THINKING WITH FEELING : SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND LEADERSHIP

PhD

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents Barbara and Neville and grandparents Elle, Elsa, Joachim, Ivy and Henry; and to Žanis; and to Helle.

And to my dear Aunty Ira who like my parents always believed in the power and freedom education provides and missed out on such opportunities.

Malicious leadership inflicted much cruelty, pain, and upheaval in your lives but your great strength as individuals was in countering evil by being warm, generous, humane, kind and exceptionally intelligent and loving people.

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“You can do anything if you try little one!” Mama, I have tried. I hope that it makes you proud.

PREFACE

There is often an attempt to acquit undesirable actions and behaviours in the political realm on the basis that they are just part of the nature of politics, and that the need for their application stems from the unique character of the conditions and undertakings which are associated with performing the political role. Acceding to such a conclusion belies the import of political decision making, on the everyday lives of the citizenry, from which the political candidates themselves derive. The rationale for exoneration also appears to overlook that navigating political intrigue is also part of the organisational life of numbers of Australian employees, without them being able to avail themselves of exercising the same licence or absolution concerning their conduct, such as is applied by their political counterparts.

In 1891 Australia's foundation Prime Minister Sir Edmund Barton expressed of his government:

> "I hope … the result of our labour will be … an example of freedom, political morality, and just action … which will one day be the envy of the world" (Australian Federal Election Speeches, 2017).

The sentiment exemplified by Sir Edmund Barton is that of socially intelligent leadership. It speaks to the setting of an exemplar by our political representatives rather than excusing them from specific standards of behaviour. These thoughts are echoed by a modern-day leader in the Australian complex project development field, who shared his reflections about the nature of socially intelligent leadership and how these ideas influenced his leadership actions:

> "Followers have agency. They do not have to follow, they choose to follow. Followers in effect grant a leader licence to lead … For them to want this they had to believe in the quest, believe it was possible and they had to believe in what I said. For them to believe my words they had to witness my behaviour, correlate it with my words and form the judgement that my words could be trusted" (Mathew Dalmau, 2017).

A picture that expresses the quintessence of social intelligence in action was captured from an incident in Western Australia. In 2014 at approximately 8:50 am at Stirling Station in Western Australia a man was boarding a train destined to Perth when he tripped, and one of his legs became trapped between the train and the platform. Staff organised for other passengers that

were present to join with them to tilt the train to free the man. The train driver was also notified to ensure that the train was not set in motion.

Source: http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-08-06/people-push-a-train-off-a-man27s-leg/5653174

This thesis intends to evoke consideration of socially intelligent leadership through an assessment of how its application occurs through the actions of our political leaders.

I hope you enjoy the journey.

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GLOSSARY

Co-creation	Employees and clients cooperate to create value in products, processes and services (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004)
Emotional intelligence	Perceptiveness and skill in dealing with emotions and interpersonal relationships (Oxford English Dictionary, 2015). "A type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate amongst them and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p.85)
Emotional Labour	Coined by Hochschild (1983), emotional labour is a concept whereby employees align their feelings and/or any able to be seen emotional expressions to those of the organisation they work for. Furthermore, the notion of emotional labour entails employees being organisationally compelled, to feel and act in a certain way towards clients, in service interactions, through the use of organisationally imposed mandatory rules, e.g. instructions to use expressions such as, "Have a nice day". More positively, emotional labour is not merely concerned with quashing or conveying emotions to influence upbeat sentiments in others but also entails methods to help staff to manage their own emotions when coping perhaps with irate customers or difficult circumstances (Surman & Sturdy, 2009).
Killing Season	A reference to the last week of Parliament before the winter and summer break, known as the most dangerous time for a vulnerable leader (Knox, 2015).
Organised emotional care	Developed by Lopez (2006) as part of what Lopez describes as the other end of the continuum from emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983). Organisations can create an environment that is not prescriptive in the emotional requirements of staff. Instead, they can construct friendly environs that cultivate an

	opportunity for caring relationships to happen, between those giving service and those receiving it.
Psychopath	A psychopath is a person that is lacking in empathy and remorse. People who are psychopathic prey ruthlessly on others using charm, deceit, violence or other methods that allow them to get with they want. The symptoms of psychopathy include: lack of a conscience or sense of guilt, lack of empathy, egocentricity, pathological lying, repeated violations of social norms, disregard for the law, shallow emotions, and a history of victimizing others (Hare, 2011).
Social Intelligence	"…The ability to understand and manage people and … act wisely in human relations" (Thorndike, 1920, p.228). "Social intelligence refers to thought and action directly concerned with actual things and persons in one's hands …" (Thorndike, 1920, p.220). "Social intelligence may be defined, as the ability to understand others, manage people, and act wisely in social contexts" (Seal, Scott & Royce-Davis, 2010, p.3).
Narcissism .	"Excessive interest in or admiration of oneself and one's physical appearance". "Extreme selfishness, with a grandiose view of one's own talents and a craving for admiration, as characterizing a personality type" (Oxford Dictionary, 2017, 2nd March) "Narcissists have a strong sense of entitlement and a constant need for attention and admiration. They are arrogant and consider themselves to be superior to others" (Academy of Management Insights, 2017)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the dynamics of social intelligence in the practice of political leadership. It offers a mode of analysis that has not been attempted before in Australian prime ministerial studies, to further our understanding of contemporary politics. The intention of this thesis is both normative and empirical. That is, it makes a normative case for the importance of social intelligence in Australia's political leaders, which is based on and combined with an empirical study that explores social intelligence in the leader's actions and outcomes.

The inspiration to attempt a framework to analyse the social intelligence of seven of Australia's prime ministers was derived from Thorndike's focus (Thorndike, 1920). Thorndike (1920) defined social intelligence as: "[t]he ability to understand and manage people and .....act wisely in human relations" (Thorndike, E 1920, p.220). Thorndike also suggested that studying behaviours in a context provided better scope for an analysis of such skills. Despite a significant passage of time Higgs and Dulewicz (2016) wrote that the components that Thorndike "included in his 'social intelligence' bear an uncanny resemblance to current thinking on EI" (Higgs and Dulewicz, 2016, p.15).

In the absence of a methodology or study found through the literature review that could be replicated, variables that were identified as relevant skills in the Australian leadership setting were first extracted (Karpin (1995); IBSA (2011). These abilities aligned to the umbrella framework of analysis of exploring social intelligence in context through the conduct and deeds of Australia's prime ministers. Second, a study undertaken in Canada identified criteria specific to the political context of Prime Ministerial tenures, designating seven aspects as indicative of the measurement of successful governance by Prime Ministers (Hillmer and Azzi, 2011). Despite the geographical distance, it can be argued that these six traits are equally applicable in the Australian political setting given that Australia and Canada have comparable governance systems (Kaiser, 2008). The variables provided by the Hillmer and Azzi (2011) study are: stable wielding of power; well defined and communicated goals; skillful cabinet and party management; capacity to unify rather than create dissent; a firm record of accomplishments; enhanced country after their term. 'Organised emotional care' (Lopez, 2006) was used as a reference point for internal leadership dimensions and how the available data elucidates the working environments created and espoused by the leaders.

The thesis also includes an exploration of the Prime Minister's life experiences and what the data might elicit in terms of different or shared experiences amongst them or alternately specific life occurrences within individual prime minister's lives that could be explored for its impact.

A qualitative research analysis has been applied using numerous primary and secondary sources of data such as social media, media more generally, speeches, biographies, interviews, and records from archives. To achieve balance in the face of any latent or implicit political bias, multiple data sources are quoted or credited.

The findings indicate that a lack of social intelligence was a factor in ending each of the prime ministerships irrespective of whether overall the prime ministers were deficient or exceptional in their practice of social intelligence.