Leadership: Distributed Leadership, Charisma And Leadership As An Art Of Motivating A Group Of People

Question 1.

Distributed leadership is commonly known as shared leadership and involves sharing roles and responsibilities, while decisions are made through multiple people's opinions, not just one. For example, an organisation finding they have a problem and sharing the decision-making process with many staff to get the best plan of action. A benefit of distributed leadership is it may increase team member’s motivation as everyone believes they have a part to play and their input really helps, this will help stop social loafing from occurring as everyone has a part to play. Another benefit is it takes off pressure from those higher up in a company who are expected to take on many roles, by sharing leadership it may significantly reduce the stress on managers/owners of a company, whilst it may also bring out many new creative ideas that may not have come about solely from the managers. However, distributed leadership may come with its costs, firstly groups may take a lot longer to come to a decision as you must satisfy a lot of people's opinions, therefore sometimes it may be easier if one person takes control. Due to this, it means it may not be suitable when time is limited or in dangerous situations, for example a football team deciding who should take the penalty in extra-time. In this situation due to the limited time, an autocratic style of leadership would probably be best to make a quick decision.

Distributed leadership can happen in both planful alignment and spontaneous alignment. Spontaneous alignment is when there is no set plan of action, and roles are set on the spot based on one's knowledge which ends up leading roles to the right people, for example an in-class project. Whereas planful alignment is when roles are given to people/groups before the task ahead, based on people's expertise, such as a rugby team naming the squad before the game. Overall, I believe planful alignment is most appropriate in 21st century organisations as everyone is clear what role they have, this means there is no confusion, so the task is completed a lot faster, unlike spontaneous alignment which takes time to see which roles people will be best suited to. Moreover, spontaneous alignment may lead to people getting roles they're not actually best suited to, or do not want. This is less likely to happen in planful alignment as the person setting roles already knows the people’s strengths and what they're suited as, whereas if roles were set on the spot, it can be difficult to understand who is best suited to which role. Further to this, there may be conflict over who is doing what role as some roles may be more desirable than others, this may cause arguments/disagreements resulting in group cohesion decreasing, leading to a decrease in group performance.

Question 2.

Charisma is a very important aspect of leadership which is often used to motivate and influence performers to bring out certain behaviours through communication and encouragement, for example Sir Winston Church who influenced the nation to win the war using charisma within his leadership. Charismatic authority is defined as “devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him.' (Weber, 1922/1947). Other examples include Nelson Mandela and Mother

Teresa, both who had strong morals, influenced many people and confidence within themselves and others. Many say that it is within the human nature to follow those with a charismatic personality.

On the other hand, transactional leaders motivate performers using rewards, such as promotions. Using rewards gives people motivation to work harder/maximise productivity to achieve these rewards, this hard work will not only benefit the leader/team but the worker if goals are met. Transactional leadership has two parts, contingent reward (giving the reward only if performance standard or work effort is sufficient) and management by expectation (the leader does not interfere, as long as work effort is high and goals set are being met). Nowadays many people would say they'd rather be led by a transactional leader due to the rewards which come with it, however I argue this is not the best leadership style and I'd rather be led by a charismatic leader. Firstly, I believe transactional leadership is only best for new workers/performers, because as you progress and you receive rewards less frequently, your intrinsic motivation will dramatically decrease as you feel like your hard work is going unnoticed, this can lead to demotivation and a fall in self-worth, therefore being led by a charismatic leader will continuously make you feel motivated and may even increase your mood as you want to complete the task for your own personal satisfaction, rather than just for rewards. Lastly, I'd like to be led by a charismatic leader because normally people follow a charismatic leader as they both have a shared vision, therefore if we both believed in something it would enable me to work harder to achieve this goal as I knew someone was standing up for something I believed in. Whilst a charismatic leader normally is very kind/passionate, making people believe in their own hearts what they are striving to achieve, therefore being led by someone who motivates through kindness and persuading speech would make me feel a lot better about myself than just doing something to be selfish and earn a reward.

Question 3.

Leadership is the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal (Ward, 2020). In Western Culture we often prioritise Heroic Leadership, whenever we hear the word 'hero' we often think of fictional super hero's such as Superman. In reality being a hero "is the art of influencing others to their personal best and maximum performance in accomplishing any task, objective, or project while putting their needs and those of the mission above your own" (Cohen, 2013). Many people fail to recognise leadership based on social interaction, for example a mother is a clear leader to their child using relationship orientated leadership, but we often do not take this into consideration. A heroic leader is far more recognised by people, as a heroic leader is often doing something that puts their life at risk, for example an army officer, this is something not many people would do, like run into a warzone to help save others. Therefore, heroic leaders are not seen as often as our everyday leaders as it takes a lot of courage and selflessness to do something heroic, when in reality, other leadership roles seen in everyday life are just as important for society. Therefore, I believe due to the huge significance of a heroic leader, people often forget about the different models of leadership such as situational leadership and even a democratic leaders like our Government.

A real life example of heroic leadership is Nelson Mandela who took the role of leading the transition from apartheid to a multiracial democracy, Nelson Mandela risked his own life and freedom for the needs of others. Mandela is considered a real life hero and throughout the process of inspiring/leading a nation we can see how he used many styles of leadership to

achieve his goals. Mandela used charisma to influence and inspire many black individuals suffering from oppression, he did this through having a strong sense of his own morals, being very self-confident, while showing competence in being a good role model. Nelson used a charismatic style of leadership which meant he didn't need to use many other styles like transactional leadership (giving people rewards), this is because many say its within humans to follow those showing charisma, especially if what they stand for is something which you believe in. Throughout his journey, using charisma helped to aid his transformational style of leadership. To get people to transition/follow his movement, Mandela used the five fundamental practices (Kouzes and Pozner 2002). Firstly, using charisma, he modeled the way by setting an example to the nation standing up for human rights, showing commitment and building the confidence of his followers, while he also inspired a shared vision as he fought against what many knew was wrong, however was too scared to stand up against. Moreover, he challenged the process of what society saw as acceptable, speaking for many, this slowly enabled others to act as everyone had a clear goal, trust in their leader and the help of many others deciding to join the movement. Lastly he encouraged the heart by recognizing people's efforts and how they contributed to the success, this positive feedback/external praise caused an increase in motivation and meant everyone was willing to engage and follow his command which ultimately led him to be president. Concluding, Mandela used charismatic leadership throughout this mission, this charismatic leadership was then used to help transformation, as many people began to follow him for the good of his mission. Mandela was able to use transactional leadership after following the five fundamental practices (Kouzes and Pozner 2002), as he formed a connection by fascinating people with his views and morals. Mandela also used inspirational motivation by setting a clear view of the future if they followed him. Mandela combined this with Idealised Influence (charisma) as he sacrificed his own life to then share his success with the nation, concluding using charisma allowed him to perform transactional leadership. Another example of someone who was considered a 'hero', and who led millions using charisma and transformational leadership was Winston Churchill. Churchill motivated an entire nation to reach its goal of winning the war and maximize its potential through transforming everyone as they begun to think freely and understand what he was doing was the best for everyone. Not only did he change the way Britons thought to help keep pushing everyone through the war however, he changed them in the heart as they trusted him and knew what he was doing was best for themselves and the country. This meant that he successfully used transformational leadership as he got the entire nation behind him to help win the war and bring permanent changes to the country. Using intellectual stimulation, a part of transformational leadership, Churchill emphasised why he was taking many actions and what success it would bring if people did so, this gave people a clear vision of the future and motivated many to work hard for the goal to win the war.

To conclude, I believe the heroic model of leadership is still important in 21st centaury society, however models based on social interaction and relationships should be recognised more often as we don't actually see heroic leadership as much as many other styles. A style of leadership seen much more often seen such as coach-style leadership used by teachers, is an example one of many different styles of leadership seen in the 21st centaury. Leadership based on social interactions, is far more realistic for the average person who is not willing to put themselves second and people must open their minds and understand that leadership is all around us, everyday. Therefore, I believe more must be done to highlight leadership roles based around social interactions such as a team captain, and understand their real significance in society, whilst you don't just have to be a 'hero' to be a good leader.