project-based learning (Hawari & Noor, 2020), narrative storytelling (Armstrong & McCain, 2021) and promoting knowledge exchange (Borup, 2014). Others have integrated digital tools in the arts and humanities to expand SoTL possibilities (Spivey & McGarry, 2019). A similar theme among the studies cited is that Leadership Pedagogy is generally ineffective without considering the socio-relational context where learning occurs; this is especially true in early childhood education (Heikka & Waniganayake, 2011).

### SoTL and leadership studies

Research on SoTL has increased over the past several years. Hubball and Clarke (2010) note that SoTL is equal parts multidisciplinary, practice-focused and community-driven and integrates diverse research methodologies to achieve long-term change in each field. Much like the associated disciplines that comprise Leadership (Education, Pedagogy, Academic Studies), SoTL is frequently nebulous and challenging to define, especially by those in clinical fields, including health care (Cox, Wettergreen, Savage, & Brock, 2023). Kreber (2007) explains that SoTL research concerns three primary aims: how students learn, their experiences in higher education and how educators promote authentic connections in their classrooms. Prosser (2008) echoes this, emphasizing the collaborative efforts required by multiple educational stakeholders (faculty, staff, administrators) to advance learning concepts.

In Leadership Studies, recent SoTL scholarship points to a disconnect between research expertise and the broader leadership culture in higher education (Simmons & Taylor, 2019). Building leadership capacity in students requires targeted action research in learning communities that students occupy, along with evaluation strategies that assess how leadership is distributed among stakeholders (Simmons & Taylor, 2019). Webb and Tierney (2020) analyzed SoTL interventions at two different universities, one in the UK (teaching-focused) and the other in the United States (research-focused). Data from the studies revealed that while both groups improved their knowledge and understanding of pedagogy, the culture within each institution and local community play an equal role in shaping teaching effectiveness, as each unit (departmental, college, or university) has a particular set of politics and interpersonal dynamics (Webb & Tierney, 2020).

There are many challenges involved with cultivating Leadership Pedagogy in university settings. Administrators generally have the most “power” to advance leadership initiatives; however, many academic deans lack basic knowledge of leadership traits despite increasing such university appointments (De La Harpe & Mason, 2014). Also, as the number of non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty continues to rise, educators across multiple disciplines face many challenges in building a program of improvement that explicitly addresses teaching needs. Often, such faculty are not eligible for research grants and professional development opportunities, making it hard to address discipline-specific SoTL issues and build like-minded communities (Simmons, Eady, Scharff, & Gregory, 2021). For Leadership Pedagogy to “stick,” faculty likely need support and stakeholder buy-in to ensure that new teaching approaches align with Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs). The issue is that NTT faculty (both full-time and contingent or adjunct) do the bulk of the teaching in most university departments. Presumably, they have the most contact with an assortment of students of varying backgrounds, yet there is little reward for cultivating innovative pedagogy if one remains on the margins and lacks access to influential networks (Simmons *et al.*, 2021).

Despite the challenges, there have been some recent innovations that reflect a plethora of research and pedagogical approaches with SoTL; many faculty have adopted a reflexive manner of cultivating leadership ethos, as this method is particularly effective in smaller communities of practitioners (Din *et al.*, 2022; Myatt, Gannaway, Chia, Fraser, & McDonald, 2018). Nonetheless, SoTL research has its critics in higher education. While SoTL has the potential to inspire faculty to examine their teaching approaches, some researchers suggest that a new model of SoTL is needed and is likely to fail without adequate modeling and support from academic administrators (Canning & Masika, 2022; Floyd & Platt, 2013). Therefore, any consideration of how to build future leaders in the Creative Arts must reflect the needs of local communities. In many cases, communities are separated into smaller networks, each with the power to shape the direction of SoTL initiatives (Verwoord & Poole, 2016). Faculty have also assumed peer-leadership roles in learning communities, with each group collaborating to provide ongoing professional development design to address teaching and research (Henry, Brantmeier, Tongen, Taylor Jaffee, & Pierrakos, 2021).

### **SoTL, leadership and the creative arts**

Connecting the theory and practice of leadership and assessing its effectiveness in the Creative Arts starts by identifying those with the most influence over learning communities. Those with a background in the performing arts frequently assume such roles in music schools, and their leadership acumen draws from both fields (art and leadership). It is expressed through creativity, openness to new ideas and an innate desire to serve the institution through transformative leadership (Uscher, 2020). The challenge, however, is figuring out how to foster similar skill sets for students.

Potter and Wuetherick (2015) note that while SoTL research has inspired a fertile exchange of ideas among university educators, the research methods and ideologies have primarily been confined to the social sciences, placing arts and humanities-based topics on the margins. One explanation for the need for more coverage of arts-based research in the SoTL literature is that many journals prefer established methodologies and writing styles in the social sciences. In contrast, arts and humanities research encompasses various mixed methods and disciplinary applications (Potter & Wuetherick, 2015). The lack of arts-focused SoTL research reinforces a broader criticism noted by Schroeder (2007), who argues that much SoTL scholarship is confined to classroom-specific inquiry. Moreover, classroom inquiry dramatically changed during the coronavirus pandemic. As people quarantined, teachers and students experienced a host of new issues. In his study on performing arts student learning during lockdown, Simamora (2020) found that students were concerned by security issues in online environments, quality of curricular materials and economic precarity.

While beneficial at the local level, individual research projects will likely only capture the attention of policymakers with additional support. Many Creative Arts fields have published SoTL research evaluating portfolios and performance practice; critique-based pedagogy is another option that links theory and practice as the instructor and students emphasize dialog and process in the classroom (Klebesadel & Kornetsky, 2009). Dialog and process have also proven effective when undertaking SoTL initiatives in a Creative Arts university, sharing knowledge and best practices and garnering administrative buy-in. (Graham, 2007).

A study of Leadership Pedagogy among mid-level arts administrators found that those in the role have a strong understanding of arts-based content but vary in their knowledge and confidence to articulate a vision, build consensus among faculty members and drive change in their organizations (De La Harpe & Mason, 2014). One possible explanation for this is that while research-based universities have undertaken SoTL initiatives in undergraduate teaching, less than 20% have integrated formal language into faculty handbooks and procedures, thus limiting the reach of professional development (Gansemer-Topf, Mendee, Liang, Kensington-Miller, & Alqahtani, 2023).

Articulating one's creative path happens in multiple ways. In music, program notes are frequently written to accompany a live performance. Gallery exhibitions often include artist statements along with details supporting the visual media. Entering a museum, one will see rich historical information and digital tools (audio accompaniment, interactive exhibits) to give the visitor an immersive experience. While many of these items are written, they are also created using sound, video and virtual reality (Carrozzino & Bergamasco, 2010; Dimitriadis *et al.*, 2009; Hirose, 2006; Shehade & Stylianou-Lambert, 2020). Artists must conceptualize their ideas and make their work accessible to a broader audience. The same applies when applying for grants, scholarships and employment opportunities.

The advantage of Leadership Pedagogy is that it requires the artist to think about their work across multiple domains—the craft, the community and the context. The craft is the specific medium in which the artist works. This might be music performance, theater, dance, or photography in the Creative Arts. The craft is the skill honed through the undergraduate degree, along with a demonstration of creative output—compositions, gallery exhibitions, recordings and performances. The community includes those the artist works with and learns from—most likely peers and their teachers. The context involves where the artist works (classroom and community) and how they situate their work locally and beyond.

### Introducing the three pillars

The literature review revealed some commonalities among SoTL, Leadership Studies and the Creative Arts fields. First, while there are subsets in discipline, research in each field has



steadily increased over the past several years. Second, SoTL in Leadership Studies and the Creative Arts must reflect the cultures these fields occupy. In university settings, this most often occurs in the classroom; however, that is not always the case. As institutions were forced to shift their activities to the online space, many existing student issues were exacerbated—among these were equity, access to resources, socioeconomic status and a collective sense of uncertainty. Third, one reason for the lack of understanding of Leadership Pedagogy may be the fluid nature of how people think, feel and communicate with others. Put another way, the characteristics that define “success” in Leadership Pedagogy and how it is evaluated through SoTL are subjective and not confined to a single trait or style like charisma. On the contrary, multiple research methods, including Action Research and Grounded Theory, are used to collect, interpret and share data with learning communities.

For these reasons, the timing is right to focus on a few central “pillars” that represent a holistic interpretation of the cognitive, emotional and interpersonal dynamics that test a leader’s capacity during their formative stages. Based on [Vygotsky’s \(1978\)](#) educational theories of cognitive development, the three Pillars (Socio-Relational, Cognitive and Creative) reflect the interplay among communities—mainly how people think and create meaning ([McLeod, 2022](#)).

### *Socio-relational*

The first pillar of Leadership Pedagogy in the Creative Arts is Socio-Relational. Complex in scope, [Clark-Polner and Clark \(2014\)](#) argue that one’s social behaviors are situated in a larger relational context and include all “social [and non-social] thoughts, feelings and behaviors” (n.p.). [Glăveanu and Tanggaard \(2014\)](#) frame the creative artist identity across three areas: individual (artist with themselves), artist with others (audiences, collaborators) and artist in society. As discussed, leadership occurs in formal and informal settings and considers an organization’s social, organizational and interpersonal dynamics. This is no different in university settings, as undergraduate students from varying sociocultural backgrounds comprise undergraduate degree programs in music, theater, visual art and related areas. As the adage reminds us, “we’re in a people business.” Socio-Relational capacity, however, is only sometimes built through traditional means such as face-to-face communication and in-person meetings. With the increased focus on digital communication and telecommuting (pre- and post-pandemic), leaders have been forced to consider how they foster collaboration. [Torre and Sarti \(2020\)](#) argue that leveraging mobile technology can advance “e-leadership,” building trust and vision through non-traditional means such as social media and digital communication. In this case, the development of innovative technology is evaluated on its ability to engage people and how the leader considers the user’s needs.

The Creative Arts engage with a broad range of audiences, funding mechanisms and collaborative partnerships. For undergraduate students, much of this work happens through group projects, partnerships and performances (ex: theatrical plays, performing ensembles, dance troupes and exhibitions). These are not the only possibilities; they merely describe a host of opportunities for students to showcase their skills, both individually and collectively.

Creative Arts educators’ challenge is striking a balance between individual and collaborative work; this is particularly true when assessing the contribution of each group member ([Orr, 2010](#)). In many cases, honing one’s craft is a solitary existence. Spending years in the practice room or dance studio requires individual focus and discipline. Furthermore, while undergraduate students usually enter as part of a yearly cohort and enroll in a typical course sequence, the expectation remains that they will spend hours working on individual projects and techniques. Considering this, one might ask where educators “find room” for Leadership Pedagogy in an already packed curriculum that requires Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) coursework ([Bequette & Bequette, 2012](#)). One way to address

this issue is by understanding what aspects of leadership might appeal to Creative Arts students and how learning such competencies will benefit them in the long run, hence building a pillar around socio-relational learning and pedagogy.

Building leadership capacity in the Creative Arts must consider the possible social components of an artistic undertaking. Leadership capacity is built through enhanced social capital, honed through participatory action research and improved relationship and communication skills (McCallum & O'Connell, 2009; Roberts, 2013). In the Creative Arts, relationships are built through collaborations, group projects and entrepreneurial endeavors such as commissions, performances, exhibitions and festivals. More than just "getting a foot in the door," effective mentoring requires understanding the artist and how they view their work. For many, this will be the first time they have considered who their audience is and how best to reach them through crowd-sourcing, experimentation, embracing unpredictability and leveraging social media (Hui, Gerber, & Dow, 2014; Marstine, 2007). Furthermore, this means challenging undergraduates to communicate in multiple domains—written, verbal, online and digital media. Likewise, the educator may occupy multiple roles in building a Leadership Pedagogy, including the facilitator, researcher and observer during a service learning or action-based project (Meyer & Wood, 2017).

Leadership Pedagogy encourages creative artists to consider the broader context of their emerging identity and philosophy. While an artist statement might imply a single person reflecting on their work, it need not be confined to one individual. Educators can encourage a broader reflective practice through case studies and service-learning projects. Here, the students are exposed to creative art practice that involves investigating a specific issue, exploring thematic content, promoting cross-disciplinary collaboration and engaging students in participatory action research and service learning beyond the classroom walls (Wood & Meyer, 2016). The socio-relational component of Leadership Pedagogy involves designing a curriculum that cultivates a sense of belonging, provides a forum for students to engage with their peers in a supportive manner and allows space for reflection and creativity (Dallow, 2003).

### *Cognitive*

Scientific approaches to Leadership Studies research now integrate cognitive analyses from neuroscience and biology to assess the complex interplay between personality and human behavior (Lee, Senior, & Butler, 2012). In the Creative Arts sector, scholars have also examined the role of technology and games as predictors of leadership skills (de Freitas and Routledge, 2013). Electronic technology is widely prevalent in arts education and is crucial in facilitating leadership, student learning and multiple forms of literacy (Krug, 2004). The need for critical thinking skills by graduates of art education programs is palpable; however, students who are products of rigid curricular structures find it more challenging to interpret and synthesize less clear-cut information. To alleviate this gap, practitioners and scholars take an interdisciplinary approach, drawing on cognitive science, SoTL and design-based processes (Vanada, 2013). Reflecting on cognition and decision-making, another benefit of Leadership Pedagogy is that it builds on classroom innovation by addressing the challenges of multiple stakeholders—teachers, administrators, students, policy decision-makers and communities (Male & Palaiologou, 2012). Babu, Kumar and Kumar (2022) contend that there is potential for building leadership capacity in the arts, as the cognitive processes associated with performing require tremendous concentration and focus on memorizing and assimilating new styles. Forging an entrepreneurial path in the Creative Arts involves multiple cognitive processes, including strategizing, problem-solving, creativity and conception (Pollard & Wilson, 2014). Along with the many socio-relational aspects of building contacts, building effective communication and adjusting course, nascent



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entrepreneurs must also keep abreast of trends in their industry and establish a presence that attracts like-minded people (Pollard & Wilson, 2014). Beyond individual traits such as charisma and personality, leaders use a range of cognitive processes. Mumford, Todd, Higgs, and McIntosh (2017, p. 24) categorize these across nine primary areas:

- (1) Problem definition
- (2) Cause/goal analysis
- (3) Constraint analysis
- (4) Planning
- (5) Forecasting
- (6) Creative thinking
- (7) Idea evaluation
- (8) Wisdom
- (9) Sensemaking/Visioning

As evidenced by the combination of critical and creative thinking skills, cognitive leadership skills encompass idea generation, gathering and evaluating information, planning and implementing strategies, and learning from experience (Mumford *et al.*, 2017). Prescient here is the idea that the nine attributes are not siloed. In contrast, cognitive leadership skills are situational and highly dependent on the intellectual abilities and support mechanisms of the leader and their followers, known as cognitive resource theory (Fiedler, 1986, 1995). Nevertheless, while under intense pressure, leadership skills (just like job performance), are influenced by a multitude of factors including support systems, physical health, motivation and institutional policies—factors that move beyond cognitive resource theory to the 21<sup>st</sup> century model known as job demands—resource theory (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023).

### *Creativity*

Creativity is measured through one's ability to generate new ideas, follow a thoughtful process, troubleshoot issues and express themselves individually and collectively. Like the socio-relational pillar, creative leadership embodies multiple cognitive, emotional, social and interpersonal spheres through art (Rodgers *et al.*, 2010). In arts-based fields, creativity is also understood to be less focused on a fixed outcome and more concerned with the process. In other words, there is much value in recognizing how artists and educators build, conceptualize, revise and accomplish a result rather than focusing on the fixed output (Briskman, 1980; Kopcha, Neumann, Ottenbreit-Leftwich, & Pitman, 2020).

In their Manifesto, Glaveanu *et al.* (2020) argue that meaningful creativity is physical and embodied, intertwined with culture and power dynamics, socio-relational, crucial to society, varied in scope and requires specificity in theory and practice. The authors frame the Manifesto with a sense of urgency, advocating for robust research methodologies that recognize established procedures and similarly recognize the social implications of scholarship (Glaveanu *et al.*, 2020). Creativity research is not new; however, the ideas expressed in the Manifesto have implications for the burgeoning areas of interdisciplinary scholarship that blend Leadership Pedagogy and the Creative Arts. In essence, the effectiveness of Leadership Pedagogy cannot be measured solely by the impact one person has on a field. This person could be a future graduate, a single teacher, or a single enterprise in higher education. More appropriate is to assess the multiple stakeholders involved in any artistic enterprise:

- (1) Leaders and followers
- (2) Artist and audience
- (3) Teacher and students
- (4) Enterprise and community

Glaveanu *et al.* (2020) remind us that at the most basic level, creativity research is socio-cultural.

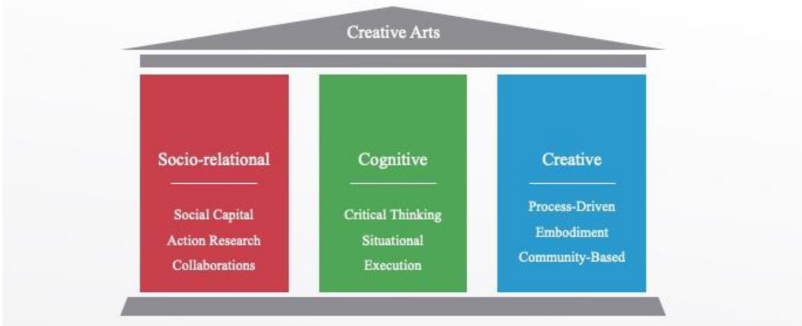
This Manifesto represents thus a call to move beyond focusing on the individual alone, isolated from his/her social, material and cultural context. This is not a rejection of research on individuals, in particular research into individual differences, but, rather, an invitation to integrate and (re)interpret its concepts, methods and findings within a wider, socio-cultural framework (p. 744).

A practical evaluation of Leadership Pedagogy must similarly recognize the social contexts in which such activities occur (ex: undergraduate programs, communities, online), those occupying positions of power (ex: educators, academic administrators, accreditation agencies, hiring managers, funding mechanisms) and how fulfilling learning outcomes benefit everyone. It is not enough to say that we are training the future leaders of our respective fields without reflecting on what kind of world arts leaders will occupy in the future and the role we play as educators in preparing students for that challenging undertaking (see Figure 1).

**Implications for practice: Leadership pedagogy in the creative arts**

An effective Leadership Pedagogy in the Creative Arts accomplishes three essential aims. First, educators must be recognized for their content expertise and encouraged to move beyond limited instruction. Instead, they are incentivized to develop projects and assessments that reflect the social contexts of their students and encourage multiple ways of thinking and doing. More importantly, the hierarchal structures traditionally determining instruction (teacher-focused) and pedagogy (administrator-focused) must be recalibrated such that leadership roles are more fluid (Pan, Liu, Ma, & Qu, 2018; Sun, Frank, Penuel, & Kim, 2013). Assessing leadership effectiveness must also consider the arts and their role in society. Second, applying relevant theory to promote innovative teaching must consider

Three Pillars of Leadership Pedagogy



**Figure 1.**  
Three pillars of  
leadership pedagogy in  
the creative arts

Source(s): Image created by author

multiple ways leadership acumen is fostered—cognitively, relationally, emotionally, socially and creatively. Such leadership traits may not be innate but may be cultivated through supportive, pragmatic mentoring by teachers who demonstrate their Creative Arts knowledge formally and informally. Beyond discipline-specific instruction, theory must be flexible and practical so stakeholders can find the most helpful information for their institution. Third, Training future arts leaders requires that curricula include assessments that promote critical and creative thinking and doing. As expressed earlier, one way to accomplish this is by designing service learning and collaborative projects that put students into groups, give them a real-world problem to tackle and examine questions that challenge their conceptual understanding of art and its function in a broader community. For this endeavor to be successful, faculty need actual professional development and administrative support, with a particular emphasis on providing equitable access to non-tenure-track and contingent faculty members. Finally, Leadership Pedagogy is most worthwhile when stakeholders have the flexibility to adopt research methodologies that emphasize a practical, reflective model of teaching and learning and promote a process-driven, iterative approach to curricular decision-making that promotes the Creative Arts holistically, such that future graduates are well-prepared to navigate the future and contribute meaningfully to their chosen artistic pathway.

## Conclusion

Throughout the article, I have endeavored to generate a flexible theory of Leadership Pedagogy and its applicability in the Creative Arts. A conceptual framework for the three pillars of Leadership Pedagogy might best be understood as an interdisciplinary connection between Vygotsky's (1978) cognitive development theory and Meier's (2016) application of Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) to advance blended learning. Ultimately, how leaders are built depends highly on the spaces they occupy, and their roles are not always easy to define. What is clear is that notions of "Leadership", "Creativity", "Art" and their associated pillars (Cognitive, Socio-Relational and Creative) must account for the multilayered aspects of theory, practice and situational contexts that comprise university settings. Moreover, what SoTL offers is a mixed-method research ethos that encourages personal reflection, service learning and multiple dissemination possibilities—some of which have emerged through "e-leadership," a manner of communication that embraces mobile and digital technology. Ultimately, Leadership Pedagogy is not confined to the Creative Arts but rather a launching pad for fostering thoughtful, people-focused practitioners and researchers in multiple professional settings in and out of education.

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