



Distributed Leadership: Lessons from
Destination Management Organisations

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ABSTRACT

Within a new funding and governance landscape, pooling knowledge and resources has become a fundamental prerequisite to ensuring the long-term sustainability of reshaped, yet financially-constrained Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), which face challenges to deliver value to their destinations and member organisations. Leadership and its distributed dimension, namely Distributed Leadership (DL) is a recent paradigm, which is gaining momentum in the domain of DMOs and destinations as a promising response to these challenges. The overarching aim of this study is to investigate how DMOs enact and practice DL and as such, serve as leadership networks in destinations following the organisational transformation of these DMOs within a new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England.

Three prominent domains from the broad organisational literature, namely DMOs and destinations, leadership and its distributed dimension, and Network theory and its practitioner tool SNA, both underpin and inform the cross-disciplinary approach embedded in this study. By adopting and adapting a recent organisational leadership framework (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010), the underpinned study develops and puts into practice mixed- and multi-method-driven, three-phase methodological framework aimed at identifying the enactment and practice of DL in Destination Milton Keynes (DMK). The methodological framework fuses two strategic organisational literature domains, namely DL and SNA.

Five core objectives contribute to addressing the overarching aim of this study, where the study first deconstructs and contextualises the shifting DMO concept, before defining the political and economic dimensions of its organisational context that influence change on a DMO level. The study then identifies an initial evidence of organisational change within the DMO in focus influenced by shifts in its organisational context, where the development and implementation of Destination Management Plans (DMPs) provide insights into the enactment of DL on a DMO level. The adopted Abductive approach to knowledge accumulation, which is founded on the continuous interplay between existing theoretical contributions and new empirical data, also supports the

development of the DMO Leadership Cycle. Thirdly, after providing evidence of the enactment of DL through DMPs, the study investigates processes related to the practice of DL in DMK by adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for the evaluation of leadership development along with a number of structural and relational network properties. This results in the identification of six contrasting yet interconnected leader types within the organisation in focus. Building on this evidence of the enactment and practice of DL in DMK, the study formulates a response to key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL in DMK and reshaped DMOs in England through the perspective of both senior leaders representing DMO member organisations and policy-makers representing lead figures at VisitEngland. At last, driven by findings derived throughout the three phases of data collection, the study constructs a set of practitioner outputs, which may provide implications for DL practice in reshaped DMOs. Amongst these are guidelines for good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs to inform future leadership practice on a DMO level in the UK and the development of a methodological framework for the identification of DL in DMOs.

Findings from this study build on the existing state of the literature on DMOs and destinations by constructing the DMO Leadership Cycle and its theoretical dimensions, the introduction of definitions of DMOs serving as leadership and DL networks in destinations, and building upon the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle. Findings also build on the existing state of the DMO and destination leadership practice and the application of the DL paradigm in the context of DMOs and destinations in particular by shifting the focus from marketing and management to leadership and DL, the introduction of guidelines on good leadership practice for DMOs, constructing the DMO Leadership Cycle and its practitioner dimensions.

Findings from this study build on the existing state of the literature on leadership and DL by introducing advances in the measurement of DL and the identification of DL behaviours and roles within networks. Findings also build on the existing state of leadership practice and the application of the DL paradigm in particular by providing practitioner insights on how leadership is distributed through an investigation *in situ* beyond traditional fields of application and across diverse organisations.

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Practice

DMK and SEMLEP

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LIST OF KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Key terms	Definitions
Co-opetition	A state of simultaneous co-operation and competition among organisations in a destination (e.g. two hotels being members of a single DMO or operating in the same destination).
Destination	A geographic area that does not follow administrative boundaries, but more-fluid economic areas where tourism and visitor activity occurs.
Destination Organisation	Refers to organisations, which are impacted by or have an impact on the tourism and visitor industry. They may or may not be DMOs.
Destination Management (DM)	Strategic management and planning (including marketing and promotion) of destination elements (e.g. natural resources); co-ordinates processes that aim to attract visitors and investors.
Destination Management Organisation (DMO)	England's new, local destination management and marketing body, introduced by the 2010 coalition government, operating on a local destination level; serving to balance the interests of businesses with those of local government and community organisations.
Destination Management Plan (DMP)	A shared statement and mechanism by which reshaped DMOs in England manage and lead destinations over a stated period of time; articulates roles of different stakeholders and identifies actions.
Destination Milton Keynes (DMK)	The official DMO for the City of Milton Keynes; its main goal is to attract investors and visitors to the destination; an independent, not-for-profit company and collectively funded platform.
DMK Corporate Members	DMK member organisations, which represent a total of 13 founding members and have the highest economic contribution to DMK.

DMK Non-corporate Members	DMK member organisations, which represent a total of 70 non-corporate, nor founding members of DMK.
DMK Network (Complete)	The complete network of both corporate and non-corporate member organisations, which reflect destination businesses, local government bodies and not-for-profits.
DMK Network (Policy)	The wider network of destination organisations on national, regional and local level, which is partially defined by the 2011 Tourism Policy; it is also partially defined by DMK members themselves.
English Tourist Board (ETB)	England's former tourism organisation, which was operating on a national level and was established by the 1969 Development of Tourism Act; subsequently restructured and renamed to VisitEngland (see <i>VisitEngland</i>).
Free Riders	Destination actors, who benefit from collective investment in marketing and promotion without directly contributing to this investment; Free riders are often referred to as followers and non-members of DMOs.
Local Authority (LA)	Local government play a key role in serving community and public interests; important to destination leadership and management as LAs are providers of much of the infrastructure related to the visitor economy.
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	The successor of RDAs (see <i>Regional Development Agency</i>); having a local focus on economic development and being led by predominantly private parties; limited public funding.
Localism	Agenda associated with the 2010 coalition government; abolishing regional structures; focus on the needs of local destinations, communities and businesses; strong emphasis on local partnerships.
Regional Development	The predecessor of LEPs; <i>delivery arms</i> of government departments with an interest in sub-national economic

Agency (RDA)	development; funding destination development projects and assuming some RTB functions; supported by taxpayers money.
Regional Tourist Board (RTB)	Predecessors of contemporary DMOs in England; exercising various functions related to tourism development on a regional level, marketing and promotion of places; working closely with abolished RDAs.
Regionalism	Refers to the 1997 Labour Government's commitment to establish regional planning and governance across England.
Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME)	Small and medium-sized business organisations; SMEs are said to be driving innovation and competition in many localities across England; capture the majority of tourism and visitor economy businesses.
Social Network Analysis (SNA)	Also Organisational Network Analysis (ONS) is a methodological approach (applied framework) for studying the patterns of relationships among individuals, e.g. DMO and destination stakeholders.
The Coalition Government	Refers to the 2010 elected members of both the Conservative Party and Liberal Democrats; introduced the <i>localism</i> agenda in England.
Austerity	Refers to uncertainty and complexity in the landscape for DMOs and destinations in England triggered by the 2008 economic downturn; a key driver of change for DMOs and destinations in England.
The Labour Government	Referring to the Labour Government (1997-2010); the 1997 elected members of the Labour Party who introduced the <i>regionalism</i> agenda.
VisitEngland	England's national tourism body since 2009, which is responsible for consulting DMOs, providing market intelligence data. It is a non-governmental organisation supported through a grant from DCMS; the successor of ETB.

Visitor Economy Group (VEG) SEMLEP	A joint initiative between DMK, SEMLEP and other regional organisations; providing a platform for discussions, co-delivery and support for destination development projects aligned with the visitor economy in the SEMLEP area.
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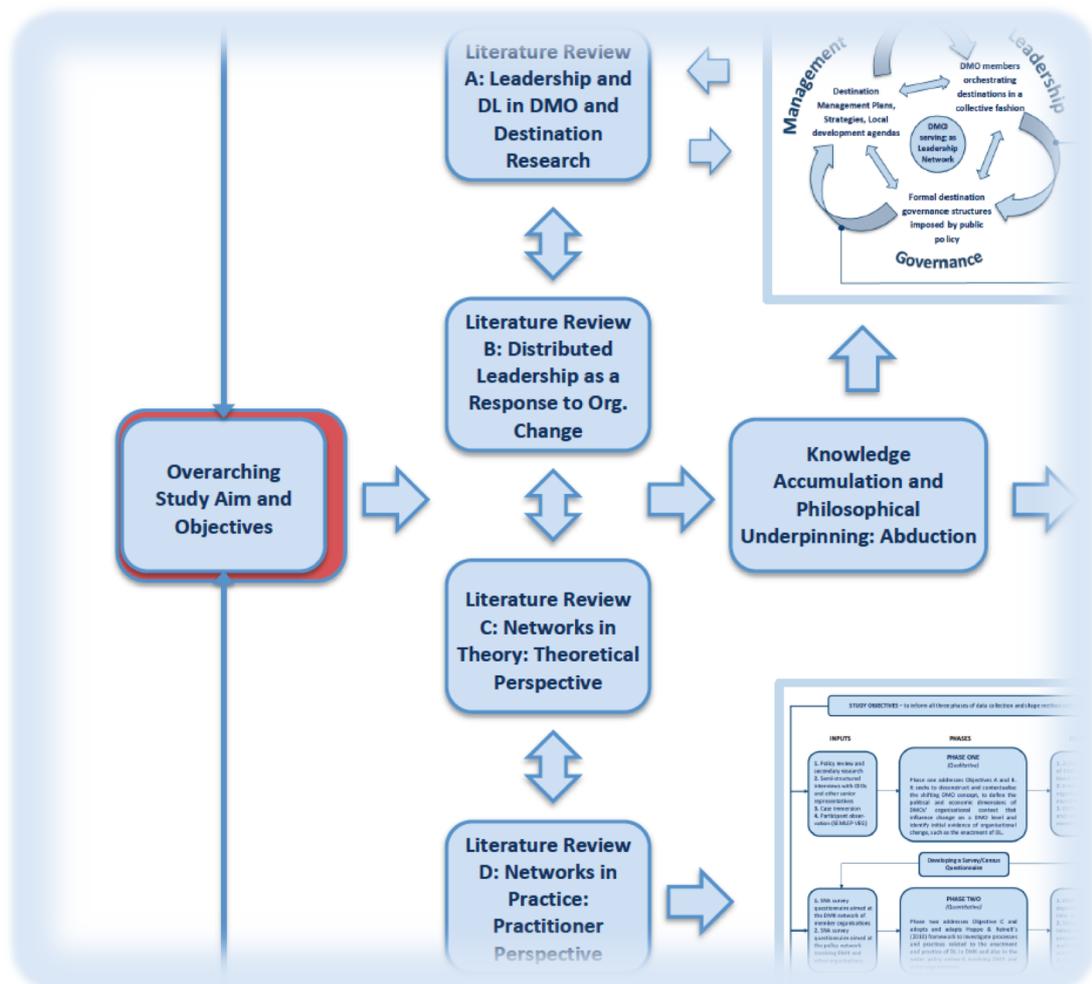
Section I

Introduction

Section I consists of Chapter 1 and provides an introduction to this study. The underpinning chapter introduces the study by unfolding its background, which is grounded in global, national, regional, and local developments; it highlights the study's linkages to three contrasting but interconnected literature domains within the broad literature of organisations. Against this background, the chapter discusses the overarching aim and objectives, followed by the problem statement and study rationale. The chapter continues by providing an overview of the applied methodological framework and the adopted approach to knowledge accumulation. This is followed by an introduction to the unit of investigation in this study (a DMO) and its spatial setting (a destination). Chapter 1 concludes with a brief outline of all study chapters, which follow as part of this thesis.

Chapter 1

Introduction



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter introduction

The chapter introduces the study by unfolding its background, which is embedded in global, national, regional and local developments across three contrasting but interconnected literature domains in the broader literature of organisations, namely Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) and destinations, Distributed Leadership (DL) and Network Theory. Developments on a global level are informed by the shifting notions of DMOs and destinations, which are the result of major economic and political disruptions on a global to local level. Developments on a national level are informed by the rise of ‘the leadership paradigm’ and its distributed dimension on the agenda for DMOs and destinations in England within a new funding and governance landscape. Developments on a regional and local level are informed by emergent leadership networks, which are embedded in DMOs across England’s destinations.

In light of the rationale behind the study, the chapter continues by outlining the scope, aim and objectives, where the underlying purpose of this study is to investigate how DMOs enact and practise DL and as such, serve as leadership networks in destinations following the organisational transformation of these DMOs within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. Further, the chapter provides an overview of the research design, which serves as an introduction to the case study and unit of analysis, namely a DMO and its operational context. The adopted methodological framework aimed at investigating this unit of analysis and its spatial setting is then introduced. The framework features three contrasting, yet interconnected phases of data collection and analysis, having the task to facilitate an in-depth investigation of the organisation and its context and thus provide answers to the key question in focus. The adopted approach to knowledge accumulation, namely *abduction* and its interest in the interplay between theory and data in generating new scientific knowledge is then covered. Hence, the introduction provides a short discussion on *abduction* where Chapter 2 A has been written in parallel with Chapter 4 A due to the

nature of adopting *abduction* as a dominant approach to knowledge accumulation. This first chapter concludes with a detailed outline of the study by chapter and a summary of what has been covered in this chapter.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Global perspective: Shifting notions of DMOs and destinations

Destinations and DMOs face remarkable challenges in light of the global crisis aftermath and continuous political turmoil (Coles et al. 2014; OECD 2014). A number of scholars and practitioners have indicated that the landscape of DMOs and destinations is altering (Fyall et al. 2009; Harrill 2009; Morgan 2012) and that this process of transformation is a consequence of large to small scale disruptions, which take place in local, regional, national, and even international contexts (Pearce and Schänzel 2013; Coles et al. 2012; Bramwell 2011; Kozak and Baloglu 2011; Longjit and Pearce 2013). This is a result of the influence of major global–local forces (Milne and Ateljevic 2001; Ritchie et al. 2010; Urry and Larsen 2011).

Turbulence in the operational environment, coupled with the rapid development of tourism and the visitor economy as a multifaceted phenomenon, bring new challenges to both destination practitioners and academics attempting to predict global industry shifts (Kozak and Baloglu 2011; Laesser and Beritelli 2013; Urry and Larsen 2011). This calls for rethinking of existing destination concepts and the way destination management practitioners approach destinations and DMOs in general (Pechlaner et al. 2014). These notable transitions form a strong call for reconsidering the modus operandi of DMOs when leading on strategic agendas in the domains of destination management and leadership (Hristov 2014; Pechlaner et al. 2014).

The past has seen DMOs as organisations closely associated with marketing *vis-à-vis* the selling of places (Pike 2004). The classic interpretation of the DMO concept once assumed that the M stands for Marketing (Hristov 2015; Pike and Page 2014). However, global political and economic disruptions,

along with the globalisation of the visitor economy and tourism have contributed to notable shifts in the functions, responsibilities and structure of DMOs. In light of such developments, as Ritchie and Crouch (2003) note, it is more appropriate to define DMOs as management-focused destination organisations. In other words, the term DMO captures organisations where the M now stands for Management, as opposed to Marketing (Harrill 2009; OECD 2013). As Pearce (2014, p.3) notes, this is “*not simply a question of semantics but also a question of the extent to which the title reflects the basic functions undertaken by the organisation*”.

Whilst the focus of destination marketing is outward (e.g. establishing links with different markets with the purpose to attract visitors), destination management, in contrast, adopts an inward focus, where the latter is interested in the destination (e.g. creating a suitable environment, management of natural and built destination resources, capitalising on inward investment opportunities, ensuring seamless visitor experience) (Hristov and Naumov, 2015). Within this context, the role of contemporary DMOs expands towards assuming greater management and even leadership role in destinations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015; Volgger and Pechlaner 2014). This includes more inclusive and strategic destination decision-making activities (Morgan 2012), such as leadership in the domain of destinations and DMOs (Pechlaner et al. 2014; Kozak et al. 2014). This transition in the role and functions of DMOs is now evident in a number of countries across the world (Reinhold et al. 2015).

Both academia and practice are also signalling this major shift in the vision, mission and strategic operations of DMOs and evidence of this shift has been captured in two important recent events. The first one is the first ever special issue on ‘Leadership in destination and DMO research’ in *Tourism Review* (see Kozak et al. 2014; Pechlaner et al. 2014). The second one is the *2nd Biennial Forum Advances in Destination Management* in St Gallen (see Reinhold et al. 2015).

These recent disruptions on a global level, which present both challenges and opportunities, have had, and continue to influence academia and practice in the domain of DMOs and destinations. They lead to rethinking of traditional destination and DMO paradigms and influence the progress on scholarship in this domain. The progress of scholarship in the domain of DMOs

and destinations is explored in Chapter 2 A, which provides a rich narrative on recent developments in the field. The domain of DMOs and destinations is the first of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study.

1.2.2 National perspective: Leadership on the agenda for DMOs and destinations in England

Since 2008, the austerity in Europe and beyond has had major implications for destinations and DMOs (Hristov and Naumov 2015; Mihalic 2013) and this certainly is the case of England where long-established DMOs have undergone a shift to become focused and more locally-positioned lead organisations (Coles et al. 2012; Morgan 2012). The 'shifting power to the right levels' attitude of the 2010 coalition UK government was a clear indication that the spatial scale of economic governance across England was to be changed (Penrose 2011; Cameron 2010). The coalition introduced major cuts in government funding across key sectors of the economy and emphasised the need to reduce state intervention in DMOs and destinations. This decision was largely influenced by the financial crisis developing on a global level, along with the neo-liberal agenda (Duffy 2008) underpinning the coalition's manifesto and delivery programme.

English destinations and DMOs were once heavily dependent on the public purse, mainly through regional government support (Fyall et al. 2009). The *2011 Government Tourism Policy* implemented by the coalition, proposed to replace existing tourism management and supporting structures on a regional level, namely Regional Tourist Boards (RTBs) and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in favour of more locally-positioned DMOs and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) (Kennell and Chaperon 2013). This move was influenced by the localism agenda of the coalition and the need for industry organisations to take the lead on England's destinations (Coles et al. 2014). Newly-formed tourism bodies, namely Destination Management Organisations – with a definition proposed by the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* (Penrose 2011) and the *Local Growth White Paper* (BIS 2010) – have been projected as

the organisations responsible for the future delivery of destination marketing, management and leadership across England's destinations.

The coalition's main argument for delivering change in the funding landscape for DMOs and destinations was that for an industry of its size, tourism and the visitor economy has experienced an over-reliance on public funds (Penrose 2011). In the current fiscal situation, providing taxpayer-funded support for DMOs and destinations in England was seen as unacceptable and unsustainable initiative in a long-term (Penrose 2011). England's reshaped DMOs are then expected to have sole responsibility for ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of their own organisations whilst also exercising strategic destination decision-making in their respective destinations (Coles et al. 2014; Penrose 2011).

Within the new funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, predominantly businesses, some local authorities and other interested groups, such as community and not-for-profit organisations were expected to provide evidence of greater involvement in and contribution to collective strategic destination decision-making; assume greater leadership role (Coles et al. 2014; Hristov and Petrova 2015). An emphasis was placed on the importance of developing destination networks and leadership capacity (Penrose 2011). Leadership in networks implies leadership which is distributed in nature (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010; Cullen and Yammarino 2014) and this is aligned with the coalition's aspirations and vision for reshaped DMOs in England to assume collective responsibility and provide leadership for their organisations and destinations, where the public sector is no longer the sole leader (Hristov and Petrova 2015; Coles et al. 2014). This resonates with a number of recent academic contributions in the domains of destinations and destination organisations, which highlighted the rising importance of considering alternative approaches to existing DMO and destination governance models within a new policy and funding landscape (Laesser and Beritelli 2013; Reinhold et al. 2015) and the opportunities presented by shared forms of leadership, such as DL (Hristov and Zehrer 2015; Kennedy and Augustyn 2014; Kozak et al. 2014; Valente et al. 2015). Taking a collective leadership approach may well provide the answer to this question facing resource-constrained DMOs (Beritelli et al. 2015b), where a collective (if not all) of member organisations are given the

opportunity to play a strategic role in strategic destination decision-making (Reinhold et al. 2015).

These recent disruptions on a national level, which present both challenges and opportunities, have had and continue to influence academia and practice in the domain of DMOs and destinations and its relationship with the leadership paradigm. These recent developments lead to rethinking of traditional destination and DMO paradigms in light of the rising prominence of leadership and its distributed dimension. The progress of scholarship in the domain of DMOs and destinations and its relationship with the leadership paradigm is explored in Chapter 2 B. This chapter provides a rich narrative on recent developments in both contrasting literature domains. The leadership domain and its distributed dimension in the context of DMOs and destinations is the second of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study.

1.2.3 Regional and local perspective: Emergent leadership networks on a DMO level across England's destinations

The literature on networks has grown exponentially over the past decade (Aubke 2014; Cross and Thomas 2009) and the concept of the networked world is becoming increasingly widespread (Kadushin 2012; Mullins 2013). Both academics and practitioners have argued that networks are turning into dominant organisational structures in the era of globalisation (By 2005; Cravens and Piercy 1994; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010; Knowles et al. 2001).

Network theory and networks in the domain of DMOs and destinations are equally gaining prominence in times of globalisation and organisational change (Milne and Ateljevic 2001; Pforr et al. 2014). Networks have been embraced by academia as a powerful approach to studying destinations and destination organisations (Ahmed 2012; Baggio 2008; Pearce 2014; Scott et al. 2008a). The inclusion of lead actors forming leadership networks in destinations and DMOs is a pressing issue (Pechlaner et al. 2014), which is nevertheless

still insufficiently addressed by academia (Pechlaner and Volgger 2013 Reinhold et al. 2015).

Within a shifting funding and governance landscape, DMOs are seen as complex structures of organisations (Beritelli et al. 2015b) as in the case with DMOs across England, where funding streams and leadership functions are no longer provided by the public sector (DMK 2014) and the importance of local leadership and networks has been emphasised in the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* (Hristov and Petrova 2015). Contemporary DMOs often capture diverse member organisations (Beritelli and Laesser 2014). They tend to have flatter, non-hierarchical structures (OECD 2013) and recognise the resource and knowledge interdependency within their network (Hristov and Zehrer 2015), which is very much aligned with network theory.

Network theory (Granovetter 1985; Gulati 1998; Wasserman and Faust 1994) and its applied tool – Social Network Analysis (SNA) (Borgatti et al. 2013; Durland and Fredericks 2005) – serve to explain such organisational transitions in the domain of DMOs and destinations, as they allow for conceptualising the organisation in focus and investigating it in its entirety. Network theory advocates that organisations no longer compete as individual entities, but through relational networks, where value is created by means of collaboration (Fyall et al. 2012; Pearce 2012). This has been the case with reshaped DMOs in England that are expected to collectively lead on strategic agendas in their respective geographies (Hristov and Petrova 2015; Penrose 2011). Network theory and SNA facilitate investigations into processes that involve the development and practice of leadership and its distributed dimension (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). They are able to provide valuable insights into the flows of information and exchange of resources between lead organisations in destinations (Borgatti et al. 2013), in times when DMOs are gradually turning into networks that pool resources and knowledge (Beritelli and Laesser 2014; Hristov and Zehrer 2015) within a new funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England.

The literature on leadership in networks in the mainstream leadership and organisational literature has started gaining traction in recent years and this has been evidenced in a 2014 call by *The Leadership Quarterly* for further scholarship investigating the opportunities to fuse network theory with

leadership and its distributed dimension (see Cullen and Yammarino 2014). This has also been the case with the DMO and destination domain, where a 2014 event, that brought together academia and practice in this domain, serves as evidence of the lack of research into bringing to the forefront network theory and DL. Leadership networks were surfaced to be one of the five key emergent domains emanating from the *2014 St Gallen Consensus on Destination Management* (see Reinhold et al. 2015), which unlock new avenues of research for academia and practice in the domain of DMOs and destinations.

Despite recent calls to explore DL and network theory in relation to DMOs and destinations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015; Kozak et al. 2014; Reinhold et al. 2015), no studies to date have investigated how such collective leadership models are enacted and DL practice nurtured in DMOs through the lens of SNA and visually-driven network analysis (Hristov and Scott 2016). This gap in the literature has also been echoed in the mainstream organisational and leadership domain, where Cullen and Yammarino (2014) proposed eight topical areas for further enquiry that draws on networks and collective forms of leadership.

These recent disruptions on regional and local level, which present both challenges and opportunities, have had, and continue to influence academia and practice in the domain of DMOs and destinations and its relationship with the leadership and network paradigms. Recent developments in network theory lead to rethinking of traditional destination and DMO theories in light of the rising prominence of networks and network research. The progress of scholarship in the domain of DMOs and destinations and its relationship with network theory and its practitioner tool, namely SNA, is explored in Chapter 2 C, which provides a rich narrative on recent developments in both fields. Network theory and its practitioner tool SNA in the context of DMOs and destinations is the last of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpin and inform the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study.

1.3 Problem statement and the rationale behind it

1.3.1 Problem statement

The extant literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations has given considerable attention to the conceptualisation of destinations as networks (Bregoli and Del Chiappa 2013; Cooper et al. 2009; Pavlovich 2003; Pechlaner et al. 2012; Pforr 2006; Scott et al. 2008b; Shih 2006; Timur and Getz 2008). A number of studies have pursued SNA investigations into network collaboration and knowledge-sharing practices, within and across organisations in destinations through studying the network of actors in a locality, or specific public, private or mixed network clusters within geographic boundaries (Baggio and Cooper 2008; Beritelli 2011b; Cooper et al. 2006; Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013; Krakover and Wang 2008; Yabuta and Scott 2011; Zach and Racherla 2011; Longjit and Pearce 2013; Pearce 2014).

Little or no research has, however, been carried out on the strategic organisational level, where the complete DMO network of organisations involved in strategic destination decision-making is in focus (Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013). This complete DMO network often captures a number of key interested groups, such as businesses, local government and not-for-profit organisations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Recognition of the role of DMOs in orchestrating key destination management and development-interested communities (Ness et al. 2014; Volgger and Pechlaner 2014) has also been somewhat overlooked by academia as a potential avenue for research (Pechlaner et al. 2014; Reinhold et al. 2015).

This study is therefore aimed at researching on a strategic organisational (DMO) level, rather than on a spatial (destination) level. In other words:

- This study does not delve into the economic, environmental or social impacts of management and leadership in destinations through the lens of SNA, nor does this study take a comprehensive account of all existing stakeholders within the DMO geography in focus. Further, this

study does not deal with management and emergent leadership practice on a destination level;

- This study does delve into processes and practices related to the enactment of DL within a DMO, where the enactment of DL is investigated through a range of SNA structural and relational properties of its inter-organisational network of member businesses, local government bodies and not-for-profit organisations. In other words, the overarching purpose of this study is to investigate the enactment and practice of DL as a response to the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England by adopting and adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) SNA framework for evaluating leadership networks in organisations.

1.3.2 Rationale

Within an increasingly networked environment, processes and practices related to pooling knowledge and resources have become a fundamental prerequisite to ensuring the long-term sustainability of reshaped, yet financially-constrained DMOs facing severe challenges to deliver value to their destinations and member organisations. Leadership and its distributed dimension is a recent paradigm that is to gain momentum in DMO and destination research as a promising response to these challenges (Hristov and Zehrer 2015).

Building on the problem statement discussion and highlighted gaps in the literature, the rationale behind this study has been informed by a number of principal *foci* where further research investigations are called upon. They are based on recent calls from academia in the domain of DMOs and destinations, in this case:

- (i) Considering both the inter-organisational DMO network (local) along with the wider, policy one (involving the state and regional economic partnerships, such as LEPs) wherein the organisation under investigation

is nested (Beritelli and Laesser 2014; Hristov 2014; Volgger and Pechlaner 2014);

(ii) Enquiring into networks on the strategic organisational or DMO, as opposed to the much broader and blurred destination level (Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013; Morgan 2012; Ness et al. 2014);

(iii) Investigating the role of emergent leadership networks in both destinations (e.g. destination partnerships) and destination organisations (i.e. DMOs) (Beritelli and Bieger 2014; Blichfeldt et al. 2014; Zehrer et al. 2014);

(iv) Adopting multi-level SNA methodologies where the network under investigation is explored in both qualitative and quantitative terms (Conway 2014; Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010);

(v) Bringing to light the importance of knowledge and resource exchange among network actors (Ahmed 2012) in driving the development of shared leadership capacity (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010).

The above collective call within the domain of DMOs and destinations has also been echoed by influential scholars in the mainstream organisational and leadership literature, where Cullen and Yammarino (2014) called for further enquiry into the leadership paradigm, its distributed dimension and its fusion with network theory and SNA. They went on to propose eight topical areas for further enquiry, the key ones of which focus on:

(i) Advances in measurement of collective, shared, distributed, system, and network leadership;

(ii) Investigations into the sharing of leadership roles by members of a collective, network, or system;

(iii) The development, illustration, and application of new research methodologies for studying network leadership (Cullen and Yammarino 2014).

Practitioners from the mainstream organisational and leadership domain have equally advocated the use of network theory and SNA in the investigation of leadership and leadership development in organisations (see Hoppe and Reinelt 2010; Cross et al. 2002). These recent calls by academia and practice

indicate key important areas where further research is called upon, and this study contributes to the advancement of theory and practice across two domains, namely DMOs and destinations, and leadership and organisations.

1.4 Aim and objectives

1.4.1 Aim

The overarching aim of this study is to investigate how DMOs enact and practise distributed leadership and as such, serve as leadership networks in destinations within a new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England.

1.4.2 Objectives

Within the context of the overarching aim, the study addresses five specific objectives, which seek to:

- A. Explore the shifting DMO concept and conceptualise it through the political and economic dimensions of the new funding and governance landscape that influences change on a DMO level;
- B. Identify initial evidence of organisational change within the DMO in focus influenced by the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England;
- C. Investigate collective processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of distributed leadership within the DMO in focus by adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) SNA framework for evaluating leadership development in networks embedded in organisations:
 - On a DMO network level (*internal*)
 - On a wider, policy network level (*external*);

- D. Formulate a collective response to key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of distributed leadership in reshaped DMOs and surface approaches to respectively mitigate or capitalise on these; and
- E. Co-construct a set of practitioner outputs having implications for distributed leadership practice in reshaped DMOs, i.e. guidelines for good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs.

1.5 Overview of research design

Adopting a case study approach, this study delves into Destination Milton Keynes (DMK), the official DMO for Milton Keynes, which is an emerging destination, lies halfway between Cambridge and Oxford in the United Kingdom. The unit of investigation and its geography are briefly discussed further in this chapter and then covered in detail in Chapter 3. Informed by three key literature domains within the organisational and leadership literature, namely DMOs, DL and network theory, this study adopts a mixed-method approach and involves three interconnected phases of data collection and analysis. As such the approach serves as the basis for generating new knowledge on the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level (Hristov 2015; Hristov and Ramkissoon 2016). Both industry practitioners and academia have been advocating and progressively employing mixed methods in an attempt to derive complementary data (Conti and Doreian 2010; Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Edwards and Crossley 2009). This study builds on this trend by adopting a mixed method, three-phase methodological framework (see Figure 4.1), which allows for the collection of rich qualitative and quantitative data and a prolonged engagement with the organisation in focus:

- Exploratory study (Phase I): Phase I involves both preliminary and exploratory (*qualitative*) investigation and addresses objectives A and B in this study. It involves a blend of policy network analysis (Dredge 2006) undertaken through desk-based research, participant observation (Conway 2014), case immersion (Packer 2010; Stablein 2006) and semi-

structured expert interviews (Flick 2009). The policy network analysis has the task to explore the shifting landscape of DMOs and destinations in England, which is influenced by recent political and economic disruptions on a global–local level. The policy network analysis also identifies organisations of strategic importance to DMOs within this new policy network, in this case, current and prospective DMK partner organisations. Further, participant observation is aimed at the South East Midland LEP’s (SEMLEP) Visitor Economy Group (VEG) group, where the researcher’s active involvement in VEG meetings provides insights into strategic discussions, proposals, plans and strategies involving DMK and other organisations’ operation on a policy network level. Participant observation is aimed at identifying emergent leadership practice on the policy network level. Case immersion seeks to provide evidence of change occurring in the organisation in focus, evidence of an emergent joined up approach to strategic destination decision-making amongst member organisations within DMK at the time of developing the DMP, and evidence of the enactment of DL in DMK. Semi-structured expert interviews complement the policy network analysis and serve to define the political and economic dimensions of the operational environment for DMK triggering change in the organisation. Semi-structured expert interviews also enquire into the unit of analysis (DMK) and unfold the general structure and characteristics of the investigated destination management network, such as sector-type organisations involved.

- Main SNA study (Phase II): Phase II involves a complete network (*quantitative*) study, which is aimed at all DMK member organisations and an ego network study, which is aimed at both DMK’s founding and current CEOs. Phase II aims to address objective C. Whilst the complete network study investigates processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL within the network of DMK member organisations, the ego network study delves into similar processes and practices beyond this network of DMK member organisations and is therefore aimed at DMK’s wider policy network. Facilitated by a

sophisticated SNA tool for organisational network research, network data is collected by means of a network survey questionnaire on two levels – an SNA survey questionnaire aimed at DMK’s network of member organisations, as well as an SNA survey questionnaire aimed at DMK’s wider policy network. The Phase II target sample includes a network of 83 member organisations on board DMK. Member organisations capture businesses representing diverse sectors of the economy in Milton Keynes, in addition to local authorities, such as MK Council and a range of not-for-profit organisations. Phase II and the underpinning network study is guided by Hoppe and Reinelt’s (2010) framework, which is a set of both generic and specific organisational network questions for evaluating leadership development initiatives in networks embedded in formal organisations, e.g. DMOs. Academia advocates that understanding the process of leadership development implies understanding of the development of social interactions within that process (Day et al. 2014; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010), which in light of this research, has been undertaken by adopting a visually-driven SNA approach. In addition to an investigation into processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL within the network of DMK member organisations and beyond, visually-driven network insights during this phase are used for raising additional questions (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). This opportunity to build on Phase II insights by raising further questions is covered in Phase III through the adoption of self-reflective, visually-driven questionnaires with senior industry practitioners, who represent DMK member organisations.

- Post-SNA study (Phase III): Phase III involves a post-network study (*qualitative*) and seeks to address objectives D and E of this study through the perspective of both industry practitioners from DMK and SEMLEP and policy makers from VisitEngland. Phase III adopts self-reflective, visually-driven questionnaires with senior industry practitioners representing DMK member organisations and semi-structured expert interviews with policy makers from VisitEngland. Industry practitioners

representing member organisations in DMK serve to interpret Phase II-derived structural and relational properties of the network in focus and visual data (network depictions) in light of developing DL practice. Policy makers, who are external to the network of DMK member organisations, are asked to build upon the conceptual contribution derived by Phase I by exploring its relevance to reshaped DMOs. Policy makers are asked to identify key challenges to and opportunities for developing leadership on a DMO level by examining the foundations of the DMO Leadership Cycle (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Whilst industry practitioners draw on their expertise and experience with the DMO organisation in focus, policy makers provide a wider sector perspective, which covers England as opposed to DMK solely. During this phase, formulating a response to key challenges to and opportunities for developing network leadership capacity in reshaped DMOs is brought into the spotlight in order to advance the current knowledge on processes and practices in leadership development in reshaped DMOs. Insights by industry practitioners and policy makers also contribute to the development of a set of guidelines on good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs.

In order to provide a response to the above overall aim and objectives, this study delves into a DMO network called DMK, which involves 83 member organisations representing a range of businesses, local authorities and not-for-profit organisations, namely Destination Milton Keynes (DMK). The wider policy network, is also studied as DMK does not operate in isolation and thus, organisations such as SEMLEP and VisitEngland are considered as key organisations within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (Hristov 2014). LEPs and VisitEngland have been seen as allies to DMOs (Coles et al. 2014; Hristov 2014) and as such, they may well have the capacity to provide key resources and expertise to the membership organisation in focus. In other words, they have been seen as key strategic partners to DMK in developing and exercising leadership on a regional level and as such, they deserve further attention (Coles et al. 2014; Hristov and Petrova 2015).

The adopted methodological framework facilitates an in-depth investigation into the organisation and its operational context and as such, it aims to provide a response to the key question in focus, i.e. the overarching aim.

1.6 Unit of investigation and geography

1.6.1 The network of DMO member organisations

DMK was established in 2006 with a stable membership base by 13 founding organisations representing Local Authorities (LAs), a range of businesses, sustainability trusts and community organisations (Hristov and Petrova 2015). The organisation was established as the official tourist information service provider for Milton Keynes, thus exercising predominantly marketing functions (Hristov and Petrova 2015). Milton Keynes Council had a key role in providing significant support to DMK prior to the new funding regime introduced by the 2010 coalition government (Inskipp 2014).

In 2017, DMK functions as an independent, not-for-profit organisation and its funding structure includes a mixture of membership fees, some grants from Milton Keynes Council and commissions from its members (Hristov and Petrova 2015). DMK is an official DMO network of key destination businesses, council and other public bodies, along with a diverse mix of not-for-profit and community organisations. Having a clear geography, the network of DMK covers nearly 83 member organisations located in central Milton Keynes and the surrounding market villages. Among the core objectives of DMK are to encourage inward investment, to promote Milton Keynes as a viable visitor destination, and to explore opportunities in developing further business, leisure, heritage and other types of both urban and rural destination products (DMK 2014).

Within a new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, such objectives are also expected to include strategic leadership guided by a Destination Management Plan (DMP) and by involving key interested

destination actors who serve businesses, local government and third sector organisations.

1.6.2 The geography

Milton Keynes was formally designated as a new town in 1967 (The London Gazette 1967) and it continues to be one of the fastest growing in the UK (Hopkins 2013). Milton Keynes boasts a strong local economy. It is projected to be amongst the forerunning cities¹ in England to lead the country out of recession (Centre for Cities 2012; DMK 2014).

Milton Keynes is not a purely urban destination. Instead, it is an amalgam of both urban and rural, built and natural environs, providing a range of destination products and experiences, which makes Milton Keynes attractive to visitors (Hristov and Petrova 2015). Milton Keynes is urban in its core, but with a number of rural satellite market towns providing opportunities to develop heritage tourism. Milton Keynes has 5,000 acres of parkland and green spaces (The Parks Trust 2014), which provide a range of water and other outdoor sports and leisure activities, seen to enhance the destination's green image. The geography is an emerging destination, where sustainability is at the forefront of the local development agenda (Milton Keynes Council Core Strategy 2013).

Unlike prominent English destinations and their local lead organisations, e.g. Marketing Manchester, City of London, Visit Brighton, destination Milton Keynes presents a case that is well placed to capture the destination's challenges and opportunities that less-developed, however, largely important (as per the Coalition's *localism* agenda for England – see Penrose 2011) urban and rural destinations face within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England.

¹ Although Milton Keynes was referred to as a city (by both sources – DMK and the Centre for Cities), it is not officially designated as such.

1.7 Abductive approach to knowledge accumulation: The interplay between theory and data

This study draws on Blaikie's (2007) logic of enquiring new knowledge, where *abduction* is best placed to develop new theory and elaborate it iteratively through taking relativism as its ontological stance and constructionism as an epistemological stance. The adopted approach to knowledge accumulation, namely *abduction* (Peirce 1934) and its interest in the interplay between theory and data resulting in knowledge accumulation holds a prominent role in this study.

Interaction between existing theoretical contributions and new empirical data is a fundamental characteristic of *abduction* (Peirce 1934), which has been employed in this study as a logical approach to the production of new knowledge. In light of this research, the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation is captured in advancing the current knowledge of emergent leadership practice and the enactment and practice of DL in the research domain of DMOs and destinations. The relationship between theory and data is an interactive one (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012; Timmermans and Tavory 2012) in order to facilitate the production of new knowledge (Reichertz 2009). This is discussed in Chapter 3 where the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation is introduced and explored in detail in light of this research. Thus, the relevance of *abduction* and its contribution in achieving the overarching aim and objectives of this study are also discussed in Chapter 3.

1.8 Outline of the study

This dissertation comprises eight chapters, which are as follows.

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

The chapter introduces the study by unfolding its background, which is grounded in global, national and local developments across three prominent

literature domains in the broad literature of organisations. The chapter discusses the overarching aim and objectives, followed by the problem statement and study rationale. The chapter provides an overview of the applied methodological framework, approach to knowledge accumulation and a brief introduction to the unit of investigation and its spatial setting. This first chapter concludes with an outline of the study and recap of what has been covered so far.

CHAPTER 2 A: Literature review on leadership and its distributed dimension in DMO and destination research

The domain of DMOs and destinations is the first of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. This first literature review chapter is devoted to a number of discussions in the domain of destinations and destination organisations, key destination paradigms and the rising importance of embedding local leadership on both destination and DMO level. The chapter provides a critical overview of three contrasting, yet interconnected organisational literature domains – management, governance and leadership – in relation to research undertaken on both destinations and destination organisations. This critical overview plays a key role in pushing the frontiers of knowledge covered in existing academic contributions and thus serves as a means to surfacing the current gap in the extant literature of destinations and DMOs. This culminates in proposing a conceptual framework – one that introduces the concept of DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle. The chapter concludes with a discussion of key insights related to the shifting operational context for DMOs and its long-term implications for economic and political thinking.

CHAPTER 2 B: Literature review on distributed leadership as a response to organisational change

This second literature review chapter builds upon Chapter 2 A and covers key concepts in the broad organisational and leadership literature of relevance to this study, followed by a discussion of the multitude of collaborative forms of leadership in addressing organisational change, such as DL. The leadership domain and its distributed dimension in the context of DMOs and destinations is the second of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. This serves as an introduction to an in-depth discussion aimed at notable contributions in the domain of leadership and DL. The chapter then explores the emergent role of distributed forms of leadership in contemporary DMOs and debates their relevance to DMOs and destinations, before delving into a short discussion of the progress of the DMO and destination literature in the context of leadership and DL. The current progress of the mainstream DL literature, as well as the progress of the DL literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations, is discussed through bringing into the spotlight important gaps in scholarship. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the relevance of networks and the network concept to the overarching aim and objectives of this study, which serves as an introduction to the following two literature review chapters devoted to networks in theory and practice.

CHAPTER 2 C: Literature review on networks in theory

Network theory and its practitioner tool SNA in the context of DMOs and destinations is the last of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which underpin and inform the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. This chapter provides the theoretical background to network theory and SNA and covers notable contributions on theorising networks under the network theory umbrella. Further, the chapter provides an extended discussion on a range of structural and relational network properties (network measures) across three levels of analysis, namely network, actor and ego network level. The discussed structural and relational network properties are aligned with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating DL practice, which is adapted and adopted as part of this study's methodological framework. The

chapter continues with a discussion on key contributions on the application of network theory and SNA in the domain of DMOs and destinations. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion on key practitioner challenges in carrying out network research. As such, it serves as an introduction to the following chapter, which provides a discussion of network theory and SNA through the lens of practice.

CHAPTER 2 D: Literature review on networks in practice

Whilst the previous chapter provides the theoretical background to the network concept, including key levels of analysis and an introduction to a range of network measures to be adopted in line with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, the following chapter takes a practitioner approach as it discusses the complexities, particularities and practicalities in the adoption of an SNA approach in general terms and also in light of this study's focus. The chapter begins by providing a practitioner angle to the nature of network data, which sets the scene for a number of specific considerations with regard to the adoption of SNA approaches to enquiry. Further, whilst largely drawing on fundamental considerations concerning SNA applications in practice, this chapter also serves to uncover network enquiry-bound methodological processes and procedures to be applied to this study, e.g. matters of ethics in SNA and approaches to depicting network data. These are then incorporated into the adopted methodological framework discussed in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

This chapter begins with a short introduction to the overarching aim and objectives of this study before providing an in-depth discussion into the research strategy, i.e. the knowledge accumulation approach applied to this study, namely *abduction* (Peirce, 1934) and its ontological and epistemological stance. The chapter continues with a discussion on the strategy of enquiry involving the application of the case study method and its role in theory-

building, followed by details on the unit of analysis (a DMO) and its spatial setting (a destination). The methodological framework is then unfolded to provide a discussion of the three interconnected phases of data collection and analysis. This section also provides details on the applied methodological tools and approaches, sampling technique, target sample and position of the researcher. The chapter then provides two interconnected discussions aimed at the justification of core approaches to data collection. It also provides a discussion of core tools for data analysis and interpretation for each of the three phases of the adopted methodological framework. The chapter concludes with a discussion on key matters of data trustworthiness and validity, where the former is related to qualitative data, applicable to Phases I and III and the latter is related to quantitative data, applicable to Phase II.

CHAPTER 4 A: Discussion of the preliminary (exploratory) phase

This is the first of three discussion chapters devoted to findings derived from the application of Phase I of the methodological framework and covers both empirical and secondary data insights. Phase I involved both preliminary and exploratory (*qualitative*) investigation and addresses objectives A and B in this study. It involves a blend of policy network analysis undertaken through a desk-based research, participant observation, case immersion and semi-structured expert interviews. The chapter begins by providing a discussion of secondary data findings, which surface the new policy network within a new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. Emergent organisations and context characteristics of the operational environment for DMOs within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (as per Objective A) are first covered. The chapter continues with a discussion on primary data findings, which unfolds the structure and characteristics of the DMO network in focus, namely DMK. Primary data insights also provide initial evidence into the enactment of DL within DMK and also within DMK's wider policy network. The chapter concludes with acknowledging this study's initial conceptual contribution, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle, which is a product of the interplay between existing destination and DMO theory and Phase I data.

A link is then established between Chapter 2 A, Chapter 3 and the current chapter.

CHAPTER 4 B: Discussion of the SNA phase

Having identified evidence of the enactment of DL in Phase I, which is discussed in Chapter 4 A, this chapter goes on to provide a detailed discussion of findings related to the practice of DL within DMK's network of member organisations, and in DMK's wider policy network. The discussion of findings is grounded in a series of visual SNA network insights and network metrics, namely a number of structural and relational properties linked to the practice of DL and derived from the application of Phase II. The findings related to DL practice discussed in this chapter stem from the adoption of Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, which is a set of both generic and specific organisational network questions for evaluating leadership development initiatives in networks embedded in formal organisations.

CHAPTER 4 C: Discussion of the post-SNA phase

This last discussion chapter begins by providing a discussion on key insights and related questions arising from the adoption of Phase II through the perspective of both industry practitioners from DMK and policy makers from VisitEngland. If the purpose of Chapter 4 B was to provide a discussion into the enactment of DL in DMK's complete and policy networks, the focal point of this chapter, however, is an investigation into the transition from providing evidence of the enactment of DL in Phase II, towards exploring the challenges to, and opportunities for building DL capacity. The chapter continues with a discussion, where the DMO Leadership Cycle is revisited in light of Phase III data with a view to building on the cycle and its leadership dimension. The chapter concludes with a proposed set of practical outputs having implications for management and leadership practice on a DMO level.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

This chapter provides a concluding in-depth discussion, which is grounded in the key findings from the adopted methodological framework. The purpose of the latter was to provide a response to the overarching aim and five objectives outlined at the beginning of this study. By providing a concluding in-depth discussion of key findings, which cover the A, B, C, D, E journey, this chapter covers key study findings in light of the overarching study aim and related objectives in a chronological fashion. Building on this discussion, the overarching study aim is then revised and the extent to which it has been addressed in the context of the key study findings is discussed. This focused discussion sets the scene for the following chapter, namely contributions to theory and implications for practice.

Chapter 5 provides an in-depth discussion into a number of contributions to DL and DMO theory and implications for DL and DMO practice, which result from the rich insights derived from the application of the underpinning methodological framework guided by Phases I, II and III. This discussion is grounded in the current literature in the domains of DMOs and destinations, as well as in the mainstream organisational leadership literature. The first section provides a discussion on how the outcomes of this study aim to build on the existing state of the literature on leadership and its distributed dimension. The second section provides a discussion on how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the literature on DMOs and destinations. The third section provides a discussion on how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the mainstream leadership practice and the application of the DL theory in particular. The chapter concludes with a discussion on how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the DMO and destination leadership practice and the application of the DL theory in the context of DMOs and destinations in particular.

This chapter concludes with an in-depth discussion of key methodological limitations and particularly the ones related to network data sample and quality. This is followed by a short discussion of the limitations with regard to research findings, in two directions – limitations with regard to research findings of DMK's network of member organisations and also

limitations related to DMK's policy network. The chapter continues with a discussion on key themes which require further attention by both academia and practice. As such, the chapter includes proposed investigations into the relevance of DL to DMOs, the provision of longitudinal insights on how DL is enacted and practised on a DMO level, undertaking a cross-case comparison of DMOs adopting DL amongst other proposed investigations.

1.9 Chapter summary

This first chapter covered a number of important discussions that are fundamental to the overarching purpose and objectives of this study. The chapter began with a discussion of key global, national, regional and local developments in academia and practice on the subject matter, where a link was established with three core domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpin and inform the cross-disciplinary approach adopted in this study. A discussion was provided on the rationale behind this research, which served as an introduction to the overarching aim and objectives pursued by this research.

The chapter continued with an overview of the research design, where a mixed-method, three-phase methodological framework was discussed, followed by an introduction to the adopted case study approach, the unit of analysis and its geography. The abductive approach to knowledge accumulation was then introduced, where the chapter stated that *abduction* is best placed to develop new theory through taking relativism as its ontological stance and constructionism as an epistemological stance. The chapter then outlined the study.

The following four chapters are devoted to key concepts derived from the extant literature across three domains of particular relevance to the unit of analysis. The discourse is organised around four interconnected literature review chapters: Chapter 2 A: Literature Review on Leadership and DL in DMO and Destination Research, Chapter 2 B: Distributed Leadership as a Response

to Organisational Change, Chapter 2 C: Literature Review on Networks in Theory, and Chapter 2 D: Literature Review on Networks in Practice.

Section I consisted of Chapter 1, which provided an introduction to this study. The chapter introduced the study by unfolding its background, which is grounded in global, national, regional, and local developments and discussed its linkages to three contrasting but interconnected literature domains within the broad literature of organisations. Chapter 1 provided justification for these literature domains, which both underpin and inform the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. Against this background, the chapter discussed the overarching aim and objectives, followed by the problem statement and study rationale. As a response to this overarching aim and objectives, the chapter provided an overview of the developed and adopted mixed-method, three-phase methodological framework along with the adopted approach to knowledge accumulation, namely abduction. This was followed by a brief introduction to the unit of investigation, Destination Milton Keynes and the destination it operates in. Chapter 1 concluded with a brief outline of the study chapters, which follow as part of this thesis.

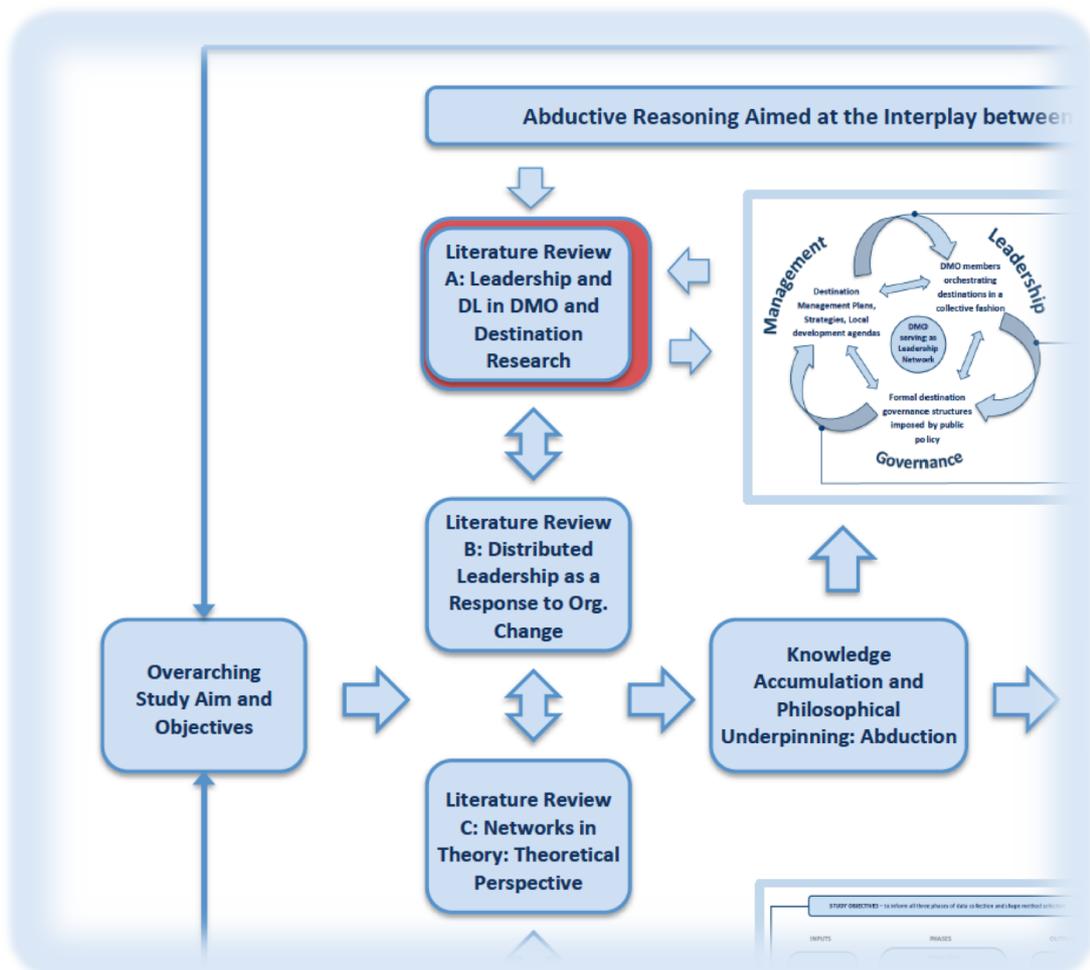
Section II

Literature Review

Section II consists of four interconnected literature review chapters and as such, it provides four discussions informed by the cross-disciplinary approach adopted by this study. The domain of DMOs and destinations, the leadership domain and its distributed dimension, and the network theory and practice domain are three prominent domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpin and inform the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. The rationale behind structuring the four literature chapters in the way they are structured reflects key developments linked to the DMO concept within a new funding and governance landscape. These developments require prior study into both the current state of the DMO concept and organisational change in DMOs, where the latter development implies emergent leadership and DL (Chapter 2 A). Within this context, Chapter 2 B provides a discussion of prominent leadership and DL literature contributions before contextualising this literature by discussing its relevance to and role in contemporary DMOs undergoing change. Chapter 2 B provides evidence that the concept of networks is a prominent theme in the DL literature. This coupled with expectations from reshaped DMOs to assume a more networked approach, prompts an investigation into the theoretical and practitioner dimensions of networks. Chapter 2 C thus provides the theoretical background to the network concept, including prominent literature surrounding key levels of analysis and a range of network measures adopted in line with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework. Chapter 2 D builds on Chapter 2 C by taking a practitioner approach to networks. This chapter therefore discusses the complexities, particularities and practicalities of the adoption of network analysis more generally and also in light of the overarching purpose and objectives of this study. This last literature review chapter thus shapes the applied methodological framework, which is covered in Section III.

Chapter 2 A

Literature Review on Leadership and Its Distributed Dimension in DMO and Destination Research



CHAPTER 2 A: LITERATURE REVIEW ON LEADERSHIP AND DL IN DMO AND DESTINATION RESEARCH

2.1.A Chapter introduction

This first literature review chapter is devoted to a number of discussions in the research domain of DMOs and destinations. The domain of DMOs and destinations is the first of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study.

The chapter begins with unfolding key destination paradigms and the rising importance of network leadership on both destination and destination organisation (DMO) levels. The chapter provides a critical overview of three organisational literature domains – management, governance and leadership in relation to research undertaken on both destinations and destination organisations. This critical overview plays a key role in pushing the frontiers of knowledge covered in existing academic contributions and thus serves as a means of surfacing the current gap in the extant literature of destinations and DMOs. This culminates in proposing a conceptual framework – namely the DMO Leadership Cycle – that introduces the concept of DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations. The conceptual framework debates the integrative nature of management, governance and leadership in guiding the work of reshaped DMOs in England. It is important to note that the DMO Leadership Cycle is influenced by both existing theoretical contributions and empirical data due to the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation adopted in this study, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

An indicative definition of DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations is then provided. This is followed by a number of propositions in relation to DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations. The chapter concludes with a supplementary discussion on key global-local developments related to the shifting operational context for DMOs. The continuous turbulence in the operational environment driving change on an organisational (DMO) level and the transition from marketing tourism to managing the wider visitor economy are explored through the lens of the Global-Local Nexus framework.

2.2.A Destinations

2.2.1.A Destinations and destination level

Destinations have long been the focal point of enquiry for academics and thus seen as a fundamental unit of analysis in tourism research (Buhalis 2000; Bornhorst et al. 2010; Baggio and Cooper 2010; Pike 2004). Destinations are a key focus of much of the tourism research (Pearce 2014). However, there is no widely accepted definition of the term destination (Pike and Page 2014) and the meaning of tourism destination is not fully understood (Saraniemi and Kyilanen 2011). A destination, as defined by the United Nation's World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 2002) reflects on:

“a physical space in which a visitor spends at least one overnight. It includes tourism products, such as support services and attractions, and tourism resources within one day's return travel time. It has physical and administrative boundaries defining its management”

(UNWTO 2002, p.1)

A destination is then a well-delimited geographical area (Hall 2008). They pull together facilities and services to meet the needs of visitors (Cooper 2005). Another classic interpretation of a destination was provided by Pike (2004), who contended that:

“Destinations are places that attract visitors for a temporary stay, and range from continents to countries, to states and provinces to cities to villages to purpose built resort areas ... destinations are essentially communities based on local government boundaries”

(Pike 2004, p.11)

Drawing on these key definitions, a decade later the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provided a more contemporary interpretation of a destination, namely a geography, i.e. area (locality, region, country), which is chosen by visitors due to its mix of attractions,

accommodation facilities, catering, entertainment and activities (OECD 2012). Destinations are considered to be the competitive unit in incoming tourism (Bieger et al. 2009). Hence, for these reasons, destinations are seen as a strategic focus for the management of tourism. The geographical boundary of a destination is usually defined by taking into account visitor travel patterns and political or administrative boundaries (OECD 2012). Spatially, a destination spans on a national, regional or local level (UNWTO 2007; OECD 2012).

Kozak and Baloglu (2011) add to OECD's interpretation by providing a more systematic and marketing-focused definition of a destination, i.e. a geographical area, perceived as a whole entity by the visitors and consumed under the brand name of the entity. Destinations are then seen as a combination of products, services and experiences (Kozak and Baloglu 2011). What is evident, however, is that in many cases, destinations are artificially divided by geographic and political boundaries. Such boundaries fail to take into consideration consumer preferences or tourism industry functions (Buhalis 2000; Bornhorst et al. 2010).

Providing that the spatial scale of investigation in this study captures England, the definition of a destination proposed by the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* is adopted:

“It's essential that each local tourism body is responsible for a genuine tourism destination which reflects the natural geography of an area's visitor economy, rather than local public sector or electoral boundaries which is what typically happens at present.”

(Penrose 2011, p.21)

In line with recent government policies, the above definition highlights that destinations should no longer be seen as geographies which reflect existing public sector and electoral boundaries (Penrose 2011). Instead, English destinations should be aligned to geographic areas that are defined by the diversity of tourism and hospitality-bound businesses and attractions (Kennell and Chaperon 2013).

Indeed, the localism agenda (see Symon and Kennell 2011) applied to tourism destinations implies that destinations should not abide by existing

administrative boundaries and give priority to fluid, local economic areas or even networks (Pearce 2014), where the bulk of tourism and visitor activity occurs. A destination in this study is also considered as a network of links between a multitude of destination organisations, which together shape destination offering (Camprubi et al. 2008; Wang and Fesenmaier 2007). Networks may well fit the above definition by Penrose, where destinations should follow natural geographies of an area's visitor economy. Network theory and its practitioner tool SNA in the context of DMOs and destinations is one of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpin and inform the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study.

2.2.2.A Types of destinations

In a seminal destination management and marketing paper, Buhalis (2000) argued that developing a destination typology is a complex task. He proposed a breakdown of destination types under six contrasting categories according to a number of purposes they serve and markets they attract, namely Urban; Seaside or Coastal; Alpine; Rural; Authentic Third World; Unique-Exotic-Exclusive (Buhalis 2000). Put in the context of English destinations and taking into account the geography of interest to this study, Alpine, Authentic Third World, Unique-Exotic-Exclusive, and Coastal typologies are not subject of discussion as they are not considered to be relevant to the case setting. The majority of destinations across England may well then be classified as Urban or Rural.

Urban destinations have been the focus of tourism since the early stages of civilisation (Buhalis 2000). Urban destinations gained more prominence in the mid-1980s (Howie 2003) in an attempt to provide an extensive offering to suit most activities undertaken by tourists and visitors (Harrill 2008; Spirou 2011). Howie (2003) argued that urban destinations are associated with sightseeing, visiting cultural attractions, the evening economy, business and shopping. In the case of urban destinations, tourism and visitor activity is largely based on man-made attractions as opposed to natural resources (Howie 2003). Within this

context, a number of scholars have advocated that this extensive tourism and visitor product portfolio represents a complex network of private, public, and third sector organisations (Spirou 2011; Morgan 2012; Laesser and Beritelli 2013).

Rural destinations are also developing rapidly across England (Kennedy and Augustyn 2014) and also across the rest of the UK (Haven-Tang and Sedgley 2014). They are now more likely to be generating visitor spending, along with purely tourism revenue. Rural destinations, however, often capture a limited set of stakeholders that are densely connected due to the scale of this type of destination, the limited product portfolio and a large number of micro businesses (Haven-Tang and Sedgley 2014).

As briefly discussed in Chapter 1, the spatial setting of this study is destination Milton Keynes. Milton Keynes is not a purely urban destination. Instead, it is an amalgam of both – urban and rural, built and natural environs, providing a range of destination products and experiences, which makes Milton Keynes attractive to visitors (Hristov and Petrova 2015). Milton Keynes is urban in its core, but with a number of rural satellite market towns. Unlike prominent English destinations and their local lead organisations, e.g. Marketing Manchester, City of London, Visit Brighton, destination Milton Keynes presents a case that is well placed to capture the challenges and opportunities of less-developed, yet largely important (as per the 2010 coalition government's *localism* agenda for England – see Penrose 2011) local urban and rural destinations face within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. The geography and its DMO, which both inform the case study approach applied to this study, are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

2.3.A Destination organisations in transition

2.3.1.A *The shifting definition of DMOs: Does the M stand for marketing or management?*

There is a considerable debate about what constitutes destination management nowadays (Ritchie and Crouch 2003; Pike 2004; Jamal and Jamrozy 2006;

Harrill 2009; Laesser and Beritelli 2013). It is a common practice that the concept of destination management and functions of respective destination management bodies, namely Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), are more regarded as having an impact on destination marketing, as opposed to management (Ritchie and Crouch 2003; Laesser and Beritelli 2013). Marketing and promotion functions have been playing a central role in DMOs (Pike 2004), and thus the DMO label is interpreted as 'destination marketing organisation' (Ritchie and Crouch 2003; Pike and Page 2014). At times, DMOs may, however, undertake management duties thus questioning what actually destination management is. A number of scholars have argued that most studies on DMOs have been carried out in the destination marketing domain (Ford and Peeper 2008; Harrill 2005; Lennon et al. 2006; Pike 2004; Pike and Page 2014) as opposed to destination management. Destination management has only recently started attracting the attention of scholars and practitioners (Beritelli and Laesser 2013; Harrill 2009; Laesser and Beritelli 2013; Spirou 2011).

2.3.2.A DMOs in the Past

From an organisational point of view, despite the plethora of definitions provided by both scholars and practitioners, there remains confusion about the acronym DMO (Harrill 2009). There are many different types of DMO deserving attention (OECD 2013). Destination management or marketing organisations are known under a variety of names (Kozak and Baloglu 2011) including agencies, authorities, boards, bureaus, centres, commissions, companies, corporations, councils, departments, destinations, directorates, offices, organisations, regions amongst others (Pike 2004; Harrill 2009). Further, they operate on various spatial levels, namely local, regional and national (Pearce 1992; WTO 2004). Marketing-centric DMOs in the past were normally funded through government (Beritelli and Laesser 2013) or tax money from hospitality establishments (Sheehan et al. 2007).

Arguably, these tourism bodies arose initially to focus on marketing, the M in DMO is typically thought to mean Marketing (Lennon et al. 2006; Sheehan et al. 2007). In this sense, Pike (2004) argued that one of the purposes of Destination Marketing Organisations is to foster sustained destination competitiveness. He summarised specific goals of DMOs as relating to four main themes, namely: enhancing destination image; increasing industry profitability; reducing seasonality; and ensuring long-term funding (Pike 2004).

In addition to being mainly responsible for the selling of destinations (Pike 2004; Kozak and Baloglu 2011), academia has given considerable attention to a number of destination marketing-related functions undertaken by Destination Marketing Organisations, namely coordination of brand identity (Bregoli 2013), boosting tourist and visitor numbers in destinations (Wang and Pizam 2011), providing economic benefits to members of the organisation (Blain et al. 2005), supporting product innovation (Zach 2012), and community-bound marketing and promotion (Wang 2008). Increasingly, they are becoming associated not only with marketing and promotion strategies, but also with other more inclusive activities – thus contributing to an upward trend in taking on board important agendas, such as sustainability and competitiveness (Presenza et al. 2005; Pike and Page 2014).

2.3.3.A DMOs in the Present

Contemporary DMOs, however, have evolved to take an active management role in their built and natural environments (Pechlaner et al. 2012). Harrill (2009) argued that this evolution has occurred from simple recognition that the very tourism product that DMOs promote must be sustained and further developed. Most DMO executives admit that marketing is still at the heart of the industry and the 'selling' characteristic is one that all DMOs share (Harrill 2009) and particularly. In this sense, Harrill (2009) points out that even new management-oriented DMOs are still strongly working in the marketing domain. However, marketing-related goals of contemporary DMOs now capture more all-

encompassing goals and are thus oriented towards facilitating the transition from supply- to demand-driven destinations (Beritelli et al. 2015b).

Purely marketing DMOs, however, hardly take on board key wider development and regeneration initiatives and objectives (Longjit and Pearce 2013), such as bringing inward investment, creating employment opportunities, community well-being, which in turn suggests a more holistic approach to destination management (Morgan 2012). Indeed, Kozak and Baloglu (2011) argued that the landscape of destination marketing is changing due to changes in the environment and a DMO nowadays should be able to satisfy needs and wants of all stakeholders within a destination and achieve a complex set of strategic objectives (Morgan 2012).

Contemporary DMOs have developed a consensus-building capability (Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013) and thus balancing the interests of various stakeholder groups (Beritelli and Laesser 2014); they play a key role in destination development (Klimek 2013); nurture strategic partnerships with key destination stakeholders (Sheehan and Ritchie 2005); participate in policy-making processes (Pforr et al. 2014) thus further establishing their legitimacy and capacity to influence destination development trajectories. Even more importantly, DMOs start to play a critical role in managing economic, environmental and social resources of a destination – they are to implement sustainable development strategies (OECD 2013) whilst also following demand-driven trends and expansion opportunities (Beritelli et al. 2015b). Such strategies focus not only on tourists and attractions, but also on the quality of life and local communities (Morgan 2012). Contemporary DMOs are, therefore, seen as complex structures of organisations (Beritelli et al. 2015b). DMOs are then well-placed to promote self-regulation of the destination network (Volgger and Pechlaner 2014) and operate independently.

DMOs are undergoing a shift towards adopting a more commercial, yet inclusive approach to destinations (Longjit and Pearce 2013). They are both flexible and adaptable so that they can better meet the highly fragmented demand (Pforr et al. 2014). This transformation is clearly reflected in the way they are named, now exercising destination lead functions (Pechlaner et al. 2014) and emphasising the more holistic management of destination resources and communities.

Within this context, it is worthwhile to note that DMOs differ from country to country and that there is no 'one size fits all' definition accepted by academia (Hristov 2015). DMOs have been known under a variety of names, they come in all shapes and sizes and operate across various administrative and spatial levels (Pike 2004; Harrill 2009; Kozak and Baloglu 2011). Contemporary, market-driven DMOs have undergone a shift towards adopting a more commercial, yet inclusive approach to destinations (Kozak and Baloglu 2011). Forming a destination management consortium, which brings under one roof the public sector, a number of industries, not-for-profit organisations and local communities is imperative (Laesser and Beritelli 2013; Morgan 2012). Such definition of a DMO implies a more networked approach to destination management and is consistent with the definition provided in the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*.

2.4.A The destination paradigm continuum revisited

Destinations and destination organisations from across the world face remarkable challenges in light of the global crisis aftermath and continuous political turmoil (OECD 2014). Turbulence in the operational environment (Laesser and Beritelli 2013) coupled with the rapid development of tourism as a multifaceted phenomenon (Urry 2002; Urry and Larsen 2011), introduce new challenges for both destination practitioners and academics attempting to predict global industry shifts (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). This calls for rethinking the existing destination concepts (Pechlaner et al. 2014). Arguably, a new, more inclusive approach to the way destinations are led should be put in place (Haven-Tang and Jones 2012; Morgan 2012). This approach is projected to ensure long-term development prospects and help destinations flourish (Mariani et al. 2014). Both well-established and novel concepts in the literature of destinations, such as management (Ritchie and Crouch 2003), governance (Ruhanen et al. 2010) and leadership (Zehrer et al. 2014) that often require joined-up thinking aim to bridge this gap.

2.4.1.A Destination management: Retrospect and prospect

Destination management is a concept that has been subject of debate for more than a decade (Laws 1995; Camprubi et al. 2008; Merilainen and Lemmetyinen 2011) but has recently attracted a great degree of attention (Fyall et al. 2012), not only in academia but, importantly, among practitioners alike (Laesser and Beritelli 2013). This is in line with the above discussion on DMOs and their shifting roles and functions in destinations. The extant literature on destination management has evolved alongside two contrasting and highly debated streams of research – the rather focused destination marketing (Pike and Page 2014) concerned with the selling of places (Harrill 2009; Pike 2004) and the much broader management concept (Morgan 2012) related to strategising, exercising control, coordinating organisations and leveraging destination resources (Mariani et al. 2014; OECD 2013).

Contemporary destination management and the formal structures responsible for exercising such functions, namely DMOs have recognised the need to adopt a more inclusive approach to destinations (Morgan 2012; Volgger and Pechlaner 2014). They are projected to oversee destination management in a more holistic manner (Fyall et al. 2009; Petrova and Hristov 2014; Presenza et al. 2005). The nexus between government, businesses and civil society is thus becoming central to management and development of destinations (Kennel and Chaperon 2013; Presenza and Cipolina 2010). This process has already started gaining momentum and is not tied to a particular region or country (Spirou 2011). Instead, it is turning into a worldwide phenomenon (OECD 2014). Arguably then, whilst the focus of destination marketing has been considered *outward* (e.g. establishing links with different markets with the purpose to attract visitors), destination management, in contrast, has adopted a more *inward* focus – it is interested in the destination (e.g. destination competitiveness, creating a welcoming environment, management of natural and built destination resources, ensuring seamless visitor experience alike). In other words, there is evidence that conventional top-down approaches to leveraging destinations step back in favour of more fluid, bottom-up ones. This is a much-needed intervention since destinations are now seen as multi-layer systems (Beritelli and Bieger 2014).

The public sector still plays a critical role in many DMOs across the world (Pechlaner et al. 2012). A number of scholars have, nevertheless, indicated that the landscape of destination management is altering and this process of transformation is a consequence of large to small scale influences taking place in local, regional, national, and even international contexts (Ritchie and Crouch 2003; Harrill 2009; Pearce and Schänzel 2013; Bramwell 2011; Kozak and Baloglu 2011; Longjit and Pearce 2013) thus bringing into the spotlight the importance of rethinking existing governance structures (Coles et al. 2012; Fyall et al. 2009; Laesser and Beritelli 2013; Morgan 2012) in and underlying theoretical concepts of destinations.

2.4.2.A Destination governance

Governance has also been a subject of debate in the DMO and destination literature for a long time (Rhodes 1997; Bhimani 2008). However, it captures a relatively recent concept when applied to destination research (Ruhanen et al. 2010). In essence, the literature on governance explains structures and processes in destinations (Beritelli and Bieger 2014; Bramwell 2011) by involving a diverse set of stakeholder groups having an interest in development of areas of tourism and visitor activity, i.e. destinations (Baggio et al. 2010; Beritelli et al. 2007; Kjaer 2004). The fundamental focus of destination governance is then steering and controlling destinations by norms, structures and processes (Beritelli and Bieger 2014), traditionally using a top-down approach. This approach is often imposed by the public sector (Ruhanen et al. 2010; Strobl and Peters 2013) in the face of local, regional and national government.

In line with the shifting destination management concept, contemporary interpretations of governance also imply less governmental control (Breda et al. 2006) and adopt a more inclusive, rather bottom-up approach where businesses and local communities are encouraged to provide input into their destinations' direction of development (Vernon et al. 2005). In contemporary destination governance structures, priority is given to the interaction between

government, businesses and civil society (Presenza and Cipollina 2010). Arguably, formal structures, such as DMOs, are expected to facilitate such interaction (Morgan 2012). A recent study on destination governance defines the tourist spatial setting as one having relationship-based dimension – a complex system of relationships (Laws et al. 2011). Hence, academia may need to take a look at the *social fabric* of destination organisations and communities, namely individuals or groups who lead formal and informal structures and exercise control over destination processes.

Destination governance may well be seen as a promising concept, but is governance on its own sufficient enough to address recent complexities in orchestrating destinations within dynamic governance and funding landscape, as in the case of England? Does academia pay too much attention to marketing and management functions and governance structures whilst overlooking the role and influence of individuals behind these organisations? Considering a radical shift may not always be the way through the maze, leadership may, however, be able to provide a response to many of the above questions.

2.4.3.A Destination leadership

A discussion in the outset of Section 2.4.A indicated that management implies control, whilst governance sets the boundaries and establishes a platform for achieving it. Is this, however, a sound approach since destinations are highly fragmented and involve a diverse set of stakeholders having contrasting objectives and divergent strategic priorities? Has academia considered alternatives in detail, perhaps more proactive forms of supporting vital tourism agendas and thus ensuring destinations' futures? The two-part, special issue of *Tourism Review* marks the beginning of a new paradigm shift where destination leadership has gradually started gaining recognition as a promising concept on the destination paradigm continuum (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Amidst a handful of academic contributions which discuss leadership in the context of destinations (Benson and Blackman 2011; Wray 2009), the above special issue is the first consolidated effort to both formalise and theorise the underpinning

concept in destination research. Hence, this section draws on a number of recent academic contributions and as such, it aims to provide an in-depth discussion of a concept, yet in its infancy.

The majority of published research on destinations in the past two decades has predominantly focused on marketing, management and governance (Pechlaner et al. 2014). Achieving destination management and development objectives does not, however, depend solely on structures, institutions or processes (Beritelli and Laesser 2013). Instead, the inclusion of lead destination actors forming leadership networks is a pressing issue (Pechlaner et al. 2014) which is as yet insufficiently addressed by academia (Pechlaner and Volgger 2013). Destination leadership, as contended by Beritelli and Bieger (2014), follows up and equally, builds upon the largely discussed for more than a decade research strands of destination marketing, management and governance. Destination leadership is an emergent concept that might be better able to capture what it is that DMOs actually do (Blichfeldt et al. 2014) or conversely, fail to address what they do in the course of leading destinations. Destination leadership then, as seen by Kozak et al. (2014), is about adopting a proactive approach to shaping the future of destinations.

In light of the mainstream leadership literature and as contended by Robbins (2000, p.347), leadership is “the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals”. It may well then be argued that such interpretation captures core functions of contemporary DMOs, namely taking the lead and shaping the direction of destination management and development through the involvement of a network of committed DMO member organisations. Fundamental topics of discussion, such as power and influence, communication and motivation reflect on the very essence of the leadership concept (Pechlaner et al. 2014). There is an emerging focus on leadership at network level across both communities and actors in destinations. Pechlaner et al. (2014) argued that network leadership among destination actors captures the complexities of leading, organising and communicating with individual network members and at the network as a whole. Leadership networks, however, come in different forms and shapes. Drawing on the mainstream literature on leadership, leadership networks, e.g. social networks among destination leaders, as contended by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) can be classified into four types:

- (i) peer leadership networks, which rely on personal trust and providing access to resources;
- (ii) organisational leadership networks, which emerge within formal organisational structures and focus on increasing network performance and impact;
- (iii) field-policy leadership networks charged with shaping the environment; and
- (iv) local, bottom-up collective leadership networks, which emerge on a self-organising basis.

It is within the context of the second leadership network type defined by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) – namely organisational leadership networks, which emerge within formal organisational structures – that this study debates the existence of lead functions of DMO members embedded in their inter-organisational network. The role of Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework in this research is further explored in Chapter 3. In a recent study, Zehrer et al. (2014) investigated networked relationships among destination leaders, where the exchange of information and coordination of joint interest, along with destination management, marketing and development were identified as key areas covered by the scrutinised leadership networks. Pooling resources is becoming a hot topic in destination management and development, particularly in light of the slow post-2008 economic recovery (Hristov 2014) and as such, it serves as a core objective of destination leadership as often lead organisations have a wide array of resources at their disposal. In addition, Zehrer et al. (2014) who have enquired into small community destinations, provide evidence that such leadership networks can also involve a healthy mix of destination actors in terms of both sectoral diversity and organisation size and scope.

2.4.4.A The gap in the literature

Who is responsible for exercising leadership functions and executing leadership decisions in destinations? Could DMOs be seen as leadership networks? So far, this chapter has examined a number of recent studies providing insights

into destination leadership *on* DMO and other destination organisations. However, the evidence is scarce when investigating destination leadership functions *in* DMO organisations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015; Reinhold et al. 2015). A number of notable contributions have been explored (captured in Figure 2.A.1) that assist in locating the gap in the literature. The figure draws on Beritelli and Bieger’s (2014) approach to visualising gaps in the literature of destinations. As is evident, both management and governance have been well researched on spatial (destination) and more strategic organisational (DMO) levels. However, the concept of leadership has so far been largely discussed on a destination level. This leaves a gap in the destination leadership literature and indicates the need for investigating the role of leadership on a more strategic organisational or DMO level; this is where the present study aims to contribute to existing knowledge.

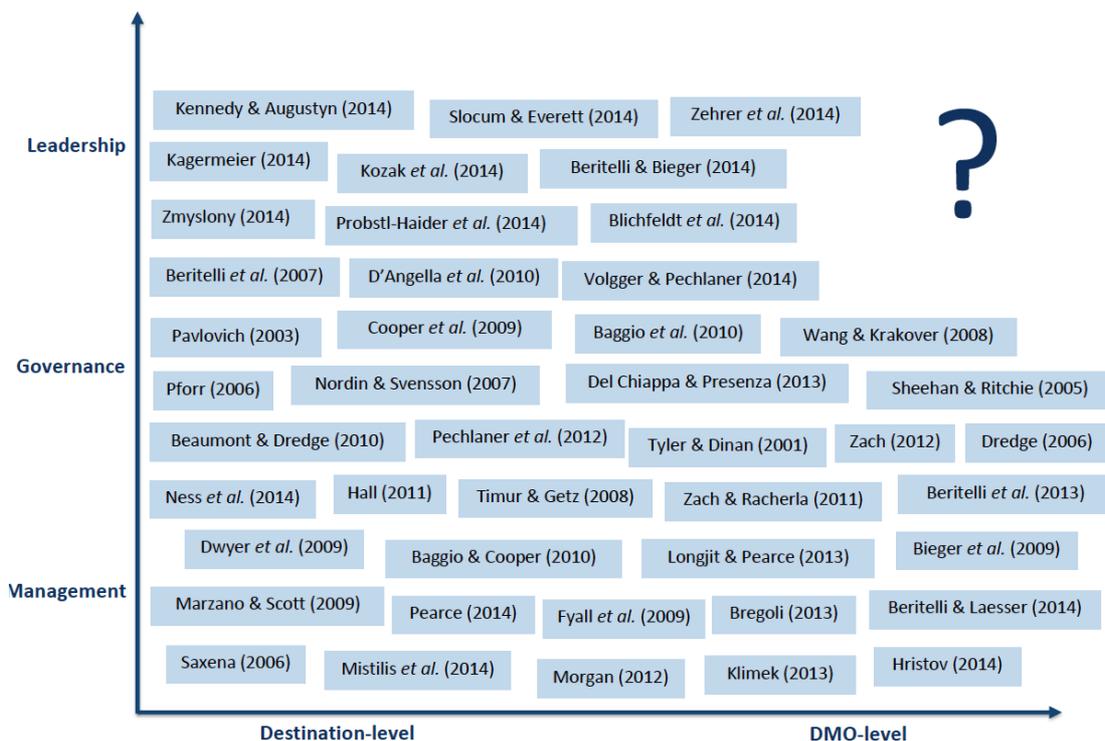


Figure 2.A.1. Destination versus DMO Leadership: The gap in the literature (Source: Author)

In line with this, and if one steps back and looks at the more generic network research in the domain of DMOs and destinations, the overall picture is similar. The bulk of network research has given considerable attention to conceptualising destinations as networks (Bregoli and Del Chiappa 2013;

Cooper et al. 2009; Pavlovich 2003; Pechlaner et al. 2012; Pforr 2006; Scott et al. 2008b; Timur and Getz 2008). However, to date, just a few studies have explored DMOs as networks (Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013). Research in these few academic contributions has been carried out in predominantly qualitative terms as opposed to using network metrics and exploring the value of inter-network collaboration through taking a close look at ties linking member organisations (Ahmed 2012). Indeed, little research has been conducted on the strategic organisational level – by exploring the DMO network of bodies involved in destination management representing the three key interested groups: businesses, local government and community organisations (Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013). When the concept of leadership is attached to such networks, one is then able to spot a new direction of enquiry that deserves further attention, i.e. DMO networks serving as platforms for nurturing joined-up thinking and collective action.

Leadership is seen as a concept having both an individual and collective dimension. Not surprisingly then, Kozak et al. (2014) call for a discussion on a recent debate in leadership networks as to whether destination leadership is primarily a role of the individual, or it takes the form of DL. Drawing on the latter option, DMOs are therefore seen as a function of such DL practice in destinations and are, therefore, subject of investigation in the present study.

2.5.A Pushing the frontiers of research: DMOs serving as leadership networks

2.5.1.A Leadership at a DMO level

Recent enquiry suggests that leadership is concerned with network orchestration (Dhanaraj and Arvind 2006). A recent work undertaken by Ness et al. (2014) suggests that DMOs can take a leading role in destinations and pursue orchestration. Equally, DMOs may well be seen as organisations having a central role to play as catalysts for collective action (OECD 2012). Shall academia then call DMOs leadership networks? The central tenet of this study is to conceptualise contemporary DMOs where these destination governance

structures are not solely explored in network terms but also involve a leadership dimension as a key consideration. Leadership occurring in DMO networks is one that adopts a constructionist perspective (Berger and Luckmann 1966) since an emphasis is given to collectivism in destination decision-making. This section provides a discussion on DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations. The discussion to follow draws on the second type of leadership networks in a classification introduced by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010), namely organisational leadership networks, which emerge within formal organisational structures.

A number of characteristics mark the fundamental difference between leadership networks on a geographic or spatial (destination) and more strategic organisational (DMO) levels. A snapshot of how selected leadership functions are likely to be addressed by leadership networks across both destination networks and networks nested in DMOs is provided in Table 2.A.1. Orchestrating in DMOs should not be seen as a role of the individual. It rather implies collective effort – a joined-up approach to lead the strategic development of destinations. Leadership should then be a function to be undertaken by all members in a DMO. Non-members of DMO leadership networks are often seen as followers (Zehrer et al. 2014); they have limited or no voice in taking destination decisions.

Leadership on a DMO level takes the form of collective action and involves the sharing of roles, when it is embedded in formal governance structures. This provides a more structured approach to leadership, wider opportunities for pooling resources (shared value creation) and importantly, facilitates interaction among destination businesses of all sizes and sectors (Table 2.A.1). Leadership developing on a strategic organisational (DMO) level accepts that having a voice in leadership and wider representation is a matter of choice (often based on whether destination organisations are willing to become members of DMOs). Leadership in DMOs then takes the form of a DL (Evans and Wolf 2005; Harris et al. 2007) – one that is fluid in nature. The DL paradigm can be adopted by any form of organisation (Benson and Blackman 2011) and should be seen as one that adopts a grassroots approach to leadership.

Table 2.A.1. A Snapshot of Selected Network Functions across Leadership Networks in Destinations and DMOs (Source: Author)

	Leadership Networks in Destinations	Leadership Networks in DMOs
Who?		
Who is Taking the Lead	Individuals, Destination Cliques	Members of DMO networks
Actor Profile	Key Blue-chip Businesses, Local Government	SMEs through to MSBs and Blue-chips
Approach to Leadership	Top-down, Exclusive	Bottom-up, Inclusive
What?		
Knowledge Diffusion	Limited to key destination network actors	Distributed across the DMO network
Developmental Resource Exchange	Limited to key destination network actors	Distributed across the DMO network
Coordination of Interests	Among key destination players	Involving all DMO members
Cost Sharing	Among key destination players	Involving all DMO members
Matters of Inclusion	Destination cliques; Influential actors	Wider representation of destination actors
Lobbying	Covers key destination actor interests	Covers the diversity of DMO member interests

Kennedy and Augustyn (2014) contended that distributed forms of leadership are vital to the future sustainability of financially-constrained destinations. In like manner, Tuohino and Konu (2014) provided evidence that there is scope for DL in destinations, regardless of it being an under-researched topic. Investigating contemporary DMOs serving as leadership networks may thus be seen as a means to bridging this gap and is among the key objectives of this study.

In contrast to leadership carried out on a strategic organisational (DMO) level, leadership in destinations is often exercised by a group of powerful players (Zmyślony 2014). Leadership exercised by few, not many, often adds to the complexities of identifying destination leaders and results in insufficient representation of some, otherwise important destination groups, e.g. not-for-profit and community organisations, and sustainability trusts (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Further, when looking at a leadership network in a destination, in contrast to the organisation (or DMO) level, one risks ignoring small, yet important enterprises who may be shaping the destination product offering and image (e.g. small-scale hospitality and attraction businesses), along with other organisations having an influence on destination planning. This involves organisations actively participating in the development and implementation of influential policy frameworks (e.g. local authorities and third sector organisations) but having limited opportunities to intervene in destination leadership. Leadership on a destination level thus means that having a voice in leadership and opportunities for wider representation is a matter of subjective

selection, i.e. often involving and even limited to 'privileged groups' (Table 2.A.1). The process of 'selection' may often be considered unfair (particularly in the case of involving smaller businesses) and at the same time, in favour of other, more influential destination players (often blue-chip hospitality and transportation businesses). Indeed, Zmysłony (2014) provides evidence that in destinations where DMOs are not in place, it is often the case that influential actors having access to the bulk of destination resources assume leadership functions.

2.5.2.A DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations

In a recent study, Beritelli and Bieger (2014) unveiled three dimensions of leadership of particular relevance to tourism destinations, namely leadership within organisations, inter-organisational leadership at dyadic level, and leadership in networks. If such a classification is explored through the lens of this study, DMOs projected as leadership networks adopt a hybrid, two-fold definition. It is a definition that is founded on two of Beritelli and Bieger (2014) destination leadership dimensions: leadership within organisations and leadership in networks. This study then argues that leadership occurs within a DMO and the organisation itself is the lead network in tourism destinations.

Leadership in DMOs accepts that the otherwise contrasting and differentiating perspectives of destination management, governance and leadership (Pechlaner et al. 2014) are, in fact, interconnected. Going further, management, governance and leadership functions may even be integrated and used in tandem when applied to DMO leadership networks (Figure 2.A.2). Hence, the following section of Chapter 2 A now discusses what is believed to be the integrative nature of these perspectives in DMOs seen as leadership networks.

2.5.3.A Proposed conceptual framework

The proposed conceptual framework, which is largely an outcome of Phase I of the adopted methodological framework (discussed in Chapter 4 A), has been discussed in this chapter as it follows up as a logical continuation of the above discussion on deconstructing the DMO concept. Despite being the outcome of empirical data insights derived from the application of Phase I of the proposed methodological framework, the DMO Leadership Cycle is also firmly embedded in the plethora of existing theoretical contributions on leadership – on both spatial and more strategic organisational levels and as such, it establishes a relationship between existing theory and new empirical data. It is thus argued that the DMO Leadership Cycle holds a prominent place in this literature review chapter as it builds on existing theory through its interplay with empirical data.

In other words, the conceptual contribution in Figure 2.A.2 draws on both key academic literature and Phase I empirical data in order to produce new knowledge, i.e. stretch the current theoretical understanding of leadership, which emerges in reshaped DMOs operating within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, which may well arguably be distributed in nature. This process of producing new knowledge is underpinned by abduction, which is a logical approach to knowledge accumulation. The adopted approach to knowledge accumulation was introduced briefly in Chapter 1 and is further discussed in Chapter 3.

As the DMO Leadership Cycle mirrors the result of the interplay between theory and empirical data, it has also been discussed in Chapter 4 A, which captures a discussion of findings resulting from the application of Phase I, i.e. the preliminary phase. The DMO Leadership Cycle (Figure 2.A.2) integrates the perspectives of destination management, governance and leadership and argues that such cyclical interaction is vital to DMOs operating as leadership networks in destinations. Management, governance and leadership provide input into, interact with, and influence one another as depicted in Figure 2.A.2. This section provides a brief discussion on these three pillars of the DMO Leadership Cycle and how they link with one another. Leadership in destinations, which is concerned with influence, action and giving direction (Beritelli and Bieger 2014; Pechlaner et al. 2014) differs from leadership in DMOs where members of the leadership network orchestrate destinations in a collective fashion (Figure 2.A.2).

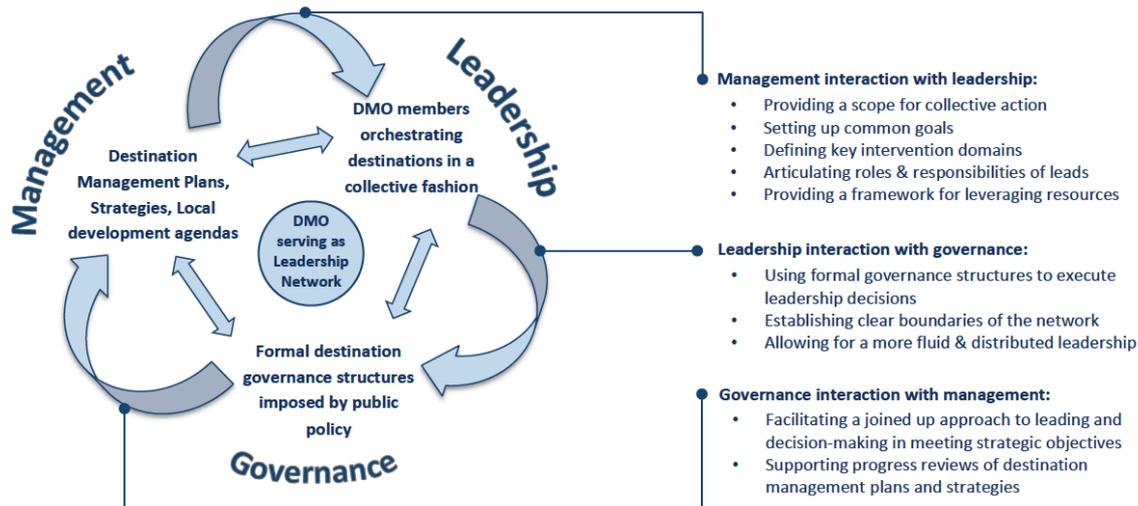


Figure 2.A.2. The DMO Leadership Cycle (Source: Author)

Where the former scenario sees leadership as a function assigned to individual destination actors and influential cliques, the latter one allows for a more integrative and open leadership practice in destinations. Leadership in DMOs may then be seen as a symbol of collectivism where all network members have the opportunity to shape the strategic direction of destinations. Destination governance, on the other hand, captures rules and norms (Beritelli and Bieger 2014) and sets the boundaries of interaction (Pechlaner et al. 2014) of leadership networks. Hence, when investigating leadership networks in DMOs, governance takes into consideration formal governance structures that are often imposed by central and regional government (e.g. through public policy) or this is the DMO organisation itself. Finally, management in destinations, as portrayed by Pechlaner et al. (2014) involves the setting of developmental goals, their implementation and optimisation. Management in DMOs seen as leadership networks, however, makes use of destination management plans, strategies and agendas to provide a scope for intervention and thus support the work of DMO network member leads (Figure 2.A.2). Implementation and optimisation of strategic objectives captured in plans and strategies are, nevertheless, responsibility and fall within the remit of network members orchestrating the destination *vis-à-vis* the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle resulting in closing this cycle.

The DMO Leadership Cycle features both reciprocal (inner arrows) and directed (outer arrows) links. The role of the inner arrows is to recognise the integrative nature of the perspectives of management, governance and leadership which serve as fundamental building blocks of the DMO Leadership Cycle, whilst also facilitating a more-systemic approach to leadership through assuming reciprocal interaction among them. Whilst the DMO Leadership Cycle has acknowledged the importance of reciprocal links between the three perspectives (inner arrows), the key strength and ultimately, point of differentiation for this conceptual model is the cyclical pattern of interaction (outer arrows). Such cyclical pattern of interaction does not simply emphasise the integrative nature of the DMO Leadership Cycle's building blocks, but also provides direction for leadership executed on a DMO level and a projected sequence of the processes located on the right-hand side of Figure 2.A.2.

2.5.4.A The integrative nature of management, governance and leadership in the context of DMOs

This section adds more depth to the rationale behind Figure 2.A.2 by providing a detailed account of the functions of links that bring together the three pillars of DMOs serving as leadership networks in a cyclical fashion. When examining *management interaction with leadership*, destination management plans and strategies can be seen as providing a scope for action in divergent, yet interconnected strategic destination decision-making domains, in this case, planning, marketing, management and development. Plans may, in addition, contain a framework or action plan for leveraging resources of the leadership network. Such plans are able to strengthen the collective approach to leadership in DMOs. They provide a synthesis of destination development trajectories being fed into the leadership network (Figure 2.A.2) with the aim to push these strategic agendas forward. This is in line with Kozak et al. (2014) who contended that developing long-term solutions for tourism and visitor contexts is at the very essence of leadership. The management dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle capturing planning and strategising for the future is an expression of that.

In the case of *leadership interaction with governance*, DMOs can be seen as leadership networks adopting fluid leadership policy in order to assign roles of network actors according to individual expertise, areas of influence and sectoral links. Individual DMO network leaders thus hold the potential to intervene in areas that match their organisational background (e.g. primary business and sectors of influence) whilst also providing input into collective DMO debates, discussions and actions concerning leadership and thus shaping destination development. Here, leadership networks meet formal governance structures, or in other words, the DMO organisation itself. Governance structures put in place are key to exercising network leadership as they establish clear boundaries of the network, which is an alternative view to the often loosely-defined destination. DMOs defining the scope of leadership networks then draw a clear line between influencers and followers, whilst also operating an 'open door' policy for those who may wish to join or alternatively, opt out.

When exploring *governance interaction with management* the conceptual model highlights that governance structures are key to facilitating a joined-up approach to leading the development and implementation of destination management plans and strategies. Again, this serves as an alternative viewpoint to the much broader and blurred destination level where leadership is often a function of the clique, e.g. a group of influential destination players. DMOs seen as leadership networks thus allow for a wider representation of stakeholder interests in shaping management plans and strategies. In addition, the relationship between both perspectives, namely governance and management on a DMO leadership network-level allows for destination management plans and strategies to evaluate what has been achieved collectively over a set period of time. This link may be seen as a way of ensuring good governance by considering strategic documents as working and living ones.

The discussion above leads to a conclusion that destination actors need to find a common ground to exercise leadership functions in destinations. DMOs acting as collective platforms that take into consideration the perspectives of management, governance and leadership and equally, recognise their inter-related nature, are seen as an expression of that. DMOs

serving as leadership networks in destinations may then be able to address fundamental issues, such as empowerment of small businesses on board (Benson and Blackman 2011). Leadership networks, in addition, play a key role in pooling resources (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010) and DMOs acting as structures that often represent a wide array of destination resources, are seen as such.

2.5.5.A A new paradigm? Definition and key propositions

Beritelli et al. (2015) argued that contemporary DMOs should be seen as organisations that bring together destination organisations from contrasting sectors, who are committed to playing a proactive role in strategic destination decision-making initiatives and as such, encouraging participation in shaping leadership decisions. Based on the above discussion, this section provides an indicative definition of reshaped DMOs, which serve as leadership networks in destinations across England. It is therefore assumed that:

“DMOs seen as leadership networks capture a cohesive, yet inclusive lead network of diverse destination actors (a nexus between businesses, local government and community) not solely having an interest in, but committed to shaping the strategic direction of the destination using formal governance structure that serves as a platform for orchestrating it (the destination) in a collective fashion whilst also following a clear collaborative agenda in delivering management objectives and meeting developmental goals...”

(Hristov and Zehrer 2015, p.125)

Further, based on the findings of the literature review, this section puts forward a series of propositions regarding DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations (see Hristov and Zehrer 2015):

P1: Leadership in DMOs is seen as a symbol of collectivism, where all network members have the opportunity to shape the strategic direction of

destinations. Hence, the existence of lead functions of DMO members embedded in their inter-organisational network is assumed.

P2: Formal governance structures, such as DMOs, are critical for facilitating a joined-up approach to leadership in destinations and serve as a means of finding common ground to exercise leadership functions in destinations.

P3: Leadership in DMOs accepts that the otherwise distinctive and differentiating perspectives of destination management, governance and leadership are, in fact, interconnected; DMOs serving as leadership networks recognise their inter-related nature in delivering value to visitors, destination businesses and host communities.

P4: DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations are better able to address fundamental issues, such as empowerment of small businesses on board, and indeed, recognise the diversity, roles and functions of destination actors by operating an 'open door' policy.

P5: DMOs serving as leadership networks adopt fluid leadership policy in order to assign roles of network actors according to individual expertise, areas of influence and sectoral links and thus provide effective and efficient joint orchestration of destinations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015).

The indicative definition of DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations is revisited in light of Phase II and Phase III data from the adopted methodological framework (see Chapter 4 C).

2.6.A Global to local forces influencing the domain of DMOs and destinations

The outset of Chapter 1 provided a discussion into the global perspective, which influences this study and its unit of analysis, namely the shifting notions of DMOs and destinations, and referred to a wide number of global-local forces and disruptions. This section acknowledges the importance of such forces and builds on the short global perspective discussion in Chapter 1 of this study by

providing a discussion which is grounded in the Global-Local Nexus (Milne and Ateljevic 2001).

There is no doubt that the economic crisis from 2008 had a profound impact across all sectors of the economy in England and that it continues to put pressure on the majority of them. The domain of destinations and DMOs is not an exception and these global-local forces (Milne and Ateljevic 2001; Urry and Larsen 2011) have led to the need to rethink the current concept of DMO, destination management and governance approaches. This process can be explained with the Global-Local Nexus, which is a concept that was originally proposed by Milne and Ateljevic (2001), where (at the top of Figure 2.A.3) the economic crisis has major implications for economic and political thinking followed by the introduction of the 2010 coalition government that stepped in on a regional level (England) in that year. The 2010 coalition government introduced major cuts in government funding for key sectors of the economy and the need to reduce state intervention in general. This decision was partly influenced by the economic crisis developing on a global level, along with the neo-liberal agenda followed by the new government. The *2011 Government Tourism Policy* proposed to replace existing tourism management and supporting structures on a regional level, namely RTBs and RDAs, in favour of a more locally-positioned DMOs and LEPs (Figure 2.A.3). This was influenced by the localism agenda of the new government and the need for the industry to take the lead on England's local destinations. An emphasis was placed on the importance of the wider visitor economy, networks and local leadership. This discussion is explored further in Chapter 4 A, which introduces the policy network analysis.

Along with external, generic political and economic drivers of change, recent factors influencing shifts in the way strategic destination decision-making is run in destinations and DMOs, lay within the industry itself. In its *Practical Guide to Tourism Destination Management*, UNWTO (2007) highlighted that governance in the domain of DMOs and destinations is undergoing a transformation from a traditional public sector model, historically delivering government policy, to one of a more corporate nature emphasising efficiency, return on investments, and the role of the market and partnerships between public, private and third sector entities. This trend has been voiced in academia

on a number of occasions (see Coles et al. 2014; Harrill 2009; Kozak and Baloglu 2011; Laesser and Beritelli 2013; Reinhold et al. 2015).

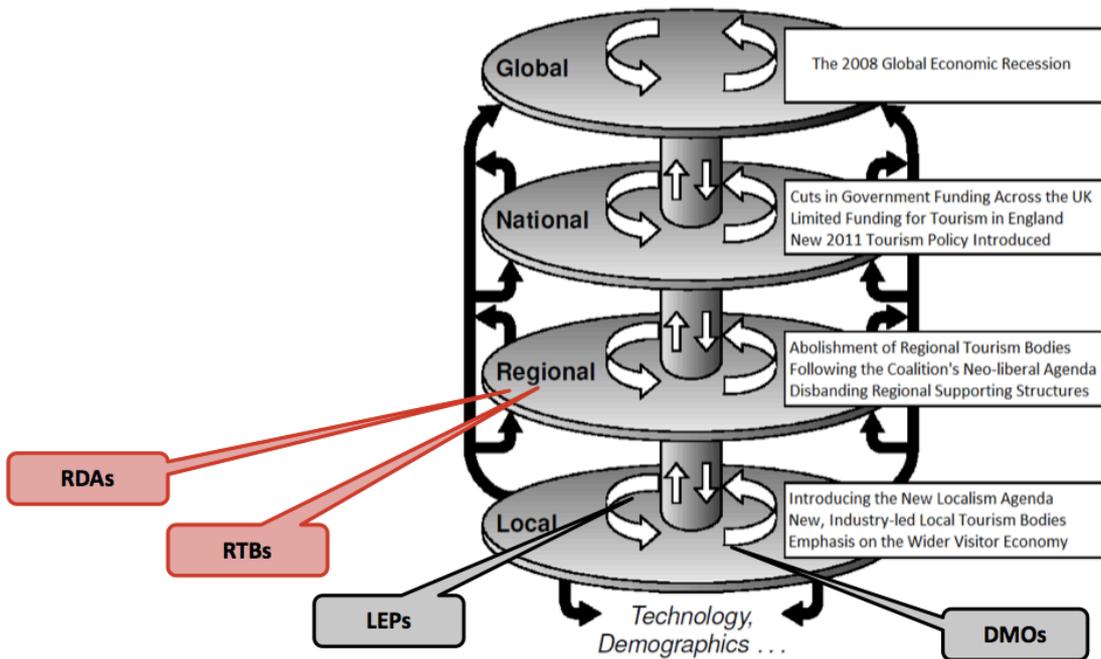


Figure 2.A.3. The Global-Local Nexus (Adapted from Milne and Ateljevic 2001)

DMOs now play a critical role in managing economic, environmental and social resources of a destination (Kozak and Baloglu 2011), and they are projected to be responsible for the implementation of more holistic and inclusive strategies. Such strategies aim to capture not only tourism and visitor activity in destinations, but also local community regeneration and well-being by improving transport infrastructure and accessibility, creating employment opportunities and attracting inward investment (Morgan 2012).

These global-to-local developments and disruptions place an emphasis on the importance of leadership in the domain of DMOs and destinations and this was discussed earlier in this chapter. The concept of leadership and its distributed dimension in the context of DMOs and destinations is the second of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. As such, it is discussed in Chapter 2 B.

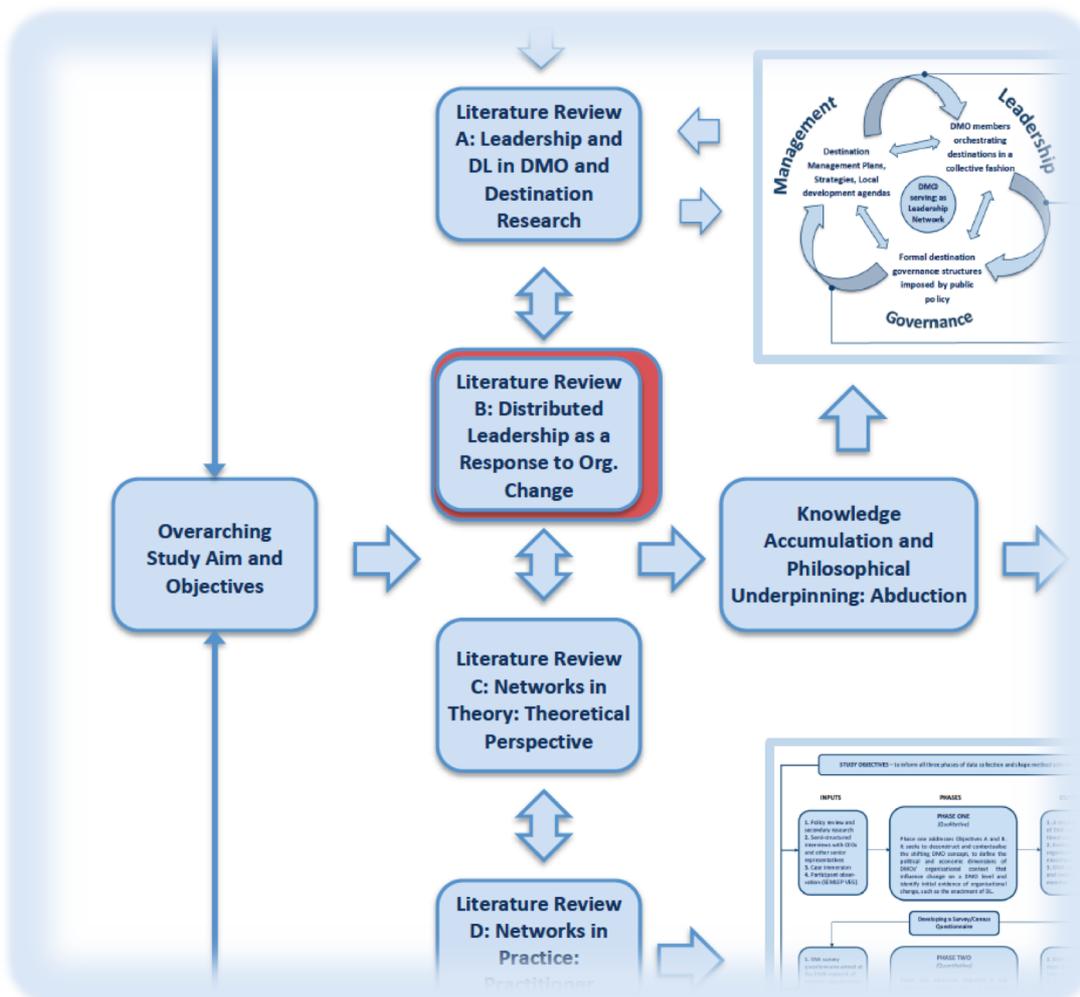
2.7.A Chapter conclusion

This first literature review chapter has introduced a number of discussions in the domain of destinations and destination organisations; it discussed key destination paradigms and the rising importance of embedding leadership on both destination and DMO levels. Chapter 2 A also sought to deconstruct the DMO concept within a new landscape for DMOs and destinations. Within this context, the chapter provided a critical overview of three contrasting, but arguably interconnected, organisational literature domains – management, governance and leadership – in relation to research undertaken on both destinations and destination organisations.

This critical overview contributed to a push on the frontiers of knowledge covered in existing academic contributions and thus served as a means to identify and depict the current gap in the extant literature of destinations and DMOs. The identification of this gap, coupled with the overview of current transitions in the DMO concept, led to the proposition of a conceptual framework – namely the DMO Leadership Cycle –that introduces the concept of DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations. The chapter concluded with a brief discussion on a range of global to local forces influencing the domain of DMOs and destinations in light of the context and purpose of the underpinning research.

Chapter 2 B

Literature Review on Distributed Leadership as a Response to Organisational Change



CHAPTER 2 B: LITERATURE REVIEW ON DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AS A RESPONSE TO ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

2.1.B Chapter introduction

This second literature review chapter builds on the previous narrative around the destination and DMO literature covered in Chapter 2 A. The chapter provides a critical overview of key leadership contributions, which stem from the mainstream organisational leadership literature and are closely linked to the overarching aim and objectives of this study interested in the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level. Leadership and its distributed dimension in the context of DMOs and destinations is the second of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which both underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study.

Rooted in the mainstream organisational leadership literature, the chapter is aimed at providing a strong theoretical basis to inform empirical investigations, which have been carried out during Phases II and III of the adopted data collection framework, subsequently discussed in chapters 4 B and C. In line with the adopted abductive approach to knowledge accumulation (Chapter 3), such processes facilitate the interaction between theory and empirical data in order to advance the existing theoretical knowledge on leadership undertaken on a strategic organisational (DMO), as opposed to geographical (destination) level.

The chapter begins by discussing key developments in the broad organisational and leadership literature being of relevance to this study, namely the role of leadership in organisational change, before linking these developments with a discussion into a number of collaborative forms of leadership as related to organisational change. The chapter continues by exploring the emergent role of distributed forms of leadership in contemporary DMOs and debates the relevance of DL to DMOs and destinations. The current progress of the mainstream DL literature and the progress of the DL literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations are then discussed by pointing out key gaps in scholarship, which have been highlighted as such by academia.

Further, by building on Phase I evidence from Chapter 2 A (see Figure 2.A.2), coupled with a review of recent literature, this chapter discusses the relevance of networks and the network concept to the overarching aim and objectives of this study, i.e. to the domain of DMOs and destinations. The chapter concludes with a discussion on how an interdisciplinary approach to enquiry fusing network theory and DL may be used to study the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level. This calls for delving into the current state of the network literature in two directions – networks in theory and networks in practice, which is a logical continuation from this chapter and hence covered in the following two chapters 2 C and D.

2.2.B The role of leadership in organisational change: Leading change

The role of leadership in organisational change has been recognised in the mainstream organisational leadership literature (Graetz 2000; Hallinger and Kantamara 2000; Mullins 2013). In a notable contribution Harris et al. (2007) discussed the importance of conducting further enquiry into the interplay between DL and organisational change:

“The evidence is able to confirm that there is an important relationship between distributed leadership and organisational change which makes it worth further investigation and scrutiny.”

Harris et al. (2007, p.345)

The first literature review chapter touched upon the importance of leadership and shared forms of leadership in particular, and their fundamental role in responding to organisational change, e.g. the process of reshaping DMOs across England. The new landscape for DMOs and its funding dimension in particular, has been characterised with a considerable degree of complexity and uncertainty (Coles et al. 2014). This has been recognised by the *2nd Biennial Forum Advances in Destination Management* in St Gallen, Switzerland:

“public budgets are increasingly squeezed and austerity measures dominate the agendas of government bodies at different levels ... as is already the case in countries, such as Italy and the United Kingdom.”

(Reinhold et al. 2015, p.3)

Within this context, a transition from traditionally influential organisational literature domains in the field of DMOs and destinations, namely management and governance towards leadership and its distributed dimension, has been seen as an opportunity to navigate through organisational change (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Hence, a number of scholars have argued that this emergent paradigm in the field of destination and DMO research requires the attention of both academia and practice (Benson and Blackman 2011; Kozak et al. 2014; Morrison 2013; Pechlaner et al. 2014).

Recent developments that have led to rethinking of traditional organisational paradigms are also evident in the organisations undergoing change. Hence this chapter draws on the extant mainstream literature on leadership in order to explore the latest theoretical developments and practitioner trends. In so doing, this chapter aims to establish a link between recent developments in the mainstream organisational leadership literature and advances in the domain of DMOs and destinations, where the latter is of particular interest to this study.

Modern organisations are complex entities (Owen and Dietz 2012) and as such, they are well-placed to facilitate the development of leadership and shared forms of leadership in particular (Pearce 2004). The importance of developing leadership capabilities in an age of uncertainty has been acknowledged in academia (Chambers et al. 2010). Change is about leadership (Gill 2002), which requires a strong vision of the organisation’s future. Vision in leadership is therefore a driving force (Senge 1990), which may be of key importance in times of organisational change and shifting organisational priorities.

Traditional theories of leadership emanating from the mainstream leadership literature tend to discuss characteristics, values and attitudes held by individuals, i.e. leaders (Bass 1985; Bass and Steidlmeier 1999) in addition to pointing to a number of leadership functions of inspirational, heroic and

visionary individuals (Nanus 1992). This set of theories follows more orthodox leadership paradigms. Equally scholars have recognised the importance of context, i.e. the setting where leadership occurs (Martin et al. 2009). Leadership can emerge from a context and be demonstrated by a collective of members of an organisation (Evaggelia and Vitta 2012) and this study investigates how leadership is enacted within a network of DMO member organisations as a response to the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. This provides evidence of contextually-embedded leadership (Chreim 2015). Therefore the transition from autocratic approaches in management (e.g. dominating local government) and traditionally 'heroic' leadership towards shared forms of leadership (Cope et al. 2011) within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England is of primary interest to this study. Hence, this study is based on the premise that, traditional (e.g. individualistic, heroic) leadership models are, however, ill equipped to explain and theorise on the largely complex and uncertain context that contemporary organisations inhabit (Lichtenstein et al. 2006; Oborn et al. 2013).

2.3.B Shared forms of leadership in response to organisational change

The purpose of this and following sections is to build upon the initial discussion of DL in Chapter 2 A, locate the concept of DL within the wider leadership literature and debate its relevance to the overarching purpose and objectives of this study. Shared forms of leadership, such as DL are gaining wider acceptance in contemporary organisations. As Cullen-Lester and Yammarino (2016, p.173) note, "a paradigm shift has occurred within the field – many scholars now view leadership as a property of the collective, not the individual." Contemporary organisations, regardless of their vision, mission and objectives, are constantly challenged to rethink their modus operandi in order to achieve sustainable structures, deliver value to their members, flourish and compete successfully (Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Mullins 2013).

Within this context, leadership and its shared or distributed dimension

have been endorsed by academia and practice due to their potential to bring about improvements to leadership practice (Hopkins 2001). Kotter (2007) contended that successful organisational transformations require a 'leadership coalition' from within the organisation. A leadership coalition is often powerful as it captures diverse titles, expertise, reputations and information and helps members of the organisation to set and achieve common goals (Kotter 2007). Organisational decision-making in collective settings is therefore governed by the interaction of individuals (Harris 2008). Emphasis on the interaction of individuals is a key strength of shared forms of leadership, which was first discussed in Chapter 2 A, where the DMO Leadership Cycle was introduced as an emergent conceptual framework to explain how reshaped DMOs are called upon to move beyond traditional organisational paradigms and explore opportunities presented by DL.

Cullen and Yammarino (2014, p.1) have seen the above transition from an orthodox and 'heroic' leadership towards collective forms of leadership as "a paradigm shift" within the broad field of leadership. This paradigm shift in the broad field of leadership, as further elaborated by Cullen and Yammarino (2014, p.1), is one that recognises that "teams, organisations, coalitions, communities, networks, systems, and other collectives carry out leadership functions through a collective social process." As a result, the leadership discourse in academia and practice has resulted in the provision of a number of definitions and conceptualisations of leadership and its collective dimension (see Table 2.B.1), namely collectivistic leadership (Friedrich et al. 2016), distributed leadership (Gibb 1954), collective leadership (Friedrich et al. 2009), emergent leadership (Kickul and Neuman 2000), team leadership (Day et al. 2014), flock leadership (Will 2016), group leadership (van Ginkel and van Knippenberg 2012), contingent leadership (Yun et al. 2005) and network leadership (Balkundi and Kilduf 2005), amongst other definitions and conceptualisations.

Table 2.B.1. Key Leadership Theories (Source: Author)

Key Leadership theories		
Theory	Source	Defining features
Collectivistic	Friedrich et al.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership as a dynamic process in

leadership	(2016)	<p>which a leader may selectively utilise the skills of followers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders distribute elements of the leadership role among these followers as the situation demands.
Distributed leadership	Gibb (1954)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is founded on and thus heavily shaped by interactions within the organisation • Takes into account organizational contexts
Collective leadership	Friedrich et al. (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is a function of collectively utilizing knowledge and skills individuals in a network possess • Information and communication are key to the emergence of leadership
Emergent leadership	Kickul and Neuman (2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is aimed at establishing conditions necessary to the accomplishment of goals and objectives • Personality traits and abilities define emergent leaders
Team leadership	Day et al. (2014)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership focused on the improvement of team performance • Organisational context defines the nature of team leadership
Flock leadership	Will (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership model characterized with emergent collective behavior • Organisational challenges unlock the practice of flock leadership through interactions
Contingent leadership	Yun et al. (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership that applies to some situations but not to others. • Leadership model shaped by specific

		situational elements
Group leadership	van Ginkel and van Knippenberg (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership that shapes a group's understanding of their tasks (jobs) • Group leaders provide directions on how to approach a group task and focus on performance
Network leadership	Balkundi and Kilduff (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is socially embedded in a network of individuals • Leadership influence relies on social networks

Amidst the multiple definitions and conceptualisations of leadership and its shared or distributed dimension (Table 2.B.1), the dominant discourse has been focused on two concepts, namely Shared Leadership (SL) and Distributed Leadership (DL) (see Bolden 2011; Fitzsimons et al. 2011), which are both discussed later in this chapter. DL is the second of three organisational literature domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. The following section provides a detailed discussion on this underpinning concept as it draws a line between the concepts of SL and DL and debates the relevance of DL to the context of DMOs.

2.4.B Shared leadership versus distributed leadership

There has been a considerable confusion in academia as to whether Shared Leadership (SL) and DL are interchangeable terms (Bolden et al. 2011; Fitzsimons et al. 2011). Hairon and Hoh (2014) emphasised the lack of consensus on a clear definition of DL, which can then potentially be translated across diverse disciplines. Friedrich et al. (2016, p.313) also noted this trend in the leadership domain, where “there is frequent overlap in definitions and use of the same words interchangeably (e.g. shared and distributed leadership).”

Fitzsimons et al. (2011) attempted to address this overlap of definitions by providing a four-fold discussion on the key characteristics of these largely overlapping, yet contrasting concepts within the wider leadership paradigm.

DL, according to Fitzsimons et al. (2011), is far more inclusive as it goes beyond a focus on team-based leadership (as it is the case with SL) to capture whole organisations as units of analysis and importantly, take into account their organisational environs (Fitzsimons et al. 2011). In other words, in DL the key focus is on leadership on an organisational level, whereas the approach that SL takes, addresses leadership development in team-based settings (Ruark and Mumford 2009). As such, DL is in line with the phenomenon studied in this research, namely a formal organisational structure (i.e. DMO) and its organisational environment (i.e. the wider policy network within a new funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England).

Secondly, unlike SL relying on individuals solely leading themselves, DL practice is founded on and thus heavily shaped by interactions within the organisation and its operational environment (Fitzsimons et al. 2011). Interactions, in the case of DMOs are therefore best studied through the lens of DL as this approach may also capture the role of developmental resource exchange and communication, which is a fundamental consideration of the largely resource-constrained DMOs and forms a strong call for further investigations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). As such, DL goes beyond SL, where the primary focus of the latter is on the collective dimension of decision-making and thus largely omitting the role of interaction (Fitzsimons et al. 2011), which is key to the emergent network-shaped organisations (Buchanan et al. 2007).

Thirdly, cognition processes and sense-making in the case of DL are not simply limited to human beings, who act as leaders in the organisation (Fitzsimons et al. 2011), but stretch over to include aspects of the context, e.g. the environment, in which organisations operate in. DL is then well positioned to facilitate the study of leadership practice that is enacted within an organisation, which is challenged to rethink its *modus operandi* (Hristov and Zehrer 2015) as a consequence of external developments in the operational environment, i.e. the introduction of a new funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (Coles et al. 2014).

Finally, the scope of DL goes beyond the importance of “aggregating attributed influence”, that being among the key characteristics of SL (Fitzsimons et al. 2011, p.319), to develop a capacity to act by means of joined-up orchestration. The latter implies a far more holistic approach to leadership in organisational settings, recognition of collective strength of diverse individuals within organisations, whilst also acknowledging the organisational environments often surrounded by complexity and uncertainty (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). In this sense, DL aims to engage and empower others (Martin et al. 2015). Within this context, the next section of this chapter provides an in-depth discussion into the concept of DL. The relevance of DL to the DMO and destination domain is then debated.

2.5.B Distributed leadership explored and its relevance to the DMO and destination domain

As discussed at the outset of this study, DL is the second of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which underpins and informs the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. Within the mainstream leadership literature the term DL was first introduced by Gibb (1954) in his investigation of dynamics in influence processes taking place in both formal and informal groups and organisations. Sufficient progress on DL was not, however, made after Gibb (1954) up until its rediscovery by Brown and Hosking (1986). DL, as contended by Harris (2008), cannot be prescribed in advance, as in the case of ‘heroic’ leadership, which was covered at the outset of this chapter. Instead, DL emerges within organisations as a consequence of major shifts and subsequent complexities in order to shape a response to these complexities. DL is enacted by a collective of individuals within an organisation (Fitzsimons et al. 2011) and occurs in a variety of group and organisation settings (Thorpe et al. 2011). A DL perspective then “recognises the inclusive and collaborative nature of the leadership process” (Oborn et al. 2013, p.254). In line with this, Valente et al. (2015) contended that effective leadership in DMOs should be empowering and thus giving equal voice to the various actors having an interest

in destination decision-making and DL may be seen as an opportunity to fulfil this purpose, particularly across reshaped DMOs, as in the case of DMK.

Within the context of the wider organisational leadership literature, processes related to the enactment and practice of DL, as argued by Hairon and Goh (2014), can be attributed to recent reforms in the public sector calling upon the need to adopt a more 'joined up' and 'networked' approach to governance. This is the case with reshaped DMOs in England, which have undergone a public-to-private transition in their leadership model (Hristov and Naumov 2015). As formerly public-led bodies, DMOs in England were responsible for providing the majority of developmental resources for destinations (Coles et al. 2014). This implied management and leadership functions exercised by individuals within predominantly local government organisations and other public sector bodies, such as councils. However, recent developments in the organisational environment, namely new political ideologies (Cameron 2010; Hristov and Naumov 2015) and the introduction of new models involving a public-to-private shift in funding for destinations and destination organisations (Coles et al. 2014; Penrose 2011), suggest that resources are now located in a number of DMO member organisations. These are likely to include businesses from a number of sectors of the economy, along with governmental agencies and not-for-profit organisations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). This collective and distributed provision of resources in meeting strategic organisational and destination objectives implies greater appreciation of the interdependence of individual DMO members and calls for, and ultimately supports the consideration of alternative paradigms, such as DL and beyond traditional public sector leadership. DL is founded on interactions, rather than actions (Harris 2005; Harris and Spillane 2008), and as such, resources are central to the enactment of DL practice at an organisational level (Chreim 2015; Tian et al. 2015). Within this context DL emerges in reshaped DMOs across England as a potential response to shifts in the landscape for DMOs and destinations. Indeed, Currie and Lockett (2011) contended that organisational context influences the enactment of DL. Bennett et al. (2003, p.7) see DL as "an emergent property of a group or a network of interacting individuals." Equally, Spillane (2006) argued that DL calls for recognition of the interdependency of

organisations, when shaping leadership practice as in the case of reshaped and largely resource-constrained DMOs.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Fitzsimons et al. (2011) attempted to provide a comprehensive definition of DL through establishing a link with SL. A definition of DL that underpins this study's direction, however, is the one provided by Harris (2008) from the domain of Higher Education (HE), who argues that this form of leadership is:

“assumed to enhance opportunities for the organisation to benefit from the capacities of more of its members, to permit members to capitalise on the range of their individual strengths, and to develop among organisational members a fuller appreciation of interdependence and how one's behaviour effects the organisation as a whole...”

(Harris 2008, p.177)

This definition also underpins the initial conceptual framework derived from the interplay between theory and empirical data, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle introduced in Chapter 2 A. Acknowledging the strengths of others, often non-leaders by definition (Oborn et al. 2013), is seen as a key consideration of contemporary leadership theory. DL therefore supports organisations in their efforts to “benefit from diversity of thought in decision-making” (Evaggelia and Vitta 2012, p.3). Equally, DL recognises the fact that diverse resources and the “varieties of expertise are distributed across the many, not the few” (Bennet et al. 2003, p.7), as again is the case of reshaped business-led DMOs in England.

Further, impactful DL has to be coordinated, often in a planned way (Leithwood et al. 2006). When this statement is translated into destination and DMO research, DMPs are seen as enablers of coordinated, effective and efficient DL by providing a vision for practising DL, as evident in Chapter 4 A, where preliminary empirical insights (Phase I) largely supporting and informing the construction of the DMO Leadership Cycle are discussed. The DMO Leadership Cycle provides arguments that formulating collective goals, providing voice in strategic decision-making, drafting joint action plans and planning for the future captures a number of core activities and actions and as

such, these activities provide a visionary function in organisations enacting DL – all being a prerequisite for effective DL practice (Hristov and Zehrer 2015).

Defining the ingredients of DL has been extensively discussed in the literature (Currie et al. 2011). Nevertheless, “there remains a poor understanding of how and why collaborative styles are enacted” (Oborn et al. 2013, p.255) in DL context. Equally, there is narrow evidence on the practice of DL in organisations (Bennett et al. 2003; Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Tian et al. 2015) and this study aims to fill this gap by providing important practitioner insights into DL developing in the context of an organisation undergoing change, namely a DMO. The employed methodological framework (see Chapter 3) and particularly Phases II and III of the framework aim to provide deeper contextual insights and aim to answer these questions; also surface practitioner perspectives of and implications for leadership practice on a DMO level.

2.6.B Key broad and specific gaps in the mainstream DL literature

2.6.1.B An overview of key broad gaps in the DL literature

DL is a relatively unexplored concept in both the leadership literature and in leadership practice, despite it providing considerable scope to contribute to academia and business organisations (Thorpe et al. 2011). The empirical research base on DL is still largely undeveloped and that evidence grounded in practice is thin (Hairon and Goh 2014; Spillane et al. 2008). Leithwood et al. (2006) called for gaining a more nuanced understanding of DL in its attempt to address a number of challenges organisations face, where processes and practices related to reshaping DMOs in England is just one example. Indeed, much has been written on theorising DL, whilst evidence in situ through operationalising DL is still rather thin (Hairon and Goh 2014).

Hairon and Goh (2014) developed a scale and sub-scales for measuring DL practice quantitatively in the domain of education. Currie and Lockett (2011) examined the interaction of DL with an institutional context, namely healthcare,

i.e. the National Health Service, and although they embark on the network concept, their methodology and subsequent discussion are largely qualitative. Gockel and Werth (2015) proposed an approach for measuring leadership and its distributed dimension by measuring influence within a leadership network. Edwards (2011) investigated the enactment of DL in a community context. However, studies that take into consideration the enactment and practice of DL within a diverse network representing organisations from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors have not been found by this researcher. Hence further evidence of current academic contributions, which investigate and discuss cross-sectoral enactment and practice of DL is thin if not missing at all (Cullen-Lester and Yammarino 2016). Valente et al. (2015) emphasised on the importance of further investigations in this direction and this study aims to yield such insights.

Indeed, Edwards (2011) calls for embracing the role of the private sector in enacting DL and involving further investigations in this direction, such contributions are rare and arguably not inclusive of the three main sectors. There is a need to understand how leadership is distributed across different forms of organisations (Edwards 2011). Edwards goes on to suggest that academia should go beyond education as a dominant context of DL investigations and embrace other organisational contexts. This points to the need for understanding new forms of organisations, which fuse the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

2.6.2.B An overview of key specific gaps in the DL literature

Equally, the mainstream organisational leadership literature also calls upon fusing the concepts of DL and SNA, i.e. network approaches to investigating the enactment of DL (see Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino 2016), and as such, it serves as evidence of the lack of research into bringing to the forefront both emergent paradigms. Drawing on these very recent gaps in the current state of the DL and SNA literature, this study therefore unfolds such case and adopts a cross-disciplinary approach to investigating the enactment and practice of DL.

A recent call by Cullen and Yammarino (2014), which is aimed at both academia and practice to introduce novel ideas in the discipline of leadership and its collective or distributed dimension, propose eight topical areas for further enquiry, three of which are particularly relevant to the case in focus (see topical areas four, six, and eight):

1. Effectiveness within leadership network structures and collective leadership;
2. Changes in leadership network structures and collective leadership over time;
3. Developing more robust leadership network structures by formal leaders;
4. Advances in measurement of collective, shared, distributed, system, and network leadership;
5. Organisational or situational factors influencing leadership and its collective or distributed dimension;
6. The sharing of leadership roles by members of a collective, network, or system;
7. Collective decision making, collective intelligence, and collective and network leadership connections; and
8. The development, illustration, and application of new research methodologies for studying collective, network, and system leadership (Cullen and Yammarino 2014).

The above call by Cullen and Yammarino (2014), who are two of the pioneers in the field of leadership, forms a special issue in *The Leadership Quarterly* aimed at collective and network approaches to leadership and its distributed dimension. Carter and Dechurch (2012, p.412) also emphasised the importance of future investigations into fusing the concepts of DL and networks, where they believed that “taking a network perspective provides a tool that can facilitate future empirical research on ‘we’ leadership.”

Adopted methodologies are often narrow and thus do not always allow for processes and practices related to DL enactment to be uncovered in their entirety and within a particular organisational context (Cullen and Yammarino

2014; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino 2016). Hence the methodological approach adopted in this study is in line with Cullen and Yammarino's (2014) call for introducing advances in the measurement of DL (see topical area four) as it aims to advance current knowledge in measuring processes and practices related to the enactment of DL in the context of DMOs. Nevertheless, within the context of fusing the concepts of DL and SNA, this study aims to respond to more than one of the Cullen and Yammarino eight topical areas.

This discussion suggests that gaps in both theorising and operationalising DL are arguably wide-reaching (see Cullen and Yammarino 2014) and as such, they set the scene for a number of investigations, and this study provides a response to these.

2.7.B Key gaps in the DMO literature in relation to the domain of leadership and DL

Whilst the extant literature on DMOs and destinations has incorporated network theory and SNA in greater detail (see Scott et al. 2008a; Baggio et al. 2010), this has not been the case with DL in the domain of DMOs and destinations (Pechlaner et al. 2014). As noted earlier, the leadership paradigm and its distributed dimension has been captured in a two-part special issue of *Tourism Review* (see Kozak et al. 2014; Pechlaner et al. 2014), contributions of which were initially covered in Chapter 2 A and are also discussed in this section. Valente et al. (2015) examined leadership practice in two Brazilian Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) by approaching RTO executives and other RTO and destination stakeholders. Beritelli and Bieger (2014) developed a leadership research framework with the help of influential actors from four destinations in Switzerland, Austria, and Italy. Blichfeldt et al. (2014) investigated the relationship between leadership and power in DMOs and other destination actors by employing a non-conventional vignettes approach. Zmyślony (2014) proposed a method of identifying and evaluating leadership potential of stakeholders in emerging destinations through employing an in-depth analysis of stakeholders representing the public, private and non-profit

sectors. Pröbstl-Haider et al. (2014) investigated leadership in rural destinations undertaking an analysis of case studies and case study-based literature.

Further, an earlier contribution by Benson and Blackman (2011) investigated the practice of DL in a destination organisation, where the authors adopted a longitudinal qualitative case study including participant observation, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis in order to explore different forms of DL in tourism firms in destinations. Benson and Blackman (2011, p.1144) argued that multiple approaches to data collection are able to draw “a more holistic picture of the case study”. However, the omission of SNA in such investigations may lead to the provision of a limited perspective into the enactment and practice of DL.

Within this context, there are no studies to date which have investigated how DL is enacted and practised by a collective of leaders on board DMOs and their networks of member organisations by adopting an SNA approach. Hence current evidence of conceptualising and enquiring into DMOs through the perspective of both DL and SNA with the aim to yield network data-driven DL insights is scarce (see Hristov and Scott 2016; Hristov and Zehrer 2015). The wider organisational leadership literature also called for more empirical evidence into fusing both organisational literature domains in surfacing DL (Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino 2016), as is evident in the next section of this chapter, which discusses current gaps in the mainstream organisational and leadership literature. This study addresses this lack of research by fusing two contrasting organisational literature domains – DL and network theory in the field of DMOs and destinations.

2.8.B Networks as facilitators of DL in organisations

The above discussion provided evidence that unlike traditional forms of leadership centred around the ‘leader-follower’ relationship (Harris 2008) and the largely team-bound SL concept (Fitzsimons et al. 2011), DL implies that both the social context and inter-relationships are fundamental ingredients to leadership activity (Spillane et al. 2001). DL practice is shaped by interactions (Fitzsimons et al. 2011) and as such, it is not surprising that DL is underpinned

by considerable complexity (Day et al. 2014). Hence, 'heroic' leadership that is primarily the role of the individual may not be efficient approach to leadership carried out on a DMO level since destination resources, expertise and knowledge in DMOs reside in often diverse, multiple member organisations.

DL has the potential to establish itself as a prominent leadership paradigm in light of recent pressures in the operational environment, the need to develop proactive approaches to respond to these pressures and indeed recognise the importance of alternative organisational forms, such as networks (Buchanan et al. 2007). Leadership in the context of DMOs, as Valente et al. (2015) argued, is socially constructed, and as such, a networked approach may potentially yield rich insights into processes and practices related to the enactment of DL in a DMO context. Cope et al. (2011) also suggested that DL should embrace a model of leadership that is network-centric. Within this context, Balkundi and Kilduff (2005) contended that there is a considerable scope for research delving into the synergy between the concept of DL and social network approaches to data collection and analysis. However, the extant literature on DL suggests that the role and contribution of individuals or organisations as sources of influence within a distributed context have not been studied sufficiently (Cullen et al. 2012; Cullen and Yammarino 2014). This study identifies the functions of DMO member organisations through the adoption of a network perspective.

Further, DL is seen as a positive channel for change (Graetz 2000) and it offers a scope for research within networks and other flatter and more fluid forms of organisations (McCrimmon 2005). One may well then argue that, "a network conception of SL raises a number of intriguing possibilities for research and theory development" (Meindl et al. 2002, p.13). A number of academics have explored the relationship between DL and network theory. Day et al. (2014) debated the appropriateness of SNA in future studies of leadership development. Contractor et al. (2012) contended that network approaches provide a higher resolution multi-level approach to study the emergence of alternative (shared, distributed) forms of leadership. Cullen et al. (2012) contended that approaches, which utilise networks as a means of leveraging leadership and its distributed dimension, are only beginning to emerge.

Leadership practice emerges through the interaction of leaders, followers and contexts (Spillane et al. 2001). The concept of leadership and its distributed

dimension implies that the underpinning concept is distributed, networked and constructed in interaction (Cullen and Yammarino 2014). Hence, network approaches to enquiry are well placed to investigate this phenomenon through its focus on relational structures and interest in providing a means to visualisation of such structures despite that DL investigations are largely grounded in qualitative research methodologies (Hairon and Goh 2014; Firestone and Martinez 2007; Timperley 2005).

It is important to note that a network approach to studying leadership and leadership development (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010) is not interested in the attributes of individuals. Rather, the focus is on the relationships connecting individuals (Balkundi and Kilduff 2005) and the role of leadership as a relational process (Alban-Metcalf and Alimo-Metcalf 2007). Hence, despite being largely neglected, networks offer an important level of analysis that sheds light on current understanding of how leadership occurs within and across organisations (Bolden 2011; Rye and Knight 2005). This falls within the scope of this study interested in how network research (Phase II of the employed methodological framework) facilitates the investigation of DMOs and their member organisations developing leadership practice and serving as leadership networks. The next two literature review chapters 2 C and D are therefore devoted to the importance of studying networks, which emerge within formal organisational structures and introduce approaches to studying this organisational structure of the future through the lens of both theory and practice.

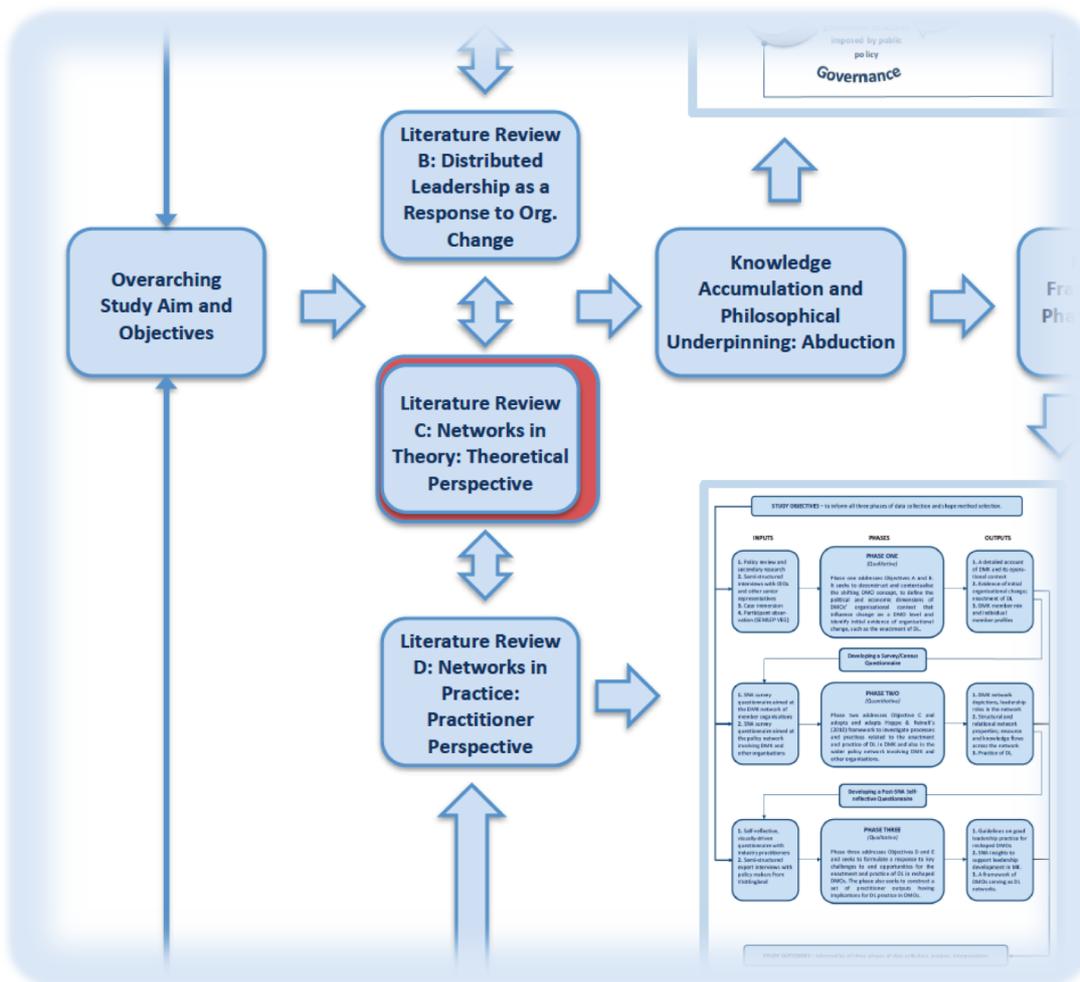
2.9.B Chapter conclusion

This second literature review chapter built upon Chapter 2 A and discussed key concepts in the broad organisational and leadership literature which is of relevance to this study, followed by a discussion into different collaborative forms of leadership in addressing organisational change. This served as an introduction to an in-depth discussion aimed at prominent contributions in the domain of leadership and DL. The chapter then explored the emergent role of

distributed forms of leadership in contemporary DMOs and debated their relevance to DMOs and destinations, before delving into a short discussion into the progress of the DMO and destination literature in the context of leadership and DL. The current progress of the mainstream DL literature and the progress of the DL literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations was also discussed by pointing out prominent gaps in scholarship. The chapter concluded with a discussion of the relevance of networks and the network concept to both the domain of leadership and DL and the overarching aim and objectives of this study. As such, Chapter 2 B serves as an introduction to the following two literature review chapters devoted to networks in theory and practice.

Chapter 2 C

Literature Review on Networks in Theory



CHAPTER 2 C: LITERATURE REVIEW ON NETWORKS IN THEORY

2.1.C Chapter introduction

Network theory and its practitioner tool SNA in the context of DMOs and destinations is the last of three domains from the mainstream organisational literature, which underpin and inform the cross-disciplinary approach applied to this study. This chapter provides the theoretical background to network theory and SNA and covers prominent contributions on theorising networks under the network theory umbrella. As such, the chapter unveils the historical development of networks, network theory and network analysis, which set the scene for a discussion of academic contributions with a focus on levels of network analysis and key network measures. This chapter therefore serves as an introductory chapter to the field of networks applied to organisational research. Further, the chapter provides an extended discussion on a range of structural and relational network properties (network measures) across three levels of analysis, namely network, actor and ego network level. The discussed structural and relational network properties are aligned with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating DL practice, which is adapted and adopted as part of this study's methodological framework.

Drawing on the overarching aim and objectives of this study, in addition to Chapter 2 A insights, this third literature review chapter brings into the spotlight the importance of carrying out network analysis on a strategic, organisational (DMO), in contrast to the more traditional - spatial (destination) level by providing a discussion on prominent contributions on the application of network theory and SNA in the domain of DMOs and destinations. Where the former domain captures a recent call of academics and practitioners to address a field that is surrounded by a number of complexities, the latter one is where the majority of network research is currently nested. This largely theory-driven chapter concludes by setting the scene for a range of complexities in undertaking network enquiry on an organisational (DMO) level, which contribute to the lack of empirical investigations across this research domain. These are discussed in detail in Chapter 2 D.

2.2.C Networks in organisations continued

The following section builds on the final section in Chapter 2 B, which emphasised the need for recognition of the opportunities presented by network theory and SNA when studying organisational transformation and new forms of organisational structures (see Cullen and Yammarino 2014). The literature on networks has grown exponentially in the past decade (Aubke 2014; Borgatti and Foster 2003). Equally, the concept of the networked world is becoming increasingly widespread (Kadushin 2012; Mullins 2013) and networks are seen as a metaphor for understanding organisations and organisational behaviour (Borgatti and Molina 2003) or being close to some emergent forms of organisations (Cravens et al. 1996; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino 2016). Going even further, some academics have argued that networks are potentially turning into dominant organisational structures in the era of globalisation (By 2005; Cravens and Piercy 1994; Knowles et al. 2001). Network theory (Granovetter 1985; Gulati 1998; Wasserman and Faust 1994) and its applied practitioner tool, namely SNA (Borgatti et al. 2013) when applied to organisational enquiry can examine the complexity of relationships between entities, such as individuals, groups and organisations that interact in the social space (Wang and Xiang 2007). There have been various interpretations of network enquiry bringing to light the importance of clarifying where theory ends (network theory) and methodology begins (SNA). Network analysis, i.e. SNA, has its theorising grounded in a fundamental construct - the network (Borgatti and Lopez-Kidwell 2011). Having a primary focus on network interactions, SNA as a network investigation tool can help improve organisational design, efficiency and communication (Kadushin 2012) in addition to having wider implications to management and leadership practice in destinations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). SNA assists with making sense of the often messy empirical network data and constructing the reality (Borgatti and Molina 2005) of network interactions.

Alliances across organisations are at the core of contemporary networks and network analysis (Pavlovich 2001). Networks reflect on a novel approach, which allows for the study of a wide variety of contemporary structures and their dynamic behaviour (Scott et al. 2008b). SNA is able to provide valuable insights

into the flows of information and exchange of developmental resources between lead organisations (Borgatti et al. 2013). Network theory advocates that organisations no longer compete as individual entities, but through relational networks where value is created by initiating and nurturing collaboration (Fyall et al. 2012). This certainly is the future of the increasingly resource-constrained DMOs thus stressing the need for identifying business rationales and potential financial innovations (Laesser and Beritelli 2013) in supporting their strategic agenda. When destinations are to compete globally by cooperating locally (Novelli et al. 2006), DMOs operating as networks can facilitate this process by bringing to light opportunities related to resource-driven development, distribution of research outputs and knowledge dissemination across networked member organisations and thus nurturing DL practice.

The mainstream management and leadership literature suggests that organisations tend to be more network-centric than ever with destination management being just one of many examples. Contemporary DMOs are not an exception of this trend (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Network-centric organisations are new organisational forms. And this is the natural way they evolve amidst uncertainty in the operational environment (Burnes 2004; By 2005). In a study looking at the successful management of organisational change in destination SMEs, By and Dale (2008) have identified communication and co-operation to be one of the eight critical success factors for managing change across destination actors. The recent business environment thus points out the importance of networked stakeholders in tourism destinations.

The network literature has grown exponentially in the past two decades across a wide range of fields, in this case business and management (Borgatti and Foster 2003). The Social Network Analysis is a key approach adopted in the literature of networks (Ahuja and Carley 1999; Cattani and Ferriani 2008; Cross et al. 2002) and the emergence of powerful network visualisation tools has fuelled the use of SNA techniques by both academia and business consultants and managers alike (Conway 2014).

Ultimately, that literature on SNA seeks to demonstrate how the concept is able to visualise the otherwise invisible social networks (Cross et al. 2002). Once depicted, invisible social networks may be leveraged for visible results in organisations (Conway 2014; Cross and Parker 2004; Cross and Thomas 2009)

or in other words - facilitate effective collaboration, identify management intervention opportunities, and to uncover emergent DL practice (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). A large number of studies in the general business and management field exist. They draw on the importance of network studies on strategic alliances and collaborative relationships for businesses (Borgatti and Foster 2003; Lemmetyinen 2009). However, to date, little research has been undertaken to examine the transformation of destinations and DMOs in particular through the lens of SNA (Ahmed 2012; Hristov and Zehrer 2015).

2.3.C Levels of analysis and measures

Having explored key recent developments in network theory and SNA, this section draws on the prominent levels of network analysis and provides a theoretical perspective into a range of structural and relational properties. These structural and relational properties of the network reflect on network, actor and ego level measures, which are of particular importance to this study. They also inform Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, which is adapted and adopted as part of the methodological framework introduced in Chapter 3.

The structural and relational properties of the network discussed below across three levels of network analysis (network, actor and ego level), are informed by a number of generic and specific network evaluation questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) in their framework for evaluating DL practice in networks embedded in organisations. The section then also provides a discussion on how these structural and relational properties behind Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) questions are related to developing DL practice. This discussion of key network measures then sets the scene and ultimately informs the network investigation in practice discussed in Chapter 4 B.

2.3.1.C Network level

Network-level research has its interest in a range of structural and relational properties of the network in focus, such as density, clustering coefficient, core-

periphery amongst others. When the entire network is to be investigated, one hopes to uncover network features that characterise the network as a whole (Prell 2012). Hence properties of the network's internal structure and how these properties affect the network as a whole are subject of investigation on this level of analysis (Borgatti and Lopez-Kardwell 2011). Network level analysis is therefore central to this study, which is interested in the enactment and practice of DL by a collective of DMO member organisations. A network-level investigation recognises the idea of cohesion and integrity, when exploring the extent to which a network stays as a whole and does not break into sub-structures (Prell 2012; Moody and White 2003; White and Harary 2001). Cohesion and integrity is a fundamental consideration when DL practice is surfaced (Garrod 2003; Harris 2008), as DL is founded on collective strategic decision-making and recognition of the diversity of resources, knowledge and expertise and their importance within the network and beyond. Within this context, a range of network measures embedded in Phase II of the adopted methodological framework are discussed, namely:

- Density (Cherven 2015);
- Clustering coefficient (Watts 1999);
- Core-periphery (Hojman and Szeidl 2008);
- Cliques (Borgatti et al. 2013); and
- Average path length and eccentricity (Cherven 2015).

Density mirrors a fundamental structural property of networks (Cherven 2015). When investigating valued networks, as in the case with this study, density is defined as the sum of all present ties divided by the number of all possible ties (Hanneman and Riddle 2005). In other words, density is interested in how close a network is to a complete one. The higher the density score, the denser the network, i.e. the network is more cohesive (Prell 2012). A complete network would normally have all possible ties and its density equals to one (Cherven 2015). A more-dense leadership network allows for easier facilitation of DL practice through either enhanced communication of its shared strategic vision,

e.g. DMPs to guide the leadership roles of reshaped DMOs, or promoting wider distribution of DMO resources across various actors in the complete network.

Clustering coefficient (CCoef) is another SNA measure, which captures the average of the local densities of all complete network members' neighbourhoods, i.e. immediate communities of individual network actors within complete networks. The CCoef is a network measure, which was first introduced and adopted by Watts (1999). The clustering coefficient of individual network actors (local level) is important network measure when identifying the proportion of present ties in relation to the total number of possible ties for each organisation within a complete network (Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015). This acts as an indicator of the extent to which an actor is linked to its immediate neighbours, which is arguably a key prerequisite for the promotion and practice of DL across network communities and sub-groups within DMOs. Hence a CCoef carried out at local level aims to understand the influence of a single node within its own neighbourhood (Cherven 2015). The clustering coefficient of the complete network (global level) captures the average figure, i.e. CCoef of all investigated member organisations (Cherven 2015) and thus captures another key network measure, which builds upon basic density insights.

Core-periphery structure in networks is another key network measure, which helps understand the structure of networks. Core-periphery is evident in the case of a high number of centrally-positioned actors, who have a disproportionate amount of connections, while actors in the periphery maintain fewer links with others in the networks (Hojman and Szeidl 2008). The network core can thus be seen as a prominent central cluster, whereas the periphery has relatively few connections (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). One approach to studying core-periphery network structure involves the Erdos Number (Cherven 2015; Grossman and Ion 1995), which uses a base node serving as the network core, i.e. Erdos proxy, in order to estimate the distance from the network core to all other actors within the complete network. Lower core-periphery figures and network structure indicate network cohesiveness and allow for a wider distribution of destination resources across the network. Lower core-periphery network structure, in addition, breaks down barriers between key destination players and smaller, often peripheral organisations to provide the latter group with a voice in strategic destination decision-making, i.e.

involvement in DL and wider opportunities to access network resources and knowledge.

Identifying network *cliques* is key to surfacing evidence of existing DL practice within and across sectors on board DMK. Such cohesive groups may well be seen as multiple leaders within a network providing a role model for others in the network to follow (Borgatti et al. 2013). However, cliques are often regarded as evidence of existing power relations within the network (Miller 1958), particularly when certain network communities have been excluded from cliques. In this sense, Harris (2013) noted that issues of power, authority and inequality are inevitably overlapping with DL practice. This arguably is the case of reshaped, business-led DMOs, where the public sector may still have considerable influence over strategic destination decision-making. Network cliques mirror extremely cohesive, i.e. closely and intensely tied to one another actors (Hanneman and Riddle 2005). Network cliques are not necessarily seen as enablers of DL practice, particularly in cases where clique members do not mirror the diversity of communities, e.g. sectors of the economy on board DMOs, within complete networks. In fact, cliques capture the maximum number of actors who have all possible ties present among themselves. Cliques are therefore likely to be leading on and being a source of power and influence within and across various sectors on-board DMOs and different membership groups.

Average Path Length (APL) is aimed at investigating complete networks and *Eccentricity* (E) for individual actors in complete networks are also key network measures providing some important insights into the structure of networks. They provide useful insights into the structure of the network and positioning of individual network actors in light of facilitating efficient communication and wider resource distribution (Cherven 2015). Networks with high APL often have a more fragmented structure and as a result, processes related to communicating information or distributing resources across all actors within the DMO may arguably take longer. On the other side of the spectrum, networks with lower APL are relatively more efficient in distribution (Cherven 2015). Further, *eccentricity* (E) has been seen as a more refined version of APL, which is interested in investigating the distance on an individual network member level. Eccentricity helps surfacing the network diameter of any given

complete network. Diameter refers to the number of steps required for the two most distant nodes in the network to reach one another (Cherven 2015). When the diameter of a network mirrors a relatively low number, this then means that nodes within that network are close to one another, and thus the network is more cohesive (Cherven 2015; Prell 2012).

2.3.2.C Actor level and ego networks

Understanding how individual actors are positioned within a network can help academics and practitioners understand issues such as who is important, i.e. central to that network, who leads the network or holds the network together (Prell 2012). Measures of centrality are appropriate and applied widely for investigating complete networks. Actor-level measures are also central to this study, as they surface influential network leaders, in addition to already established and emergent network leaders and the proportion of leaders, who are empowered or supported through developmental resources. Such insights then help uncover DL practice within complete networks (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). Within this context, a range of network measures embedded in Phase II of the adopted methodological framework are discussed, namely:

- Network centrality (Freeman 1979);
- Degree centrality (Hanneman 2001);
- Outdegree centrality (Robbins 2009);
- Indegree centrality (Balkundi et al. 2009);
- Eigenvector centrality (Borgatti 1995);
- Betweenness centrality (Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015), and
- Closeness centrality (Hanneman and Riddle 2005).

Network centrality implies that actors who occupy central position within a network tend to be more visible and thus have more opportunities to interact with a large number of entities across the network. Freeman (1979) contributed to the interpretation of centrality by providing the first graph of the concept.

Central actors normally have the highest degree of ties to others, they fall between all other nodes, and have the shortest APL to all other actors (Prell 2012). Network centrality is aimed at three fundamental centrality-related measures, namely basic degree centrality (DC), indegree centrality (IC) and outdegree centrality (OC).

Degree Centrality (DC) in simple terms means that certain network actors have many ties. Degree centrality is based around the number of direct connections (degrees) one node has to other nodes in the complete network (Cherven 2015). As DC champions have many ties, they have access to, and are able to call on more of the resources of the network as a whole (Hanneman 2001). Moreover, degree centrality is seen as a measure of the actor's level of involvement or activity in the network (Prell 2012), or in other words – how connected individual DMO members are to the rest of the network (Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015). The bigger the proportion of network actors with high degree centrality, the more involved and active these network members and hence more opportunities for developing and embedding DL practice across the network exist. Basic degree centrality indeed surfaces active and involved network champions and their proportion (Opsahl et al. 2010). These DC champions are arguably best placed to facilitate DL practice across their communities, which may or may not be tied to a particular sector on board DMK due to their high involvement in network activity, e.g. communication, collective visioning, sharing developmental resources.

Outdegree centrality (OC) is another degree centrality measure interested in surfacing the number of links, which flow from a selected network node, which is subject of investigation to a range of other nodes in the complete network (Cherven 2015). OC is a key network measure in surfacing power relationships across organisations or individuals (Ang 2011; Robbins 2009). Power in the domain of networks is not therefore necessarily seen as an attribute of individual network actors, but is embedded in relationships (Emerson, 1962), i.e. it is the power relationships that help surface power actors within a DMO (Blichfeldt et al. 2014) and OC is well-placed to facilitate such investigation. In light of the basic degree centrality, which simply captured the level of involvement and activity of network members, outdegree centrality is far more likely to imply power (Ang 2011) and network actors with high outdegree

centrality are seen as ones traditionally having power and influence over destination decision-making and thus within DMOs. Network actors with high outdegree centrality may not therefore generally be seen as enablers of DL and empowerment of peripheral and less-involved network actors.

Indegree Centrality (IC), on the other hand, surfaces the number of links, received by investigated network node from a range of other nodes in the network (Cherven 2015). Whilst OC is far more likely to imply power, i.e. network actors with high out-degree are seen as power actors (Ang 2011), IC in contrast, is well positioned to evaluate emergent and already established leaders in the network (Balkundi et al. 2009; Scott 2012; Valente 2010) as this SNA measure indicates the existence of leadership practice across actors within a network (Panda et al. 2014). Indegree centrality is a measure, which allows for surfacing organisations which are a source of leadership in the network (Contractor et al. 2012). Computing the number of follower (IC) links for the complete network is aimed at uncovering both already established and emergent leaders and this is one way of achieving this goal. Indegree centrality also helps uncover perceived influence (Cherven 2015; Freeman 1979) as a result of leadership development initiatives (Hoppe and Reinelt, 2010). Influence is one of the key traits of demonstrating leadership. Indegree centrality is arguably well-positioned to surface the already established leaders in the network, who may have traditionally been linked to corporate members. Emergent leaders, in contrast, are more likely to be tied to non-corporate members.

Eigenvector centrality (EC), as argued by Prell (2012) expands on the three forms of degree centrality as it captures the sum of an actor's connections to other actors, weighted by their degree centrality (Prell 2012). As such, eigenvector centrality may well then be seen as a refined version of the basic degree centrality (Borgatti 1995). Eigenvector centrality provides a closer look at the local network of actors that are immediately adjacent to the focal actor (Bonacich 2007; Bonacich and Lloyd 2001). As EC is the sum of a network member's connections to other actors, weighted by these actors' degree centrality (Prell 2012), this network measure implies that EC champions are reliant upon other members' ties to establish themselves as highly influential leaders. EC thus provides opportunities for wider influence of well-connected

individual actors across different communities within networks, as followers of EC champions are also well-connected network actors (Cherven 2015). High eigenvector centrality network members then tend to be leaders in the network who are surrounded by other well-connected actors (Borgatti et al. 2002) and this process contributes to shaping even more influential leaders. The ideas, resources and influence of EC champions can reach large number of individual network actors, network communities and sub-networks. When actors with high EC mirror the sectoral diversity on-board DMOs, this then provides wider opportunities to embedding DL practice by these highly influential leaders across the diversity of sectors present in the network.

Betweenness centrality (BC) takes into consideration the rest of the network when establishing a score to surface the status of each member of the studied network. However, betweenness centrality does not look at numbers as in the case of DC, OC and IC, but is interested in the location of an actor within the complete network, i.e. its location amongst others in the network. Network members with high betweenness centrality can act as network bridges (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). They connect network members and link network communities, which are not otherwise be connected (Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015). In other words, BC champions facilitate the most direct path between otherwise disconnected communities and sub-groups within the complete network by playing an active brokerage role (Cherven 2015). High betweenness centrality then indicates bridging (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). Network actors with high betweenness centrality are vital to promoting DL practice. They are therefore seen as agents of DL and can provide distant actors and communities with the opportunity to shape strategic leadership decisions, influence destination decision-making and facilitate wider representation of peripheral network actors and loosely embedded network communities. Network actors with high BC also play an important role in spreading information, knowledge and resources across the complete network (Hanneman and Riddle 2005).

Closeness centrality (CC) is another important network centrality measure, which similarly to BC, proves to be practical in identifying salient actors, who are able to link disparate actors within the complete network. However, CC is focused on the distance from each network member to all

others (Hanneman and Riddle 2005), which helps surfacing the level of closeness of individual DMK member organisations to the rest of the complete network. Or in other words, these are members of the DMK network, who are highly connected to others within their own network communities and sub-networks. CC champions have a number of direct links with others within their own network communities or sub-networks (Cherven 2015). Where betweenness centrality was interested in DMK member organisations bridging otherwise distant network communities, closeness centrality has its focus on champions having the same function yet, this time within and not across network communities. CC and BC champions may therefore complement each other so long that they mirror the diversity of sectors on board DMOs. Further, closeness centrality allows for surfacing DMO network members who act as gatekeepers, i.e. have the highest number of direct links within their own network communities and are thus able to facilitate distribution of resources that may otherwise be difficult to access in cases where communication tends to be rather patchy. Whilst network actors with high closeness centrality are not necessarily central to the overall network, they play an important role within their own communities or sub-networks. These actors are seen as agents of DL practice within their own communities, which may or may not be tied to a particular sector or membership status within DMK. Central DMO member organisations within (e.g. as in the case of CC) and across (e.g. as in the case of BC) network communities play an active brokerage role. Brokers within DMOs are central to the spread of communication and resource flows (Beritelli et al. 2015b).

2.3.3.C Valued relational data: Surfacing communication and resource flows

SNA has often been perceived as a network tool, which produces largely descriptive data (Ahmet 2012; Hristov 2015; Prell 2012; Scott 2000). However, a relatively unexplored approach to adding value to network research and providing deeper insights (beyond descriptive network statistics grounded in binary data) is the one, which is focused on relational data and relational content of links within a network (Ahmet 2012), such as diffusion of ideas,

knowledge and resources. Within this context scholars have argued that social network studies often neglect flows among actors in networks and as such, over-emphasising the quantity rather than the quality of network relationships and interactions (Conway 2014).

Nurturing active communication and distribution of knowledge and resources on a DMO level is an important indicator of developing DL practice (Hristov and Zehrer 2015) and so is the case with mainstream leadership networks embedded in organisations (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010), i.e. DL practice. Indeed, DL recognises that leadership practice is constructed and ultimately founded on shared action and interaction (Harris 2005) and distribution of resources, knowledge and expertise (Spillane 2006). As DL is founded on interactions, rather than actions (Harris 2005; Harris and Spillane 2008), knowledge and resource exchange are central to this study interested in the enactment and practice of DL in a network of DMO member organisations. Further, knowledge and resource exchange are fundamental ingredients of DL practice (Tian et al. 2015) and as such, they have a prominent place in this study.

Despite the range of opportunities for in-depth network investigations that valued network data provides (Ahmet 2012), there have not been any structural and relational properties or SNA measures proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010), as part of their framework for evaluation of leadership practice. In light of this framework limitation, the study draws on a several Gephi-powered network layout algorithms, such as *Radial Axis Layout* algorithm (Groeninger 2012) and *Force Atlas 3D Layout* algorithm (Levallois 2013), adopted during Phase II of this study's methodological framework. Network layout algorithms are aimed at generating insightful depictions by investigating communication and developmental resource flows across complete networks.

2.4.C Network theory and SNA application to DMO and destination research

Chapter 2 B discussed the leadership paradigm and its distributed dimension in light of DL's applications in the domain of DMOs and destinations. The following

two sections explore prominent contributions on the application of network theory and SNA in the domain of destinations and DMOs.

2.4.1. C Network theory and SNA adopted in destinations and destination research

This section provides a discussion on prominent contributions, which involve the application of network theory and SNA in a destination context. As discussed in the Introduction, the extant SNA literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations to date has been largely focused on networks in geographies as opposed to networks in organisations, such as DMOs (Ahmed 2012; Hristov 2015; Hristov and Zehrer 2015). This approach omits network enquiry which has its focus on the steering wheel in destinations, namely DMOs.

The key themes discussed in the network literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations include empirical investigations related to destination characteristics and governance (Beaumont and Dredge 2009; Cooper et al. 2009; Gibson et al. 2005; Wesley and Pforr 2010), destination image and branding (Camprubi et al. 2008; Lemmetyinen and Go 2009), exchange of information and knowledge management in destinations (Baggio and Cooper 2010; Miguens and Corfu 2008; Pavlovich 2002; Xiao et al. 2011), tourism product development and innovation (Novelli et al. 2006; Romeiro and Costa 2010), tourism policy networks (Dredge 2006; Pforr 2006), sustainable tourism development (Pavlovich 2001; Timur and Getz 2008), cooperation and alliances in tourism destinations (Baggio 2011; Beesley 2005).

Further, network theory and SNA have been used extensively to understand and examine the complexity of destinations as multi-dimensional systems (Scott et al. 2008b; Pforr et al. 2014). Within this context, a number of studies within the domain of DMOs and destinations have pursued investigations on network collaboration and knowledge-sharing practices, within and across organisations in destinations through studying the network of actors in a locality, or specific public, private or mixed network clusters within geographic boundaries (Baggio and Cooper 2008; Beritelli 2011b; Cooper et al. 2006; Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013; Krakover and Wang 2008; Yabuta and

Scott 2011; Zach and Racherla 2011; Longjit and Pearce 2013; Pearce 2014). In other words, the extant literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations has given considerable attention to the conceptualisation of destinations as networks (Bregoli and Del Chiappa 2013; Cooper et al. 2009; Pavlovich 2003; Pechlaner et al. 2012; Pforr 2006; Scott et al. 2008b; Shih 2006; Timur and Getz 2008) and not destination organisations, such as DMOs.

Little or no research has, therefore, been carried out on strategic organisational level aimed at exploring the DMO network of bodies involved in strategic destination decision-making (Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013), which often represent a number of key destination management and leadership-interested actors in their respective destinations (Ness et al. 2014). Recognition of the role of these lead structures in orchestrating the majority of key destination management and development-interested groups (Ness et al. 2014; Volgger and Pechlaner 2014) across the contemporary, predominantly market-driven DMOs has also been somewhat overlooked by academia. It is then not surprising that most network studies to date have been carried out on a geographical (destination) as opposed to a more strategic organisational (DMO) level. There has not been any consolidated attempt by academia to explore implications of networks in destination governance and strategic decision-making (Scott et al. 2008b; Hristov and Zehrer 2015).

In their extensive review of network contributions in the domain of DMOs and destinations, Van der Zee and Vanneste (2015) identified a number of network contributions, which have acknowledged the role of DMOs as key important destination entities. However, studies that enquire into networks on strategic organisational as opposed to the much broader and blurred destination level are rare (Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013; Morgan 2012; Ness et al. 2014). Within this content there is a need to further explore the role of emergent leadership networks in destination organisations, such as DMOs (Beritelli and Bieger 2014; Blichfeldt et al. 2014, Zehrer et al. 2014).

2.4.2.C Network theory and SNA adopted in destination organisations and DMO research

This section provides a discussion on the few prominent contributions, which involve the application of network theory and SNA in a DMO context. As discussed in Chapter 1, the rapidly shifting, post-austerity context on a global level, serves as a wake-up call for destinations and destination organisations to rethink their delivery and growth agendas (OECD 2014). The revision of the characteristics, scope and functions of destination management bodies thus requires the attention of both academia and practice (Beritelli et al. 2015a; Laesser and Beritelli 2013). The landscape of destination management is altering (Morgan 2012; Longjit and Pearce 2013) and this requires taking a look at the 'steering wheel' of geographies, namely DMOs and their networks of member organisations. This provides an alternative view to more traditional streams of research, where destinations have long been placed at the forefront of investigation (Buhalis 2000; Ritchie and Crouch 2003), particularly in times when concepts such as management and leadership are gaining prominence. The past has therefore clearly seen destinations as the unit of analysis and a prominent concept in destination marketing and management research (Hristov and Naumov 2015). The shifting landscape of destinations and destination organisations (Coles et al. 2014), however, brings into the spotlight the importance of adopting new approaches to the way academia and practice see destinations and lead organisations, such as DL. Securing a membership in a DMO often allows for having a voice in destination decision-making (Ness et al. 2014). This voice may be able to shape the way destinations are managed, developed and positioned on the increasingly competitive and highly saturated global marketplace of destination products and experiences.

Examining the discourse of key individuals behind organisations having a stake in destination management and leadership is then crucial (Beritelli and Laesser 2011; Ness et al. 2014; Reinhold et al. 2015) if destinations are to flourish within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. DMOs can clearly serve as a platform to facilitating such dialogue of strategic importance to diverse destination communities and sectors of the economy (Blichfeldt et al. 2014). Contemporary DMOs are to become a symbol of collectivism in destination decision-making. An emphasis is thus placed on the increasing importance of bringing together diverse networked destination communities involving businesses, government and civil

society (Beritelli et al. 2007). It may well then be argued that destination management and leadership involve network management (Hristov and Zehrer 2015; Laesser and Beritelli 2013) and emergent DMO networks are function of a joined up thinking and collective action.

Arguably, enquiring into networks on strategic organisational as opposed to the much broader and blurred destination level (Del Chiappa and Presenza 2013; Morgan 2012; Ness et al. 2014) deserves further attention. Studying entire organisations as the unit of analysis allows for providing a micro view (Aubke 2014), i.e. illustrating the overall picture of strategic destination networks embedded in organisations, such as DMOs. The direction of discussion in this section is then drawn on the importance of research *in* destination organisations, rather than research *on* destination organisations. The potential of Social Network Analysis (SNA) used as an approach to theory-building (Pavlovich 2014), improving management practice (Conway 2014) and surfacing DL practice (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010) is then debated. In order to deal with the messy reality, one has to find a way to simplify their research objects (DMOs) by seeing them in particular ways. This is how reshaped DMOs are seen as networks (Ness et al. 2014) through the lens of both purely theoretical underpinnings (network theory) and more practitioner-oriented concepts and applied tools (SNA). This organisational transformation was subject of discussion in Chapter 2 A, where the DMO concept was deconstructed in order to uncover the existence of leadership functions in reshaped DMOs.

Investigating DMOs in contrast to destinations implies a more practitioner-led perspective as research outcomes and outputs have the potential to inform strategic thinking in DMO organisations and provide implications to shaping destination leadership and important development trajectories. Academic contributions involving network analysis in DMOs and considering both 'thick', conceptual discussions and more practical, quantitative approaches are nevertheless scarce due to a number of complexities surrounding this research agenda. Indeed, there is a need for more case evidence on the synergetic nature of these contrasting approaches when undertaking network research (Luthe and Wyss 2014). The underpinning study aims to address this recent call by adopting a multi-phase, mixed method

approach to the investigated phenomenon, namely the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level.

2.5.C Key complexities in undertaking network studies

This section captures a synthesis of key complexities in undertaking SNA studies in DMO organisations. It covers in a nutshell key emergent debates in the wider network literature, which are of particular relevance to the application of network approaches in investigating DMOs. Social networks reflect on three core components – *actors*, which in the case of DMOs are all destination organisations being members of a DMO, *links* connecting individual network actors, and *flows* capturing transactional content, e.g. knowledge and resource exchange within the network (Hanneman et al. 2005). Network research tends to study whole populations, e.g. all individuals belonging to a group, such as organisations by means of census, rather than by sample (Ahmed 2012). Collecting network data thus implies that network members are not independent units of analysis (Scott 1991) but rather embedded in a myriad of social relations. The nature of network methodologies sets them aside from conventional quantitative approaches. Network enquiry makes use of relational (Freeman 2011; Prell 2012), in contrast to attribute data. The essential point of interest in network studies is thus the cohesiveness and integrity (Prell 2012; Scott 2000) of the inter-organisational DMO network, in contrast to network entities seen as individual units of analysis.

Network studies are often completed using survey questionnaires argued to be the key data collection technique (Kadushin 2012). Equally, network data is collected through a variety of other methods and data sources, such as interviews (Cross et al. 2001), participant observation (Freeman et al. 1989), policies and other strategic documents (Dredge 2006) to name a few. Big data which overlap with SNA (Yang, 2017) may also provide a sound approach to identifying patterns in links and flows among social actors as both approaches make use of a large number of data points. Big data has been widely adopted in the domain of smart tourism destinations (see Buhalis and Amaranggana,

2015) and destination image (see Marine-Roig and Clave, 2015) to name a few examples. Evidence of using big data approaches in identifying patterns in links is however relatively thin due to its early stage of adoption in DMO and destination research. Each approach is considered to have its strengths and weaknesses (Conway 2014). Difficulties in obtaining empirical data (Gerdes and Stringam 2008) are widely recognised in the literature and network data is not an exception. There is a vast literature exploring the complexities in undertaking network studies, particularly in the context of mainstream management and leadership (Conway 2014). Arguably, SNA can have far-reaching impacts on organisations and individuals being studied (Kilduff et al. 2008) both negative and positive. The latter scenario is of particular relevance to cases where data, which validity can be questioned is disseminated, and specific actions are then taken.

Undoubtedly, the central issue related to the overall validity of an investigation in the domain of social networks is the collection, analysis and depiction of network data (Frank 1971; Marsden 1990). SNA analysis thus implies complex data collection procedures that may be challenging to execute, or even lead to incomplete or unreliable data (Scott et al. 2008a). Clearly, network analysis is worthless without good data (Rogers 1987), which may be the reason why the literature on DL in the domain of DMOs is thin. Arguably the key reason for this assumption is that visualisations and analysis of network structures are particularly sensitive to missing data (Huisman 2009). This may have negative implications for depicting networks (Borgatti and Molina 2003) and thus provide distortions of the 'full picture'. In light of this, Parker et al. (2001) contended that while a project may not be able to achieve 100% response, typically at least 80% of the investigated network entities should have been covered. Whilst reasonable results may be achieved with up to a 20% non-response rate among actors of the investigated network (Huisman 2009), in general terms, outcomes below 100% are likely to miss crucial network data (Conway 2014). These complexities occur particularly when influential network actors, such as well-connected local government structures or key hospitality establishments in destinations are omitted from depictions.

Further, ethical issues in light of SNA research are rarely raised in the business and management community (Borgatti and Molina 2005; Conway

2014) and have only recently brought considerable attention to research in destinations and destination management. This has been the result of the progressive adoption of SNA approaches by consultants and managers in relation to decision-making and opportunities for structural intervention within organisations (Cross et al. 2001; Parker et al. 2001). It is a common case that investigated network entities may consider some of the questions as sensitive (Tourangeau et al. 2000) as mapping a network ultimately exposes the network status of individuals representing DMO member organisations. Ensuring anonymity of participants in network research is not a straightforward process (Conway 2014). In general, the most efficient tool for protecting research subjects being questioned by a survey is to simply guarantee their anonymity (Kadushin 2005). This is not however always the case in network research and SNA. Characteristics and functions of featured DMO member organisations *vis-a-vis* actor attributes are prerequisites to facilitating an in-depth exploration of networks. In practice anonymity in network research cannot be guaranteed as organisations and individuals are easily identified by the combination of attributes (Borgatti and Molina 2005). Network analysis is nevertheless truly useful to management practice if it captures the actual names of actors (Borgatti and Molina 2005). However, considering matters of privacy and ensuring anonymity of participants imply actions and possible consequences that are difficult to be dealt with.

Inaccurate data may also be arising from informant bias. This issue occurs when respondents forget to list some of the network members they have interacted with (Bernard et al. 1984). Network studies can avoid these issues by ensuring that all DMO member organisations, which are part of the network, are clearly listed in the survey as per membership data provided by the DMO organisation. Whilst individuals are good in recalling strong ties, under-reporting of weak ties is a common issue (Freeman et al. 1987) and thus a list of network actors arranged by size of the organisation starting from Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) through to Medium-sized Businesses (MSBs) and prominent Blue-chips and local government bodies may be used as part of the survey instrument in a response to this common practice. Complexities in undertaking an SNA investigation call for an in-depth discussion into matters of importance in relation to the nature of network data, sampling and census

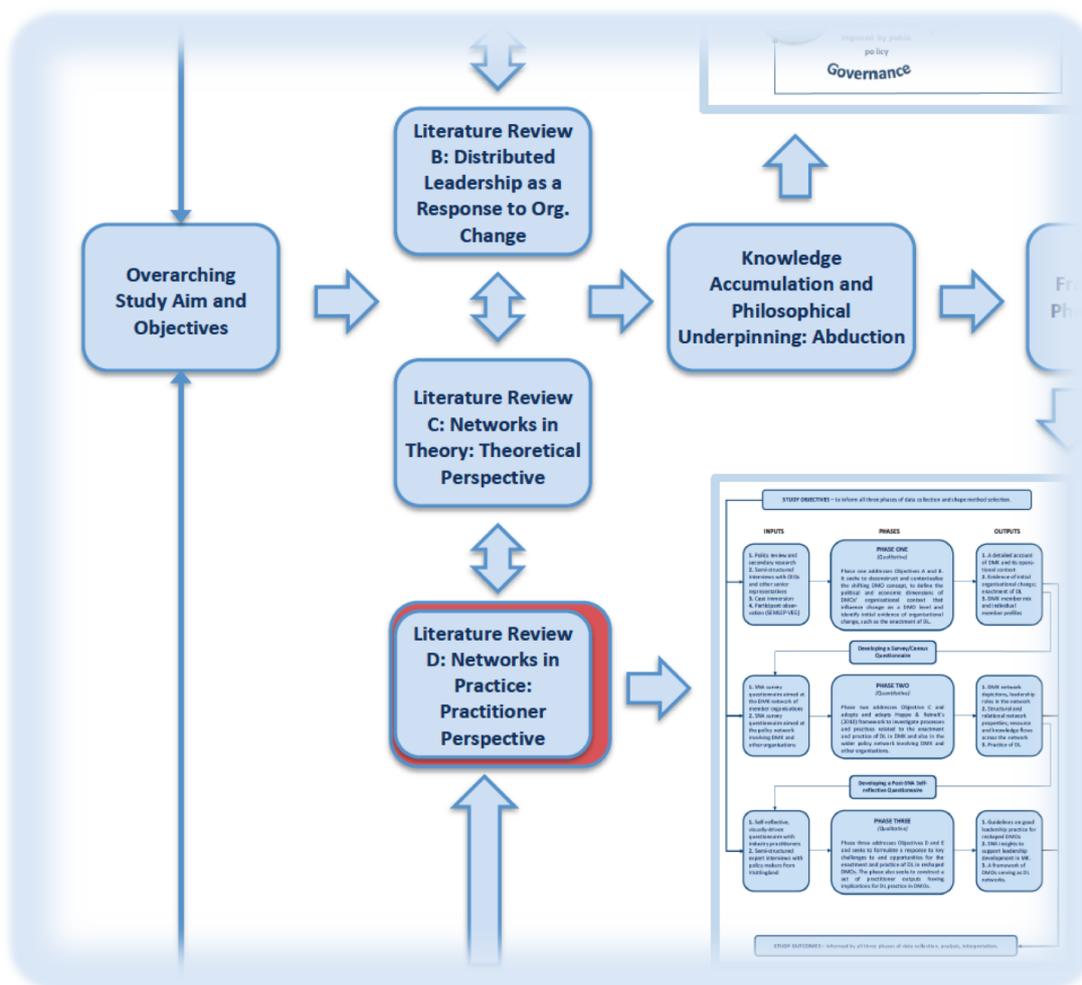
techniques, access to organisations, data validity and visualisation amongst others. The latter is subject of discussion in the literature review chapter to follow, namely networks in practice.

2.6.C Chapter conclusion

This chapter provided the theoretical background to network theory and SNA and covered prominent contributions on theorising networks under the network theory umbrella. Further, the chapter provided an extended discussion on a range of structural and relational network properties (network measures) across three levels of analysis, namely network, actor and ego network level. The discussed structural and relational network properties were aligned with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating DL practice, which is adapted and adopted as part of this study's methodological framework. The chapter continued with a discussion on prominent contributions on the application of network theory and SNA in the domain of DMOs and destinations. The chapter concluded with a brief discussion on key complexities in carrying out network research. As such, the chapter serves as an introduction to the following chapter, which provides a discussion into network theory and SNA through the lens of practice.

Chapter 2 D

Literature Review on Networks in Practice



CHAPTER 2 D: LITERATURE REVIEW ON NETWORKS IN PRACTICE

2.1.D Chapter introduction

Whilst the previous chapter provided the theoretical background to network theory and SNA, including key levels of analysis and an introduction to a range of network measures to be adopted in line with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, the following chapter takes a practitioner approach as it discusses the complexities, particularities and practicalities in the adoption of an SNA approach in general terms and in light of this study's focus. In other words, if Chapter 2 C discussed predominantly 'what' questions, the following practitioner-driven chapter is largely interested in 'how' questions.

The chapter begins by providing a practitioner angle to the nature of network data, which sets the scene for a number of specific considerations with regard to the adoption of SNA approaches to enquiry, when leadership development on a strategic organisational, i.e. DMO level is investigated. These considerations include sampling and census techniques, matters of validity in network data, particularities with regard to ethics and ethical procedures, and the challenges of depicting network data amongst other considerations. The narrative in the underpinning discussion is largely influenced by a prominent network literature contribution by Conway (2014), who discussed a number of fundamental considerations and complexities in undertaking a network enquiry in organisations.

Further, whilst largely drawing on fundamental considerations concerning SNA applications in practice, this chapter also serves to uncover network enquiry-bound methodological processes and procedures to be applied to this study, e.g. matters of ethics and approaches to depicting network data. These are then fed into the adopted methodological framework discussed in Chapter 3. Having provided a detailed account of the nature, particularities and complexities of network data, this chapter then sets the scene for Chapter 3, which outlines the developed and embedded three-phase, mixed-method methodological framework as a response to literature-surfaced complexities in undertaking network studies in general terms and in the context of DMOs.

2.2.D Network data

2.2.1.D *The nature of network data*

The concept of network has arguably become a metaphor for understanding organisations and organisational behaviour (Borgatti and Molina 2003). A decade later, the concept of networks arguably goes well beyond metaphors to capture emergent organisational forms as a response to the rapid globalisation of economies, societies and environments (Hristov and Zehrer 2015; Romero et al. 2013). Clearly, SNA has turned into a tool, which is now extensively applied approach to studying networks by both business and management academics and practitioners (Borgatti and Molina 2003; Cross et al. 2002; Conway 2014). However, little attention has been given to the complexities in conducting an SNA study, in this case the nature of network data being collected, the way visual representations of networks are constructed, and the existing plethora of data collection approaches and important ethical considerations (Chiffolleau 2005; Conway 2014). Both academia and practice have recognised that the central issue related to the overall validity of an investigation in the domain of social networks is the collection, analysis and depiction of network data (Conway 2014; Frank 1971; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010; Marsden 1990; Scott et al. 2008a). The reason behind this is the nature of network analysis, which often implies complex data collection procedures that may be challenging to execute, or even lead to incomplete or unreliable data (Scott et al. 2008a).

As pointed out at the end of the previous chapter, network enquiry is a complex approach characterised with rather blurred boundaries when one aims to identify a point where theory ends (network theory) and methodology begins (SNA analysis). SNA has been perceived by some to capture an approach that comes with conceptual, methodological and analytical toolkit (Prell 2012). In purely practical terms, Aubke (2014) has seen SNA as a toolbox of network methods predominantly used in the management and organisational research domains.

2.2.2.D Data collection methods and sources

Network studies are often associated with survey questionnaires, which are seen as the key data collection technique (Conway 2014). However, network data may also be revealed through a variety of other approaches and data sources, such as interviews (Cross et al. 2001), group observations (Freeman et al. 1989), review of policies and other strategic documents (Dredge 2006) to name a few. Each approach is considered to have its strengths and weaknesses (Conway 2014), which is one of the reasons why this study adopts a set of both qualitative and quantitative SNA data collection tools over three phases and in line with the specific objectives of this study. Indeed, practitioners and academics are progressively employing mixed methods in an attempt to derive complementary data (Conti and Doreian 2010; Conway 2014; Edwards and Crossley 2009). Conway (2014) contended that while quantitative approaches may be particularly useful in revealing the structure of the network, 'thick' data accumulated from interviews and group observations (e.g. Phase I of data collection) is more effective in providing insights into processes, relational content and context of interaction among network actors. This is also one of the key reasons behind undertaking Phase III in the course of data collection.

However, in the majority of empirical cases network data is obtained through survey questionnaires, which have to be completed by all members of the investigated network (Conway 2014), although data may also be collected through interviews, documents, observations as in the case of the underpinning study. Survey questionnaires are central to revealing 'the overall picture' of structural and relational properties (Chapter 2 C), in addition to surfacing existing resource and communication interaction within the network in focus (Hristov and Ramkissoon 2016). Data collected via survey questionnaires is most likely to be translated into insightful network depictions, which are the essence of SNA.

2.2.3.D The sample and census approach

Networks capture three core components, which are considered to be the building blocks of networks (Conway 2014). These are actors, which in the case of this research are all member organisations in the investigated DMO, links that connect individual network actors, and flows capturing interactional and transactional content, in this case knowledge and resource exchange within the network of DMO member organisations. Network approaches to enquiry tend to study whole populations, e.g. all individuals belonging to a group such as an organisation by means of census, rather than by sample (Ahmed 2012). Collecting network data thus implies that network members are not independent units of analysis due to the nature of network data. As network data draws on relational data, the essential point of interest in SNA studies is the cohesiveness and integrity of networks, in contrast to network entities seen as independent units of analysis. Links between actors and their relational content are then the fundamental building blocks of networks (Ahmed 2012).

Nevertheless, as Scott et al. (2008a) argued, network researchers are often limited when studying whole networks due to the number of relationships that they can reasonably study. In order to illustrate this, Ahmed (2012) draws on a typical example of a single destination network limited to 50 actors, which takes into account five types of relational content. Ahmed (2012) assumed that each of these 50 actors would have an average of 10 relationships with others in the network. This small-scale network consisting of 50 actors then leads to investigating a network with a total of 2,500 ($50 \times 5 \times 10$) data points for analysis. Where in addition, network researchers are interested in collecting attribute data for the actors (e.g. type of organisation, company size, budget), considering 10 actor attributes, would ultimately add another 500 (50×10) data points for analysis (Ahmed 2012). Ahmed's (2012) example thus suggests that network size does matter and clearly, dealing with this large number of network data points is a complex issue. Network researchers are then often advised to carefully consider the size of the network, types of relational content and individual actor attributes in focus.

This study looks at the complete membership network of a single DMO, which consists of 83 destination businesses, local government and not-for-profit

organisations in Milton Keynes. This implies a network with a number of data points, which may well be above the 2,500 data points given in the case of Ahmed (2012).

2.2.4.D Multiple levels of analysis

As already captured in Chapter 2 C, network investigations often draw on multiple levels of analysis, which further adds to the complexities of undertaking network research (Borgatti and Lopez-Kidwell 2011). This is the case with the underpinning study, which is aimed at both complete network level study and ego network level study. Where the former level is interested in DMK's complete network of member organisations, the latter one is adopted when DMK's wider policy network is investigated.

The network enquiry carried out as part of this study then involves two levels of analysis, with the aim to investigate the enactment and practice of distributed leadership by adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) SNA framework for evaluating leadership development in networks embedded in organisations:

- On a DMO network level (*internal*)
- On a wider, policy network level (*external*)

This two-level network enquiry is in line with Objective C introduced in Chapter 1 of this study and is addressed as part of Phase II of the adopted methodological framework, which is discussed in Chapter 3.

2.3.D Organisations conceptualised as networks

2.3.1.D Establishing network boundaries

The boundary specification issue (Laumann 1989) captures the managerial and theoretical perspectives to distinguish whom to consider as part of the network

(Ahmed 2012). Conducting studies investigating large networks, the collection and subsequent analysis of network data then often becomes unmanageable (Conway 2014). In light of the latter statement and considering time and resource constraints, this study overcomes such complexities by applying a focused enquiry of the steering wheel of destinations, i.e. the DMO as oppose to taking into account all stakeholders in a given destination that usually captures a much larger network, which may or may not be interested in strategic destination decision-making in its entirety. In such case, a pre-defined approach to population sampling, i.e. census is evident (Aubke 2014).

Conway (2014), in addition, argued that one way of tackling issues related to large, blurred networks is when the researcher deliberately aims to establish rules of inclusion. Rules of inclusion should be linked to the key project questions put in place (Laumann et al. 1983). Recalling this study's original objectives and Objective C in particular, such rules of inclusion have been established with regard to the wider, policy network where the DMO in focus is the focal point of analysis. It is assumed that the external (ego) DMO network is partly-defined through the policy network analysis which identified key destination management-interested organisations located beyond the membership network. Other organisations that may be important to the DMO in focus are also to be considered for inclusion based on insights provided by both the former and current CEO of the membership organisation in focus. The study then leaves the external DMO network open to interpretations as to who else is to be considered as an important DMO ally in post-2011 Government Tourism Policy context. The internal (complete) DMO network, in contrast, has clear boundaries as it takes into account all membership organisations. Then, rules of inclusion (Laumann et al. 1983) with regard to the internal network have not been considered as required.

2.3.2.D *Sampling and census techniques*

The following section provides a discussion on key approaches to sampling and conducting a census across complete networks and ego networks. In line with

Objective C, both complete and ego networks, are subject of investigation in this study, where the former network is aimed at DMK's network of member organisations and the latter one is aimed at DMK's policy network from the perspective of the ego, namely DMK. As already discussed in this chapter, in complete networks, all actors in the network are usually known beforehand. An organisation and its members, for instance, can be studied as a complete network (Prell 2012), as in the case of DMK and its complete network of member organisations.

Some organisational settings, however, carry difficulties in knowing beforehand all actors in a given complete network (Wellman and Berkowitz 1988), which in turn makes the boundaries of that network undefined (Prell 2012). This calls for the adoption of alternative approaches to studying networks with undefined boundaries, such as the ego network approach (Prell 2012), which is aimed at personal, immediate networks surrounding an ego, as opposed to complete networks. An ego network approach is applied to enquiry, which seeks to define the set of links between one node and all others to which it is joined (Scott et al. 2008a). Ego network approach is adopted in the case of DMK's policy network, which boundaries are to be defined by DMK's founding and current CEOs. This is in line with Objective C, which also has its focus on surfacing emergent DL practice on a policy network level. Sampling approaches include:

- *Complete Network Sampling Approach:* Rosters are extensively adopted in methodologies as a census sampling approach (Aubke 2014), which are aimed at complete network investigations (Prell 2012). Roster is a list of all the actors in a network (Aubke 2014). Adopting a roster as a complete network sampling approach, implies that boundaries of the network are well known (Prell 2012). The DMK roster captures both corporate members and non-corporate members from a range of sectors of the economy and is available in Appendix 1. The adopted Phase II survey questionnaire for the complete network, i.e. DMK's network of member organisations has been discussed in detail as part of Chapter 3.

- *Ego Network Sampling Approach:* Fixed and free-recall are often adopted in methodologies as a sample approaches aimed at ego network investigations (Prell 2012). Free-recall approach implies that one may or may not know all the actors in the network in focus, i.e. the network boundaries (Prell 2012).

Within the context of DMK's policy network, both fixed and free-call sampling approach is adopted for the purpose of constructing the network. The Fixed sampling approach refers to the inclusion of policy network analysis-identified organisations (see Appendix 3b), whilst the free-recall sampling approach refers to other destination management and development-interested organisations identified by DMK's founding and current CEOs. DMK's policy network is therefore partially defined. This fundamental consideration is also reflected in the survey questionnaire adopted as part of the methodological framework and further discussed in Chapter 3. The adopted Phase II survey questionnaire for the ego network, i.e. DMK's policy network has been discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

2.3.3.D Access to organisations

Arguably, access to organisations is among the key challenges faced by researchers conducting a network enquiry (Borgatti and Molina 2005; Conway 2014). Reluctance of organisations to take part in network studies is often based on the assumptions that sensitive data are likely to be disclosed to the general public (Borgatti and Molina 2005). Various organisations adopt different approaches to their tolerance for disclosure of various kinds of social relations (Cross et al. 2002) and this may well be seen as one of the challenges to carrying out network research. The latter may be the reason why SNA studies investigating complete DMO networks by means of census are few as discussed in Chapter 2 C.

Within the context of this study, the matter concerning access to organisations has been addressed due to the researcher's prolonged

involvement in a past project with the organisation in focus, namely DMK. This prolonged involvement commenced in 2012 and continued until 2014 and indicates that the researcher has been actively involved in one or more aspects of the work of the organisation. The researcher's involvement in both consultations and also in the development of the new DMP for DMK and Milton Keynes well before commencing with this study provides evidence into this matter. This prolonged involvement allows for a case immersion (Stablein 2006), which is one of four data collection approaches adopted as part of Phase I. Case immersion is discussed in detail in Chapter 3, which introduces the developed and adopted methodological framework.

2.4.D Matters of validity of network data

Matters related to validity of network data, as argued by Conway (2014), are an important consideration, which deserves particular attention when network investigations are carried out. Obtaining close to a complete dataset is imperative (Conway 2014; Parker et al. 2001), as network data tends to study whole populations by applying a census instead of a sample approach. Visualisation and analysis of network structures are particularly sensitive to missing network data (Hristov 2015; Huisman 2009). However, conducting network studies and collecting data in organisational settings proves to be problematic (Beritelli et al. 2015b; Costenbader and Valente 2003), which may often result in low response levels than expected.

Figures 2.D.1 and 2.D.2 provide an example of how missing network data might affect the visualisation of networks. In the first scenario (Figure 2.D.1), data has been collected in relation to all network actors and thus represents a complete network. Figure 2.D.2, however, provides a network visualisation, which has been notably affected by missing network data. This is evident in the case of two central nodes (Actor 10 and Actor 11), which act as the only bridge between the two sub-groups in the network. Network bridges are considered crucial to ensuring the overall connectivity of a network, they also allow for

exchanging new ideas and creating development opportunities across the network (Burt 1992).

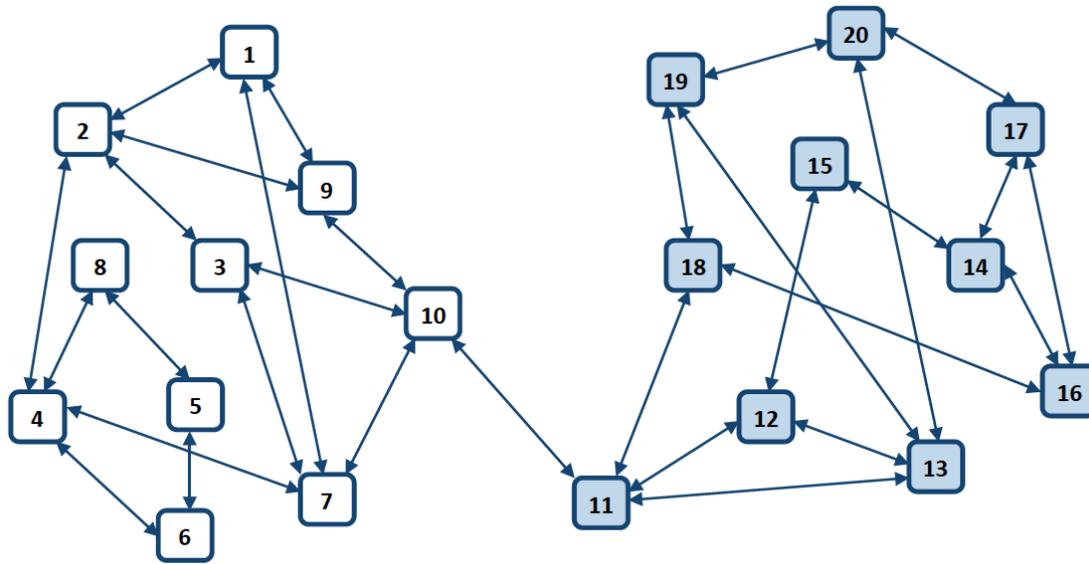


Figure 2.D.1. Complete network (Adapted from Conway 2014)

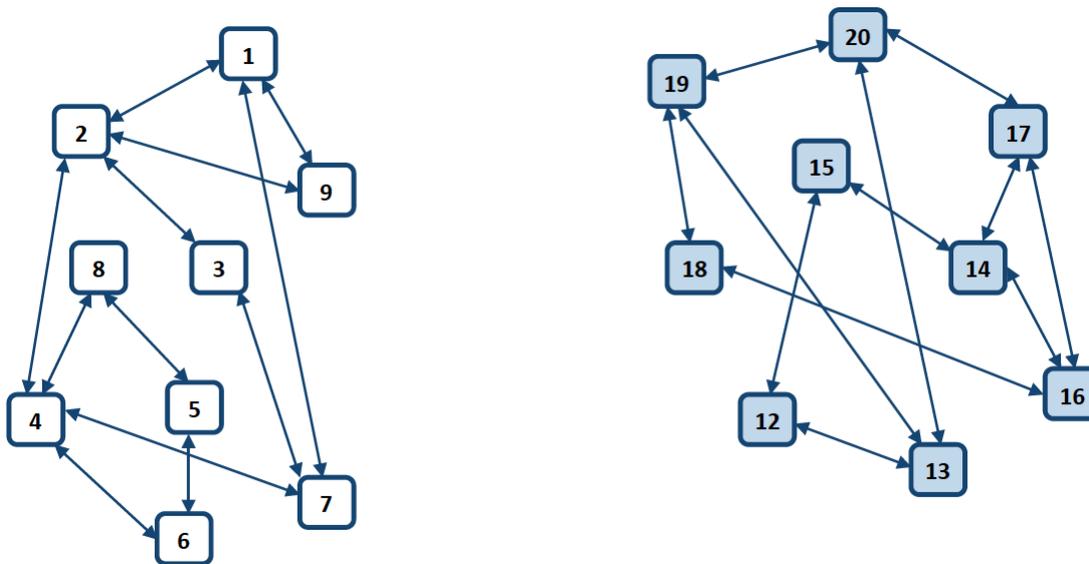


Figure 2.D.2. Incomplete Network (Adapted from Conway 2014)

A scenario, as the one provided in Figure 2.D.2, may have negative implications for the visualisation of network structures and network analysis (Borgatti and Molina 2003). In light of Figures 2.D.1 and 2.D.2, which provide an example of how missing network data might affect the visualisation of networks, this study

aims to provide a response to allow for the reproduction of a 'close to a complete' network. This response is grounded in the broad network literature (see Borgatti and Molina 2005) and is achieved by the inclusion of non-respondents in network visualisations and in the case, where the response rate is below 100%. Within this context, Borgatti and Molina (2005) contended that:

“Technically, though, the researcher is within his rights to include the non-respondent because the perceptions that others have of the non-respondent belong to them (the perceivers) and if they choose to divulge those perceptions in a survey, the subject of those perceptions has no say in it. In addition, eliminating the non-respondent does reduce the validity of the analyses, which has its own ethical problems if the analyses are claimed to be a true representation of the network.”

(Borgatti and Molina 2005 p.110)

In essence, non-response of network members, matters of questionnaire design, and informant bias are fundamental to network data completeness (Hristov 2015; Kossinets 2006). Missing data resulting from non-response of a proportion of network actors is a major issue in SNA research (Aubke 2014). Investigated network entities may consider some of the questions as sensitive (Tourangeau et al. 2000) as mapping a network ultimately exposes the network status of individuals (Conway 2014).

Inaccurate data may also result from informant bias, where network study respondents forget to list some of the network members they have established links with (Bernard et al. 1984). Whilst individuals are good in recalling strong ties, under-reporting of weak ties is a common issue (Freeman et al. 1987). This study provides a response to this potential issue by the inclusion of a roster of all DMO member organisations in the survey questionnaire used in Phase II. Nevertheless, further matters of validity of network data in relation to this research are discussed in Chapter 3 in its final section, namely Matters of Data Trustworthiness and Validity.

2.5.D Matters of ethics in network studies

Matters related to ethics in conducting network research is yet another important consideration, which should be taken into account when conducting a network enquiry (Conway 2014). Network studies differ from conventional social science studies, where in the case of the latter, respondents report for themselves (Borgatti and Molina 2003). In network research, in contrast, respondents report on others, either individuals or organisations involved in this research (Borgatti and Molina 2005).

Ethical matters in network research are, nevertheless, rarely raised in the business and management community (Borgatti and Molina 2005; Conway 2014). Matters of ethics have only recently gained prominence, as the result of the progressive adoption of network theory and SNA approaches by practitioners with a view to inform strategic decision-making and structural intervention and organisational design (Cross et al. 2001; Parker et al. 2001). Within this context and by its very nature, network research introduces new dimensions of ethics, which deserve further attention and recognition by both academia and practice (Borgatti and Molina 2003; Conway 2014).

Where a research project forms part of a consultancy project, network participants may be unaware of the possible implications of participation or non-participation (Conway 2014) and if they do not understand the impacts of their answers on themselves, the latter could be considered as unethical use of network analysis (Borgatti and Molina 2003). Network researchers may be facing major issues with securing consent with regard to non-participants due to the nature of data to be collected where non-participants may appear on the network in case they have been labelled as network members by participants themselves (Borgatti and Molina 2003; Conway 2014). Despite a recent discussion on this matter (see Conway 2014), there has not been a consolidated response from academia, nor practice as to how to approach the inclusion and visualisation of non-participants in network research. Further, Borgatti and Molina (2005) went on to argue that network analysis is truly useful to management and leadership practice, if it contains the actual names of actors. This process may be facilitated by the introduction of a pre-study consent, as in the case with this study, where study participants are informed

prior to conducting research that their organisations may appear on network visualisations. Indeed, 'management prefers to know who is who on the charts and metrics because it provides a path for action' (Borgatti and Molina 2005, p.111).

Despite the above-discussed ethical considerations, Borgatti and Molina (2003) argued that what ultimately matters in network research, is who is targeted as an audience and what the data is to be used for. In other words, the question of who benefits of network research (Kadushin 2005) raises important further questions. Kadushin (2005) argued that whilst academia and involved organisations often benefit, individual respondents rarely do. In light of this study, individual respondents are also likely to benefit from their contribution to the network study, as they are members of DMK, which represents their interests. Upon completion of the study, network participants will also be provided with research outputs to inform their destination practice. This is in line with Objective E of this study, which is aimed at constructing a set of practitioner outputs having implications for DL practice in DMOs, such as guidelines on good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs.

2.6.D Matters of visualising network data

Matters of visualising network data has also been considered to be among the key considerations, when dealing with network data collection and analysis (Conway 2014; Hristov 2015). Network visualisations are among the key strengths of SNA and network visualisation software has been an important innovation adding to the popularisation of SNA among business and management practitioners and consultants (Cherven 2015; Conway 2014). Visual reproduction of networks is central to this study, where a range of structural and relational network properties contribute to providing evidence into the enactment and practice of DL in DMK's membership and policy networks during Phase II, and also considered as an approach to raise further questions during Phase III.

Network software adopts an approach called multi-dimensional scaling (Scott 2000), which is a technique for converting network metrics into physical distance and if used as a network study output, visualisations reflect on a powerful tool for investigating key features of the network of interest, in this case clusters, structural holes and bridges (Conway 2014). This study employs SNA with the key purpose of depicting the DMO network and processes related to developing DL practice across the complete network. Network depictions may, in addition, be used as part of the data collection process as a way of interacting with respondents to expand on salient points (Biddex and Park 2008; Conway 2014; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). The underpinning multi-phase study adopts such approach as part of Phase III of the adopted methodological framework, where research participants are asked to interpret Phase II network depictions in light of the challenges and opportunities to embedding and practicing DL on a DMO level.

Further, network visualisations play a substantial role in fuelling the process of theory building - new insights into investigated matters can emerge through manipulating and further examining network depictions (Conway 2014; Conway and Steward 1998; Moody et al. 2005). Processes related to theory-building are of a particular interest to this study, which first conceptualises DMK as a leadership network, before theorising on it with the aim to construct a set of practitioner outputs having implications for DL practice in DMOs, such as guidelines for good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs.

2.7.D Chapter conclusion

Whilst the previous chapter provided the theoretical background to the network concept, including key levels of analysis and an introduction to a range of network measures to be adopted in line with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, this chapter discussed the complexities, particularities and practicalities in the adoption of an SNA approach in general terms and also in light of this study's focus. As such, the chapter provided a practitioner perspective into the nature of network data, in addition to a number of specific

considerations with regard to the adoption of network approaches to enquiry. Further, whilst largely drawing on fundamental considerations concerning SNA applications in practice, this chapter also served to uncover network enquiry-bound methodological processes and procedures, which are applied to this study. They also contribute to the development of the adopted mixed-method, multi-phase methodological framework discussed in Chapter 3.

Section II provided four interconnected literature review chapters, which are informed by the cross-disciplinary approach adopted by this study. Chapter 2 A discussed key developments linked to the DMO concept within a new funding and governance landscape. This included a study into organisational change in DMOs triggered by the new funding and governance landscape. A key evidence of that change was the emergent leadership practice and the distribution of leadership in DMOs, where these organisations have traditionally been associated with marketing and management of destinations. Building on this evidence of organisational change, Chapter 2 B shifted the focus from DMOs and destinations to provide an in-depth discussion of key literature in the leadership and DL domain. The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the foundations of leadership and DL prior to exploring in detail the emergent role of distributed forms of leadership in contemporary DMOs and the relevance of this domain to DMOs and destinations undergoing change. Networks emerged as a prominent theme within this chapter due to their relevance to DL. Building on this theme, Chapter 2 C and Chapter 2 D then provided an investigation into the theoretical and practitioner dimensions of networks. Chapter 2 C discussed key literature related to the theoretical background of networks, including key levels of analysis and an introduction to a range of network measures adopted in line with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework. Chapter 2 D built on the previous one by taking a practitioner approach to networks and discussing key literature related to the complexities, particularities and practicalities of the adoption of network analysis more generally and also in light of the overarching purpose and objectives of this study.

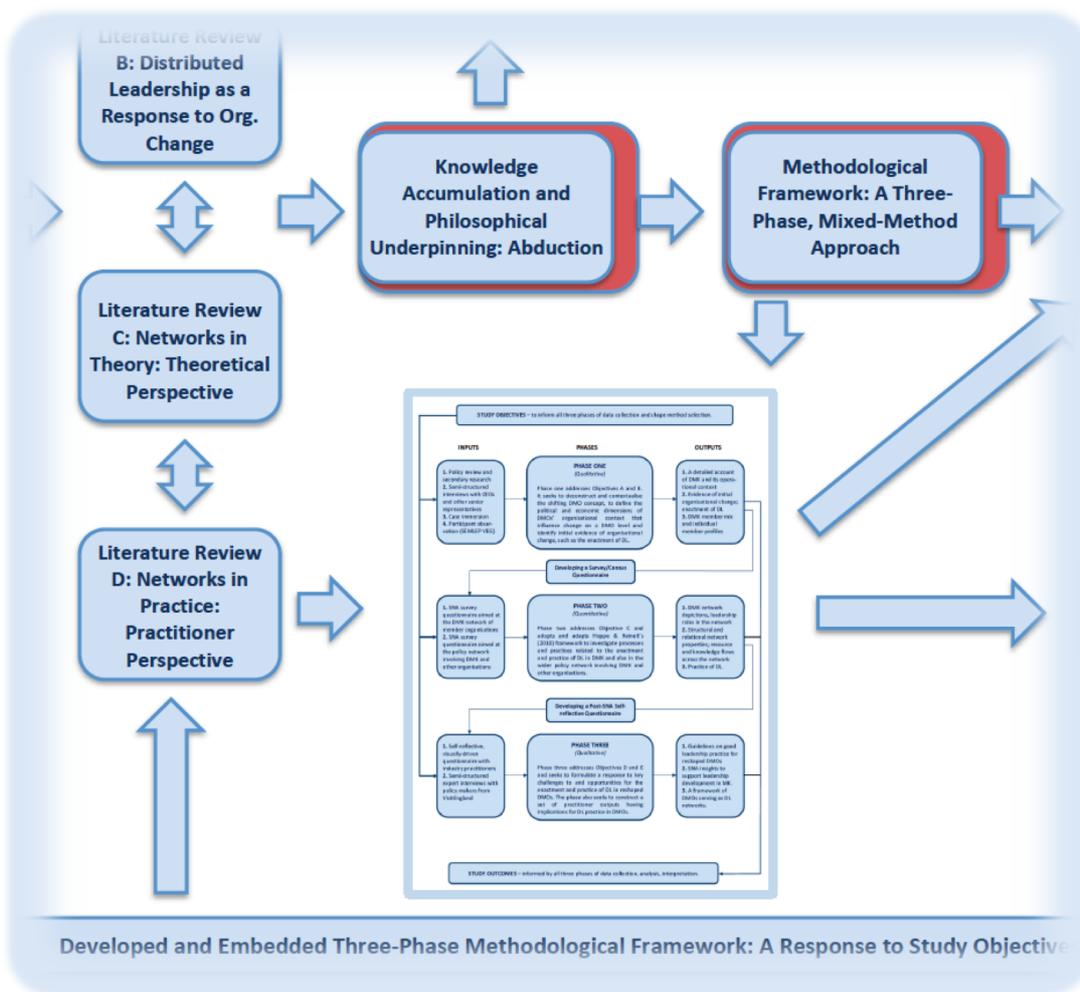
Section III

Methodology

Section III consists of Chapter 3 and provides the philosophical and methodological foundations adopted by this study in order to facilitate a response to the overarching aim and objectives introduced in Chapter 1. The underpinning chapter highlights two prominent discussions; one with a philosophical dimension and another one with a methodological dimension. The philosophical discussion introduces the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation, which is informed by its relativist ontological stance and constructionist epistemological stance adopted in this study. The methodological one provides a discussion of the adopted strategy of enquiry, which involves the application of the case study method and its role in theory-building. The unit of analysis and its spatial setting are then discussed. Building on Chapter 2 D, this chapter continues with an in-depth discussion of the developed and adopted mixed-method, three-phase methodological framework aimed at providing a response to key complexities in undertaking network enquiry discussed in the former chapter. Chapter 3 also provides a discussion on the applied methodological tools and approaches, sampling technique, target sample and position of the researcher. The chapter concludes with a focused discussion of key matters of data trustworthiness and validity in relation to the methodological framework.

Chapter 3

Methodology



CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter introduction

Grounded in the overarching study framework presented in Chapter 1, this chapter begins by providing a short introduction to the overarching aim and objectives of this study before providing an in-depth discussion into the research strategy, i.e. the knowledge accumulation approach applied to this study, namely *abduction* (Peirce 1934) and its ontological and epistemological stance. The chapter continues with a section on the strategy of enquiry involving the application of the *Case study* method, where the unit of analysis (DMO) and the geography (destination) this membership organisation operates in are discussed in detail. The role of the case study strategy of enquiry in theory-building is then discussed by critically examining key management and organisational literature. This is followed by examining the current evidence, which suggests that single case studies have the potential to contribute to theory-building.

The chapter continues with introducing a three-phase methodological framework. The adopted methodological framework builds on a recent contribution (see Hristov 2015), where an earlier version of the three-phase framework was first introduced. The framework serves as a response to some previously discussed complexities in carrying out network studies in DMOs (see Chapter 2 D). The study adopts and adapts Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating leadership development in networks, which emerge within formal organisational structures. The methodological framework is subsequently unfolded to provide a detailed account of each of the three contrasting, but interconnected phases of data collection and analysis. The chapter also unfolds the position of the researcher during each of the three phases of the data collection, which is key to responding to the five objectives outlined at the outset of this study.

The core methods for collecting empirical data across the three phases of the methodological framework are then outlined, namely semi-structured expert interviews, case immersion and participant observation (Phase I), SNA network survey questionnaires for DMK's complete and ego networks (Phase II)

and expert interviews and self-reflective questionnaires: policy makers and industry practitioners (Phase III). This is followed by an overview of the core tools for data analysis, interpretation and visualisation of both qualitative and quantitative data. The chapter concludes by providing a discussion of matters of data trustworthiness for qualitative data and validity for quantitative data. The discussion outlines the approaches taken in this study to ensure integrity, quality and rigour throughout the three phases of the adopted methodological framework and as part of data collection, analysis, interpretation and visualisation processes.

3.2 The overarching aim and objectives of this study

The overarching aim of this study was to investigate how DMOs enact and practise distributed leadership and as such, serve as leadership networks in destinations within a new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. Within the context of the overarching aim, the underpinning study addresses five specific objectives, which seek to:

- A. Explore the shifting DMO concept and conceptualise it through the political and economic dimensions of the new funding and governance landscape that influences change on a DMO level;
- B. Identify initial evidence of organisational change within the DMO in focus influenced by the new funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England;
- C. Investigate collective processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of distributed leadership within the DMO in focus by adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) SNA framework for evaluating leadership development in networks embedded in organisations:
 - On a DMO network level (*internal*)
 - On a wider, policy network level (*external*)
- D. Formulate a collective response to key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of distributed leadership in reshaped

DMOs and surface approaches to respectively mitigate or capitalise on these; and

- E. Co-construct a set of practitioner outputs having implications for distributed leadership practice in reshaped DMOs, i.e. guidelines for good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs.

3.3 Approaches to knowledge accumulation in social enquiry: Abduction

The overarching aim of this study involves an investigation into how DMOs enact and practice DL and as such, serve as leadership networks in destinations following the organisational transformation of these DMOs against a shifting economic and political context. This investigation then involves processes of knowledge accumulation into a novel phenomenon in the research domain of DMOs and destinations, namely the enactment and practice of DL.

Within the context of the wider set of approaches to knowledge accumulation, Blaikie (2007) discussed the existence of four distinct ones, also called research strategies: *inductive, deductive, retroductive and abductive* (Table 3.1). Blaikie (2007, 2009) contended that each of the four approaches to knowledge accumulation provide a distinctly different way of acquiring new knowledge. Whilst Blaikie (2007) sees induction and deduction as two logics of enquiry, which involve linear processes, abduction tends to involve more complex, iterative processes, which are unfolded in detail in the sections to follow.

The adoption of abduction as a knowledge accumulation approach in this study is driven by the unusual research context and case in focus, where complexity and uncertainty define the new governance and funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. Responding to the overarching aim and objectives of this study requires a continuous immersion in the case in order to understand organisational change and facilitate an in-depth study of the enactment and practice of DL. It also calls for the adoption of a multi-phase data collection approach, which allows for the investigation of organisational change over a set period of time in an iterative fashion. The involvement of iterative processes is the heart of the abductive logic of enquiry, unlike induction and deduction, which both involve linear processes of knowledge accumulation

and as such, they may not fully allow for responding to the overarching aim and objectives.

As already pointed out in the introduction to this chapter, this study’s approach to knowledge accumulation draws on Blaikie’s (2007) logic of acquiring new knowledge through the adoption of abduction (Peirce 1934) throughout the three phases of data collection informed by the adopted methodological framework. Abduction is well placed to develop new theory and elaborate it iteratively and it does so, according to Blaikie (2007), through the adoption of relativism as an ontological stance and constructionism as an epistemological stance (Table 3.1). Both stances are discussed further in this chapter. The appropriateness of abduction in relation to this study’s overarching aim and objectives is now discussed through common characteristics and defining features of the abductive reasoning to knowledge accumulation, namely:

- Abduction is grounded in the relationship between theory and data;
- Abduction has its focus on surprising or unusual research evidence; and
- Abduction accepts that phenomena are seen in a particular way (Peirce 1934; Blaikie 2007, 2009).

	Inductive	Deductive	Retroductive	Abductive
Aim	Establish universal generalisations to be used as pattern explanations	Test theories, to eliminate the false ones and confirm the survivor	Discover underlying mechanisms to explain observed regularities	To describe and understand social life in terms of social actors’ motives and understanding
Ontology	Realism	Realism	Realism	Relativism
Epistemology	Pragmatism	Positivism;	Neo-realism	Constructionism
Start/Inputs	Accumulate observations of data	Identify a regularity to be explained	Document and model regularity	Discover concepts, meanings and motives
Finish/Outputs	Produce generalisations and use this ‘laws’ as patterns to explain further observations	Construct a theory and deduce hypotheses; test them by matching them with data	Construct a hypothetical model of a mechanism; find it by observation and/or experiment	Produce technical accounts and/or develop a theory and elaborate it iteratively

Table 3.1. Core Approaches to Knowledge Accumulation (Blaikie 2007; Blaikie 2009; David and Sutton 2011).

3.3.1 *Abduction is grounded in the relationship between theory and data*

The relationship between theory and data is an interactive process (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012; Timmermans and Tavory 2012), it often occurs in unpredictable and unexpected manner (Bendassolli 2013), and as such, it often contributes to generating novel theoretical insights. When a novel phenomenon is observed, e.g. the enactment and practice of DL on a strategic organisational or DMO level, one should establish a link with the existing literature in order to explore whether this phenomenon is truly novel (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). In light of this research, establishing such a link is captured in the iterative nature of undertaking: an abductive approach to acquiring knowledge and the fact that abduction starts with pre-conceptions which are, subsequently, turned into concepts based on carrying out further empirical investigations. The DMO Leadership Cycle, discussed in detail below, can be seen as a concept, which started with a pre-conception.

As Peirce (1934) contends, researchers must start from somewhere. Grounded in the fixation of beliefs, the starting point of abduction then involves exploring data and finding a pattern, which both contribute to the proposition of a plausible hypothesis (Yu 2006). This is a hypothesis, which is grounded in new empirical data and aims to explain what has been observed (Blaikie 2009). This starting point is not a proven or verified assumption, but rather a private flash of thought (Yu 2005). Wright (1999) argued that this starting point is also seen as a seed of creativity. Abduction therefore captures a process of creatively inferencing and building on these inferences with more data (Timmermans and Tavory 2012; Thagard and Shelley 1997). That inference is rational and scientific which enables the creation of new forms of knowledge (Reichertz 2009). According to Peirce (1934), abduction is the only logical operation that is able to introduce new ideas. Within the context of this research, the introduction of new ideas is mirrored in the idea that DMOs operating within a context, which advocates reduced state intervention and a collective, business-led approach to strategic destination decision-making, are presented with the opportunity to enact and practice DL as a response to the complexity and uncertainty within a new governance and funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England.

The next stage of the abductive approach, according to Blaikie (2009), is to generate further technical concepts, which build on initial concepts (a plausible hypothesis). Within the context of this study, further concepts are introduced through the DMO Leadership Cycle, which provides insights into how reshaped DMOs might enact and practise DL as a response to the new funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. As Blaikie (2009) argued, further stages beyond the generation of initial and technical concepts are not uncommon in the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation. This is reflected in the adopted, multi-phase methodological framework, which is covered in Section 3.9.

3.3.2 *Abduction has its focus on surprising or unusual research evidence*

The availability of surprising or unusual research evidence is at the core of the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation (Timmermans and Tavory 2012) and this section discusses the notion of surprising research evidence in the context of this study. Abduction is a development from the inductive stance of Grounded theory (Charmaz 2006), where the accumulation of novel theoretical contributions is driven exclusively by empirical data. Timmermans and Tavory (2012) argue that surprising or unusual research evidence is the product of the interplay between new empirical data and existing theoretical knowledge:

“In the context of research, abduction refers to an inferential creative process of producing new hypotheses and theories based on surprising research evidence ... it fits with the traditional grounded theory recommendation to move back and forth between data and theory iteratively.”

(Timmermans and Tavory 2012, p.170)

The abductive stance accepts that one looks for aspects that contradict or do not fit with existing theory (Thomson 2014) over the course of data exploration and familiarisation. Such novel or unusual insights are the starting point for generating new theoretical concepts and ideas (Timmermans and Tavory

2012); they are seen as surprising research evidence, which is the basis for creating new concepts to explain it (Agar 2010).

Within this context, the starting point for this study was a shift in the funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, where established concepts, such as destination marketing and management are challenged by emergent paradigms in the domain, namely leadership and its distributed dimension. Whilst the opportunity and also the need for DMOs to assume leadership functions and play a strategic destination decision-making function in their destinations has been covered by the Coalition's *Local Growth: Realising Every Place's Potential* White Paper as an important consideration within a new funding regime for DMOs in England (Hristov and Petrova 2015), how leadership functions are practised and who assumes responsibility for leadership within DMOs was not covered in the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. Further, the enactment and practice of leadership on a DMO level, which implies a shared or distributed form of leadership, has not been sufficiently covered in the DMO and destination literature to date (see Figure 2.A.1 in Chapter 2 A). This unusual or surprising insights point to phenomena which may not be fully explained or understood by the adoption of existing theoretical contributions in the domain of DMOs and destinations, e.g. destination management, destination marketing; nor they can be examined through theoretical contributions in the domain of leadership in organisations, e.g. 'heroic' leadership.

3.3.3 Abduction accepts that phenomena are seen in a particular way

The abductive approach to data accumulation accepts that investigated phenomena are seen in a particular way and there is no existing knowledge to explain it (Blaikie 2007, 2009). In this study, this is reflected in the case of a DMO establishing itself as an emergent leadership network, where there is no existing knowledge to explain this transition, nor is there available evidence from either academic and practitioner perspectives. This study is therefore aimed at the production of knowledge, which is aimed at the explanation of

emergent leadership development processes in a network of DMO member organisations, which functions, vision and mission have long been centred around orthodox destination marketing and management theories (see Chapter 2 A).

Going even further, Peirce (1934) contended that abduction should be seen as a process of forming an explanatory hypothesis based on the interaction between theory and data, and as such, reaching beyond existing theory, evaluating it and expanding on it. When translated into the context of this study, this captures the development of a conceptual contribution to explain and understand DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations (see Figure 2.1.2 in Chapter 2 A). The DMO Leadership Cycle is a product of the interplay between existing theoretical contributions in the domain of DMOs and destinations and Phase I empirical data, which has been revealed in Chapter 2 A as a logical continuation to the current progress in this domain. This initial conceptual contribution, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle introduced in Chapter 2 A, is to be advanced by further empirical insights derived from Phase II and III of the adopted methodological framework. As such, the adopted methodological framework takes into account Dubois and Gadde's (2002) argument that novel conceptual ideas should evolve in the course of a study, where further empirical observations inspire changes of the view of existing theory and vice versa.

The DMO Leadership Cycle along with the indicative definition of DMOs serving as leadership networks and the set of propositions then both serve as an input for the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation (see Table 3.1). This study aims to further develop, refine and expand on the underpinning initial conceptual contribution through a process of a continuous iteration, which is reflected in the developed and employed multi-method, three-phase methodological framework. The abductive approach to knowledge accumulation is then embedded in this study, which seeks to investigate, analyse and theorise on how reshaped DMOs enact and practise DL; and serve as leadership networks following a call for organisational transformation within a new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. This follows Blaikie's (2007) logic of enquiring new knowledge, where abduction is well-placed to facilitate the development of new theoretical perspectives and elaborate them

iteratively through the adoption of relativism as ontological stance and constructionism as epistemological stance.

3.4 Ontological stance: Relativism

Ontology is a fundamental branch of philosophy (Blaikie 2007) and is concerned with the nature of social reality, i.e. the starting point for most of the debates among philosophers (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Lincoln et al. 2011). In broad terms, the dispute resulting in much tension in academia is between *realism* and *relativism* (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012), as two largely contrasting stances of ontology. *Realism* or *objective reality* (Lincoln and Guba 1985) assumes that there is a single truth and hence, facts exist and can be revealed (Stacey 2007). On the other hand, *relativism vis-à-vis constructed reality* (Lincoln and Guba 1985) accepts the existence of multiple truths and facts, which are grounded in the observer's viewpoint. The starting point of relativism implies that there is no single reality that can be investigated and discovered. Instead, Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) suggest that many perspectives on the issue under investigation exist.

The adopted in this study relativist ontological position assumes that different observers may hold different worldviews (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012). Within the context of this study, this is reflected in the collective of individuals behind DMO member organisations, along with policy makers and industry practitioners, who provide contrasting accounts on the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level over three phases of data collection. The relativist's reality is then what a collective of human beings make or construct (Blaikie 2007). The relativist's reality claims the existence of fundamental differences between natural and social phenomena, where humans unlike things in nature, have culture and live in a world of their shared constructions and interpretations (Blaikie 2007; Lincoln and Guba 1985).

Within the social sciences the investigator is then interested in the behaviour of people, rather than objects (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012). Within the context of this research, this is achieved by the adoption of a range of structural

and relational properties, which are aimed at the co-construction of leadership behaviour of individuals behind member organisations in DMK during Phase II of the adopted methodological framework. Further, Blaikie (2007) contended that social action is not a mere behaviour but, instead, involves a process of meaning-giving. It is the meanings and interpretations created and maintained by social actors involved in processes of collectively constructing social reality (Blaikie 2007) and in turn, generating novel insights and thus contributing to theory development. Within the context of this research, this is explored throughout Phase III of the adopted in this study methodological framework, where individuals representing member organisations in DMK collectively construct the social reality through interpretation and meaning-giving of visual empirical insights derived from Phase II.

3.5 Epistemological stance: Constructionism

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy dealing with the grounds by which knowledge about the world can be obtained and assessed (David and Sutton 2011; Eriksson and Kovalainen 2008). Epistemology is a theory or science of the methods or grounds of knowledge (Blaikie 2007) and as such, epistemology is concerned with the fundamental question of how human beings come to have knowledge of the world around them (Denzin and Lincoln 2003). Drawing on the two branches of *constructionist* epistemology, namely *constructivism* and *constructionism*, knowledge accumulation can be seen as either individual or social activity (Blaikie 2007).

It is the constructivist branch, also known as *radical constructivism* (Von Glasersfeld 1984) on one side, which refers to the meaning-giving activity of the individual mind to cognitive processes. The *constructionism* branch, also known as *social constructionism* (Gergen 1999), on the other hand, is linked to inter-subjectively shared knowledge, where meaning-giving is social and collective, rather than individual process. Hence, where constructivism is interested in individualistic accumulation of knowledge, i.e. psychological approach, constructionism, in contrast, sees the process of acquiring understanding of the

surrounding world as a collective effort, i.e. a sociological approach. The constructionism branch is the one adopted in this research, where social interactions serve to explain how DL is collectively enacted and practised within a network of individuals providing leadership functions in DMO member organisations.

Further, social constructionist epistemology is concerned with the provision of a rich picture of life and behaviour in organisations and groups (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012). This is the case of this study, which conducts an in-depth, exploratory and network investigation during Phase I and Phase II of the adopted methodological framework. Social constructionism also indicates a worldview where social truths are collectively constructed through interaction between people aiming towards concurrence, but still open to new interpretations as information, scope and knowledge develop and progress (Burr, 2015; Guba and Lincoln 2005; Corbin and Strauss 2008; Pernecky 2007; Robson 2011; Bryman 2012; Easterby-Smith et al. 2012). This is the case with this study, where evidence of the enactment and practice of DL is collectively constructed by multiple individuals, leaders of DMO member organisations, through interactions aimed at exchange of communication and developmental resources.

Within the context of the wider leadership and organisational literature, social constructionism is closely aligned with leadership development processes (Carroll and Levy 2010; Mabey 2013), as leadership development in organisations implies processes of social construction (Fairhurst and Grant 2010; Uhl-Bien 2006). Thus the interaction of individuals representing a collective of DMO member organisations supports the co-construction of the leadership DMO network and assist in providing further insights on how multiple individuals in the network enact and practice DL.

3.6 The relationship between constructionism and network approaches to enquiry

Drawing on network theory (Wassermann and Faust 1994) and its practitioner tool, SNA (Borgatti et al. 2013), this study investigates the key question in focus

through the lenses of the above philosophical underpinning, namely constructionism. One may argue that the contrasting concepts of constructionism – concerned with qualitative approaches to data collection and analysis (Gergen 1999; Talja et al. 2005) – and SNA – largely interested in quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis (Cross et al. 2002; Conway 2014) – may not be able to find common ground. As discussed in the previous section, constructionism assumes that reality is created in the process of communication (Campbell 2000). Despite being a quantitative approach, network theory and SNA are both defined by co-created reality, where human interactions within networks are at the very essence of SNA. Reality in network enquiry is created through human interactions and communication (Borgatti and Molina 2005).

Unlike prominent quantitative approaches to data collection and analysis, SNA makes use of relational (Scott 2011), in contrast to the more widely-accepted and utilised attribute data (see Chapter 2 C). Relational data is interested in establishing links within a collective of social actors and examines the nature, depth and impact of this relationship (Scott 2012). Constructionism also has its focus on the network of interactions between individuals in the process of communication (Blaikie 2009; Campbell et al. 1994) and as such, it arguably fits well with quantitative network approaches, such as SNA.

3.7 Strategy of enquiry: The Case Study method and its role in theory-building

Case study is a strategy of enquiry, which facilitates the study of an emergent phenomenon, which is difficult to separate from its context, whilst being important to study within it in order to understand the dynamics of the setting (Halinen and Tornroos 2003; Stake 2005; Yin 2009; Farquhar 2012). The case study strategy of enquiry provides concrete, context-dependent knowledge (Flyvbjerg 2011), which in the case of this study takes into account the organisational environment of the DMO in focus. The adopted case study is exploratory in nature (Thomas 2011), as it is undertaken when the understanding of a phenomenon is limited and not much is known about the

characteristics of its context (Sekaran 2003). This is the case of this study, where DMOs in transition are required to rethink their *modus operandi*, function within a new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, where the funding dimension of this landscape brings a considerable degree of uncertainty.

Further, the case study strategy of enquiry seeks to identify and describe, before it attempts to analyse and theorise (Chadderton and Torrance 2011) and as such, the case study places description before explanation. Within this context, a preliminary work to identify and describe the organisation and its setting (Sekaran 2000), which also reflects on an organisational transformation in a specific contemporary context (Locke 2001), is seen as an important first step prior to commencing with in-depth case analysis and theory-building. Such initial immersion into the organisation (i.e. a DMO) and its organisational context (i.e. a new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England) has been carried out during Phase I of the adopted methodological framework (Figure 4.1).

One of the academic pioneers of case study methodology Yin (1984, 1994, 2009) argued that case study is the preferred strategy when *how* or *why* questions are raised, when the researcher has little control over events; and when the focus of the case is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context. The DMO and destination-specific literature has also echoed that the case study methodology is well-positioned to facilitate in-depth investigations into emergent trends in the field (Dredge 2006; Strobl and Peters 2013). Yin (1994, 2009), in addition, emphasised the practitioner perspective of the case study methodology and pointed to a number of settings corresponding to the nature of this study and where the approach can be adopted successfully:

- In cases of policy development and public administration;
- When one conducts organisational and management studies;
- In research, which involves city and regional planning (Yin 1994, 2009).

Yin's (1984, 1994, 2009) stance is supported by Fiss (2009), who contended that one can distinguish the case study from other organisational research strategies by its understanding of organisational phenomena within a specific

context. A case is a holistic entity and in order to understand it, one should study it in its entirety (Fiss 2009; Flyvbjerg 2011; Sekaran 2003) as is the case of this study, where the adopted methodological framework is designed to allow for an in-depth investigation of the organisation and its setting through three interconnected phases of data collection (Figure 4.1).

Case studies have a long and distinguished history in the study of organisations and many of the most highly regarded and influential studies in the organisation and management literature have adopted the case study approach (see Berg 1968; Dietz and Gillespie 2012). Other scholars have argued that case studies may even form the cornerstone, on which modern organisation theory has been built (see Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007), often through the accumulation of rich insights into contemporary organisations. The closeness of the case study approach to the experience of life in organisations and the ability to capture complexity of organisational phenomena make the approach attractive to both industry practitioners and academics (Fiss 2009). This is the case of the underpinning study, which aims to build upon the existing body of theoretical contributions and practice intelligence in the field of MDOs and destinations through the adoption of an in-depth case study.

The case study strategy of enquiry also assumes that social reality is created through social interactions (see Stake 1995, 2005; Yin 2009) similarly to the case of this study, where the enactment and practice of DL is investigated within a socially-constructed network of senior leadership personnel that represent DMO member organisations. The adopted methodological framework which is underpinned by an in-depth case study approach, enables senior leadership in a number of DMO member organisations to collectively construct the social reality of the recent phenomena and its organisational context. This involves the enactment and practice of DL by a collective of DMO member organisations. The case study strategy of enquiry is, therefore, very much within the social constructionist perspective of social science (see Chadderton and Torrance 2011) and as such, it defines the adopted set of philosophical approaches in this study discussed at the outset of this chapter.

Theory-building is central to this study, where empirical data is aimed at formulating a response to some key challenges to and opportunities for the

enactment and practice of DL in reshaped DMOs and contribute to the construction of a set of practical outputs, which have implications for leadership practice in reshaped DMOs. Day et al. (2014) contended that conducting further enquiry into leadership development is a promising direction for theory building. Widely supported by the academia (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007; Hristov 2015; Ragin and Schneider 2011; Siggelkow 2007), the case study strategy of enquiry is a well-placed methodological approach to facilitate theory-building. This approach can be applied to theory-building into processes and practices in the development of leadership and its distributed dimension.

The case study strategy of enquiry also provides opportunities to challenge existing theory, and as such, it supports scholars in their efforts to revise, refine and build upon it (Ragin and Schneider 2011). Building theory from case study data, according to Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), is an approach that uses one or more cases to produce theoretical constructs through the adoption of a recursive cycle among the extant literature, case data and emergent theory. Embedded within and across cases, theoretical constructs derived from case study data are seen as emergent (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). Within the context of this research, this captures evidence of emergent leadership practice on a DMO level (Hristov and Zehrer 2015) leading to the development of an initial theoretical contribution (see Chapter 2 A), which aims to explain how reshaped DMOs can serve as leadership networks in destinations, i.e. simplify and deconstruct the phenomenon and its setting as per Objective A. Simplifying complex reality is a distinct characteristic of developing concepts and theoretical constructs (Siggelkow 2007). Firmly embedded in the case, the above theoretical construct or contribution is then advanced by empirical evidence provided by Phase I and Phase III outcomes as discussed in Chapter 4 A and Chapter 4 C respectively.

Despite that a number of academics have questioned the role of case studies in providing a strong basis for scientific generalisation and theory building (Weick 1969; Yin 1994), academia in general terms have argued that “learning from a particular case should be considered a strength rather than a weakness” (Dubois and Gadde 2002, p.554). Within this content, Flyvbjerg (2011) felt that a dense case study is more useful for the practitioner and more interesting for social theory than a high level of generalisations of theory. What

is even more, Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007) and Siggelkow (2007) contended that one can theorise on a single case study. A single case study, as contended by Yin (1994), usually captures a specific example, generates an in-depth account and often provides opportunities for unusual research access to organisations. This has been the case with this research, where the researcher has the opportunity to immerse themselves in the case organisation and its context on a number of occasions as part of developing the DMP for DMK and Milton Keynes (see Hristov and Petrova 2015).

The adoption of a case study strategy of enquiry also facilitates deep probing, particularly when the enquiry is framed around multiple empirical data sources (Dubois and Gadde 2002) and this has also been the case with this research, where the methodological framework involves a three-phase, mixed-method approach. Deep probing allows one to gain specific insights that other organisations would not be able to provide (Siggelkow 2007). In light of this study, the rationale behind deep-probing DMK is then three-fold:

- The researcher's prior involvement provides further opportunities to gain an insider perspective into the organisation and its context;
- The support of gatekeepers in the face of the founding and current CEOs, who facilitate wider access to the investigated DMO;
- DMK as an organisation and destination Milton Keynes capture a case that is worth exploring - it provides insights into the challenges facing an emerging destination.

As Yin (1994) contends, a single case often captures a specific example and as such, it provides opportunities for a wider access to organisations and rich data. This study is aimed at providing such rich picture as the basis of theory-building and this is achieved through an in-depth, continuous engagement with the organisation and its context via the adopted methodological framework. As argued by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007),

“Somewhat surprisingly, single cases can enable the creation of more complicated theories than multiple cases, because single-case

researchers can fit their theory exactly to the many details of a particular case.”

(Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007)

This statement is then aligned to this study, which does not aim to provide surface knowledge as it is often the case with employing multiple case studies as argued by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007). Instead, this study enquires into a single in-depth case in order to derive meaningful and rich data, which can contribute to theory-building. Further, it is important to note that the overarching aim of this study is better addressed by involving theory-building an not theory-testing enquiry as there is no existing knowledge on how DMOs serve as leadership networks in destination (Hristov and Zehrer 2015) and this study aims to produce such theoretical insights. Theory-driven research questions extend existing theory (Lee et al. 1999) that being the reason why the study revisits traditional organisational literature domains, namely management, governance and leadership in the context of DMOs in order to arrive at the concept of DL and the need for researching it further on a more strategic organisational or indeed DMO level (see Chapter 2 A).

The study has acknowledged current calls from academia to demonstrate a close connection between empirical evidence and emergent theory (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). This is evidenced in the adopted Abductive approach to knowledge accumulation in constructionist studies, which was discussed in detail at the outset of this chapter.

3.8 Unit of investigation

3.8.1 The network of DMO member organisations

DMK was established in 2006 with a stable membership base by 13 founding organisations representing LAs, businesses, sustainability trusts and community organisations. The sustainable funding structure of DMK was guaranteed by the Milton Keynes Council, providing significant support to the DMO prior to the new funding regime introduced by the 2010 coalition

government. This was complemented by other sources of funding, such as membership fees. The organisation was established as the official tourist information service provider for Milton Keynes, thus exercising predominantly marketing functions (Hristov and Petrova 2015). So, compared to other smaller DMOs, DMK's established membership base offered stability and existing structure. Still, within a new political and economic context (Coles et al. 2014), DMK is expected to take on board a wider array of responsibilities for the destination.

DMK functions as an independent, not-for-profit company and its funding structure includes a mixture of membership fees, some grants from Milton Keynes Council and commissions from its members (Hristov and Petrova 2015). DMK is an official DMO network of key destination businesses, council and other public bodies, along with a diverse mix of not-for-profit and community organisations. Having clear geographic boundaries, the network of DMK covers 83 member organisations located in central Milton Keynes and the surrounding market (Hristov and Petrova 2015). Among the core objectives of DMK are to encourage inward investment, to promote Milton Keynes as a viable visitor destination, and explore opportunities in developing further business, leisure, heritage and other types of both urban and rural destination products (DMK 2014). Such activities are expected to be carried out under the guidance of the DMP and by involving key interested destination actors who serve businesses, local government and third sector organisations. DMK boast prior successful collaborative projects such as winning the bid for hosting Rugby World Cup games in 2015, which required close collaborative working between many of its key members and stakeholders (DMK 2013).

Milton Keynes is an emerging destination, yet in a process of developing clear tourism and visitor offering, as such in need of a thorough strategic consideration. It thus captures an excellent study setting for the adaptation of a functioning DMO to the new circumstances described above, and in particular to examine the collaborative strategic considerations and the process of applying innovative policy approaches to navigate the work of reshaped DMOs, i.e. the recently introduced DMPs. This plethora of challenges and opportunities for DMK within a new landscape for DMO and destinations in England is subject of discussion in Chapter 4 A.

3.8.2 *The geography*

Milton Keynes was formally designated as a new town in 1967 (The London Gazette 1967) and it continues to be one of the fastest growing in the UK (Hopkins 2013). Milton Keynes boasts a strong local economy. It is projected to be amongst the forerunning cities² in England to lead the country out of recession (Centre for Cities 2012; DMK 2014).

Milton Keynes is not a purely urban destination. Instead, it is an amalgam of both urban and rural, built and natural environs providing a range of destination products and experiences, which makes Milton Keynes attractive to visitors (Hristov and Petrova 2015). Milton Keynes is urban in its core, but with a number of rural satellite market towns providing opportunities to develop heritage tourism; it encapsulates 5,000 acres of parkland and green spaces (The Parks Trust 2014), which provide a range of water and other outdoor sports and leisure activities, seen to enhance the destination's green image; it is an emerging destination where sustainability is at the forefront of the local development agenda (Milton Keynes Council Core Strategy 2013).

Unlike prominent English destinations and their local lead organisations (e.g. Marketing Manchester, City of London, Visit Brighton), destination Milton Keynes presents a case that is well placed to capture the destination's challenges and opportunities of less-prominent, yet largely important (as per the 2010 coalition government's *localism* agenda for England – see Penrose 2011) urban and rural destinations face within the new funding and governance landscape in England. Less-prominent and alternative explanations are best placed to provide novice insights into the observed phenomenon, i.e. investigating an innovative approach to policy development and how it has been translated into practice within an emerging destination. Indeed, there is "little methodological value in gathering confirming cases" (Timmermans and Tavory 2012, p.180).

Located at the beginning of its destination lifecycle (Butler 1980), Milton Keynes is an emerging and relatively unexplored destination, which is at the heart of the South East Midlands region. In a seminal paper, Butler's (1980)

² Although Milton Keynes was referred to as a city (by both sources - DMK and the Centre for Cities), it is not officially designated as such.

introduced a conceptual model to capture the evolution of tourism destinations involving six contrasting stages. In line with this framework, Milton Keynes is in a stage of involvement (building upon its existing product portfolio and visitor infrastructure) towards development (establishing a well-defined visitor market area and further expansion). Arguably, within a globalised visitor economy and market, emerging destinations are the ones under pressure to deliver value (Halkier et al. 2014). However, partnerships emerge and tend to work more effectively in early stages of destination development, and in less mature tourism and visitor destinations (Fyall et al. 2009). As such the case of DMK may offer a pertinent insight into how less established destinations in the UK adapt to this context and in so doing, support transferability and may offer generalizability opportunities. Milton Keynes is an emerging destination providing a range of core tourism products to suit business, leisure and heritage visitors.

Clearly, Milton Keynes is a growing destination, yet in a process of developing clear tourism and visitor offering. The existing strong collaborative culture of destination organisations and natural, historic and social contexts provide scope for growth and strategic consideration. It thus provides a worthwhile study setting for the adaptation of a functioning DMO to the new circumstances of the political and economic environment discussed in Chapter I.

3.9 Methodological framework

Informed by three prominent literature domains within the broad organisational and leadership literature, namely DMOs and destinations, DL and network theory, this study adopts a mixed method approach and involves three main phases of data collection and analysis. As such the approach serves as the basis of generating new knowledge on the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level (Hristov 2015). Both industry practitioners and academia have been both advocating and progressively employing mixed methods with the aim to derive complementary data (Conti and Doreian 2010; Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Edwards and Crossley 2009) and this study aims to build on this trend by

adopting a mixed method, three-phase approach, which allows for a prolonged engagement with the organisation in focus. From a generic, organisation perspective, Conway (2014) contended that while quantitative approaches may be particularly useful in revealing the structure of an organisational network, 'thick' data largely derived from interviews and participant observation is more effective in providing insights into processes, relational content and context of interaction among network actors. From a DL perspective, emergent DL practice requires a multi-level approach to research (Yammarino and Dansereau 2008), which has been addressed in this study by developing of a multi-phase (Phase I, II and III) methodological framework. There is a consensus between academic and practice that network studies are often seen as both pieces of academic enquiry (Prell 2012) and applied projects attempting to deliver a set of practical outputs (Conway 2014; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). This study responds to this consensus through adopting a three-phase methodological framework with a focus on the visual strand of SNA, where the latter is arguably more practitioner-friendly (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010) than traditional SNA with focus on descriptive statistics. The adopted methodological framework builds on an earlier contribution by Hristov (2015), where the three-phase framework for investigating DMOs through the lens of network analysis was first introduced.

In order to provide a response to the above overall aim and objectives, this study enquires into a DMO network called Destination Milton Keynes (DMK), which involves 83 member organisations representing a range of businesses, local authorities and not-for-profit organisations. Milton Keynes. The wider DMK's policy network is also studied as DMK does not operate in isolation and thus organisations, such as SEMLEP and VisitEngland are considered as key organisations within the new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (Hristov 2014). LEPs and VisitEngland have been seen as allies to DMOs (Coles et al. 2014; Hristov 2014) and as such, they have the capacity to provide key resources and expertise to the membership organisation in focus. In other words, they may well be seen as key strategic partners to DMK in developing and exercising leadership on a regional level and as such, they deserve further attention (Coles et al. 2014; Hristov and Petrova 2015).

In light of the above aim and objectives and having explored the key literature on networks in destinations and destination organisations, along with key challenges and opportunities in undertaking such enquiry on a DMO level discussed in chapters 2 C and D, this study developed and adopted a three-phase, mixed-method framework as a response to these challenges and opportunities. The study involves three contrasting, yet interconnected phases of data collection and analysis, namely Phase I, II and III, which are depicted in Figure 4.1. The adopted methodological framework facilitates an in-depth investigation into the organisation and its operational context and as such, it aims to provide a response to the key question in focus, i.e. the overarching aim.

3.9.1 Preliminary enquiry (Phase I)

Phase I Overview

Phase I involves both preliminary and exploratory (*qualitative*) investigation and addresses objectives A and B in this study. It involves a blend of policy network analysis (Dredge 2006) undertaken through a desk-based research, participant observation (Conway 2014), case immersion (Packer 2010; Stablein 2006) and semi-structured expert interviews (Flick 2009). The policy network analysis draws on an extensive desktop research utilising secondary data, such as the latest government and industry policies and papers. The policy network analysis has the task to explore the shifting landscape of DMOs and destinations in England, which is influenced by recent political and economic disruptions on a global-local level. The policy network analysis also identifies other organisations of strategic importance to DMOs within this new policy network, in this case current and prospective DMK partner organisations.

Further, participant observation is aimed at SEMLEP's VEG group, where the researcher's active involvement in VEG meetings provides insights into strategic discussions, proposals, plans and strategies involving DMK and other organisations operation on a policy network level. Participant observation is aimed at identifying emergent leadership practice on policy network level.

Case immersion (Stablein 2006) is a suitable research approach when organisations are in focus and is often associated with ethnography (Packer 2010). Case immersion in the context of this research indicates that the researcher has been actively involved in one or more aspects of the work of the organisation in focus, namely DMK. This is evidenced in the researcher's involvement in both strategic consultations and also in the development of the new DMP for DMK and Milton Keynes. During this involvement, the researcher sought evidence of change occurring in the organisation in focus, evidence of an emergent joined up approach to strategic destination decision-making amongst member organisations within DMK at the time of developing the DMP. An emergent joined up approach to strategic destination decision-making provides evidence of the enactment of DL in DMK, which has been captured in the Plan. Semi-structured expert interviews complement the policy network analysis and serve to define the political and economic dimensions of the operational environment for DMK triggering change in the membership organisation. They enquire into the unit of analysis (DMK) and unfold the general structure and characteristics of the investigated destination management network, such as sector-type organisations involved. Semi-structured expert interviews also aim to examine initial organisational change in DMK since the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*, along with shifting DMK priorities and vision for its organisation and the destination.

The rationale behind the multi-method approach during Phase I of the adopted methodological framework reflect the opportunity to uncover initial processes of organisational transformation of DMK fuelled by recent shifts in the operational environment, such as preliminary insights into how DMK member organisations collectively enact and develop leadership functions and serve as a leadership network in its destination. Phase I then aims to establish an initial conceptual framework to illustrate how reshaped DMOs serve as leadership networks in destinations.

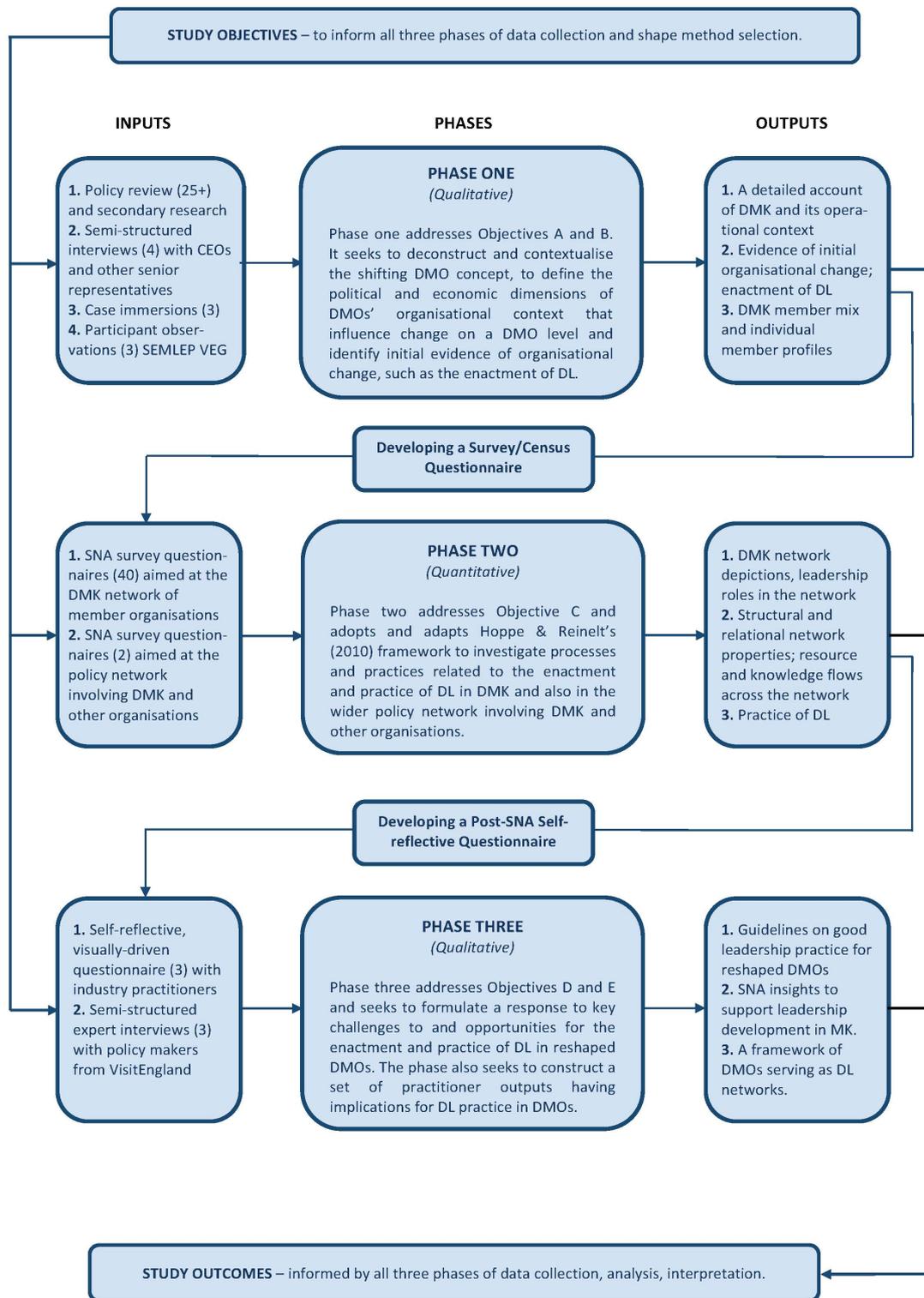


Figure 3.1. Adopted Three-Phase Methodological Framework

Specifying network boundaries (Laumann 1989) or whom to consider as part of the network is often problematic when destinations are the key unit of analysis but this is not the case with DMOs. Establishing rules of inclusion is a

straightforward process when studying DMK. Li (2013) provided a discussion into network boundary specification approaches, where attributes of nodes played a key role in defining the scope of a network. An approach, which takes into consideration the attributes of nodes in defining a boundary by a recognised group membership (Li 2013) is the one adopted by this study as all nodes considered to be part of the network are either corporate or non-corporate members of the DMO. Hence, the underpinning methodological framework accepts that network boundaries are defined by the number of members on-board DMK. In other words, in SNA inquiry carried out on an organisational (e.g. DMO) level boundaries are defined by members of that organisation, i.e. non-DMO members operating in the same destination are considered to be outside the investigated network and are therefore not included in the investigation.

By employing the above ‘thick’ approaches to generating new knowledge, Phase I aims to deconstruct and contextualise the shifting DMO concept and define the political and economic dimensions of DMOs’ organisational context that influence change on a DMO level. Phase I also identifies initial evidence of organisational change within the DMO in focus influenced by shifts in the organisational context.

Phase I Methodological Tools and Approaches

Underpinning methodological approaches adopted during this first phase included:

- Semi-structured expert interviews;
- Secondary (desk-based) research;
- Participant observation;
- Case Immersion.

Refer to Appendix 2a for a detailed description of the main questionnaire used as part of the conducted semi-structured expert interviews.

Underpinning methodological tools for data analysis and interpretation adopted during this first phase included:

- NVivo10 – a qualitative data analysis tool, which has been used in assisting in the analysis of thick data through the development of a coding scheme with the aim to uncover emergent themes related to the first two objectives of the study;
- Tableau – a quantitative data analysis tool, which has been used for longitudinal organisational data due to its data visualisation strengths.

Phase I Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling (Bryman 2012) is adopted as part of the semi-structured interviews carried out during this first phase. The aim is to involve both the founding and current CEOs of DMK and the CEO to build upon the policy network analysis derived from the secondary (desk-based) research.

- Both are well-placed to provide in-depth account of the organisation. Whilst the Founding CEO of DMK can provide a historic perspective of the organisation, the current CEO can reveal the latest developments around DMK and its operational environment.
- SEMLEP's CEO is well-placed to provide a regional perspective into destination leadership and organisations involved in Milton Keynes and the South-East Midlands geography. LEPs are seen as key strategic delivery partners of DMOs in England (Hristov and Petrova 2015).
- FSB's Business Development Manager, who is also a SEMLEP Visitor Economy Group Member and thus is well-placed to provide an insider's perspective into SEMLEP's VEG.

Phase 1 Target sample

Based on the above sampling technique, and having in mind that this first phase is an exploratory one, the Phase I target sample included:

- Jackie Inskipp (Destination Milton Keynes, Former CEO);
- Steven Gordon-Wilson (Destination Milton Keynes, CEO);
- Daniel Charles Mouawad (South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership, CEO);
- Caron Kendall (Former DMO CEO, SEMLEP Visitor Economy Group Member, Federation of Small Businesses for Beds, Cambs and Herts, Development Manager)

In addition to interviews, the researcher had the opportunity to take part in strategic SEMLEP VEG meetings to further explore the role of the wider policy network involving SEMLEP and other organisations interested in strategic destination decision-making in Milton Keynes and the South-East Midlands geography (see Appendix 3a for details on the achieved Phase I sample).

Phase I Position of the Researcher

The position adopted by the researcher during this first phase is emic (insider) perspective (see Morey and Luthans 1984). Adopting an insider perspective during this exploratory phase aims to help understand the organisation and its operational environment and uncover initial processes of organisational change or transformation, in this case evidence of the enactment of DL on a DMO level, i.e. on board DMK. Evidence of the adopted emic position of the researcher in Phase I has been demonstrated on two occasions:

- Participation in SEMLEP VEG meetings and DMK conferences;
- Adoption of a proactive role in co-shaping the DMP for DMK and Milton Keynes.

Phase I Ethical Considerations

Important ethical procedures were followed during Phase I in order to introduce target participants to the nature of the undertaken preliminary study, which

helps them make an informed decision as to whether to participate in it or not. Target participants were also provided with details on matters of anonymity and the adopted approach to data treatment (from data collection, through to data analysis and presentation). The ethical procedures followed during this phase included the use of:

- Informed Consent Letter for Phase I (see Appendix 2b);
- Additional Letter of Agreement for Phase I (see Appendix 2c).

3.9.2 Network enquiry (Phase II)

Phase II Overview

Phase II involves a complete network (*quantitative*) study, which is aimed at all DMK member organisations and an ego network study, which is aimed at both DMK's founding and current CEOs. Phase II aims to address Objective C of this study (*Figure 4.1*). Where the complete network study investigates processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL within the network of DMK member organisations, the ego network study enquires into similar processes and practices beyond this network of DMK member organisations and is therefore aimed at DMK's wider policy network. In both cases, Phase II aims to build on Phase I-identified organisational change, such as initial evidence of the enactment of DL on a DMO level and within DMK's policy network. Phase II and the network study are guided by Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, which is a set of both generic and specific organisational network questions for evaluating leadership development initiatives in networks embedded in formal organisations. Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, which brings together the leadership paradigm and network theory (its practitioner tool - SNA), is discussed in detail in Chapter 4 B. Figure 3.2 depicts the route taken in this study with regard to the adoption and adaptation of the framework by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010).

Academia advocates that understanding the process of leadership development implies understanding of the development of social interactions

within that process (Day et al. 2014; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010), which in light of this research, has been undertaken by adopting a visually-driven SNA approach. The adopted SNA approach allows for the DMO in focus to be conceptualised and thus presented as a leadership network of organisations, which provide insights into collective strategic destination decision-making. The rationale behind the adoption of such approach is based on Phase I empirical evidence of emergent DL practice, namely the DMP. The DMP is seen as evidence of leadership development initiative and also as an initial evidence of the enactment of DL practice on board DMK. This is demonstrated through the discussion of Phase I outcomes (Chapter 4 A).

In addition to an investigation into processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL within the network of DMK member organisations and beyond, visually-driven network insights during this phase are used for raising questions (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). This opportunity to build on Phase II insights by posing further questions is covered in Phase III through the adoption of self-reflective, visually-driven questionnaires with senior industry practitioners representing DMK member organisations.

Further, Objective C is also interested in processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL on a wider policy network-level. DMK's policy network is a function of a wider leadership network, where DMK has the opportunity to take part in strategic destination decision-making with other key organisations operating on regional (e.g. LEPs) and national level (e.g. VisitEngland). This Phase II investigation is building on Phase I empirical evidence, where DMK's policy network was found to be just as important in local and regional leadership within a new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (see Hristov 2015). Phase II insights into the enactment and practice of DL between organisations in the wider policy network are taken further during Phase III through the adoption of a semi-structured expert interview with senior leadership in SEMLEP – a key organisation in DMK's policy network.

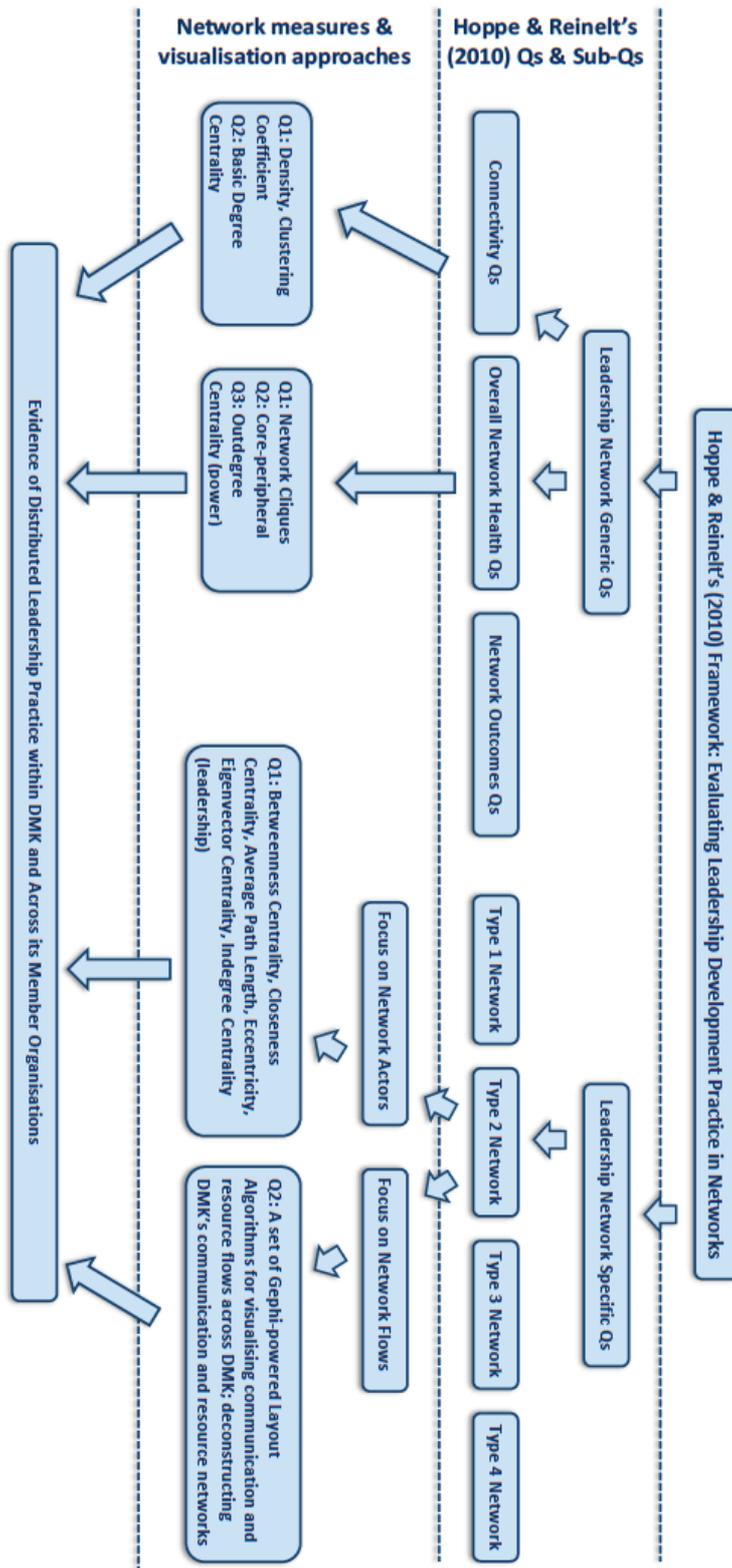


Figure 3.2. Adapting and Adopting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) Framework: The Route

Undertaking an SNA in organisations is a challenging task (Conway 2014; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010) and DMOs are not an exception (Hristov 2015).

The network literature advocates the adoption of a set of practical approaches to network data collection (Ahmed 2012; Borgatti and Molina 2005; Conway 2014; Kadushin 2005) in order to overcome common complexities linked to the collection of network data in organisational settings. Key ones are adopted during Phase II. Providing opportunities for data dissemination across DMK leadership and individual member organisations, the adoption of key messages to communicate the significance of research to respondents, the use of appropriate communication channels, along with the development of a simple and straightforward questionnaire content and design represent key responses, i.e. practical approaches to network data collection:

- *A Quid Pro Quo approach* (Borgatti and Molina 2005), also known as data dissemination shares the view that once data is processed and analysed, the researcher feeds research outputs back to the organisation in focus in return for being allowed to collect data. This study adopts such approach, where the Phase II network study invitation emphasised the fact that that upon completion of the study, key insights will be shared with Steven (CEO, DMK), Jackie (Founder and former CEO, DMK), in addition to all member organisations on board DMK, regardless of whether they participated in the project or not. Refer to Appendix 2d for a copy of the Phase II network study invitation.
- *The adoption of key messages* is another practical approach to network data collection, which is linked to dissemination of messages unveiling the importance of participation and potential benefits to target participants. SNA studies often have practical implications (Kadushin 2005) and this reflect on one of the potential benefits of contributing to network projects that can be articulated to target participants. With this in mind, this study articulates on a number of occasions that participation the network study during Phase II may well yield insights aimed at improving the operational effectiveness, knowledge and resource exchange within the network of DMK member organisations; empowerment of individual members and providing a voice in decision-making, which are closely linked to the enactment of DL. Examples of this approach are covered in Appendix 2d and Appendix 2e, where both

the email invitation and the introduction page of the network survey aim to articulate the potential benefits of participation to DMK member organisations.

- *Questionnaire content and design* (Conway 2014) is another practical approach to network data collection, which implies the development of a survey questionnaire in way, which reduces the time required for completion, whilst also following a straightforward approach to content and question structure. Matters of questionnaire design are indeed fundamental to network data completeness (Kossinets 2006). The survey questionnaire adopted in this study allows target participants to complete the survey in two steps – defining a personal network (mandatory step) and further questions related to the strength and impact of links in that personal network (optional step). Introduction to some key particularities of taking part in network studies are also important in content and design of SNA questionnaires (Hristov 2015) and thus captured in detail as part of the Phase II survey introduction. In addition, the developed survey introduction touches upon the specific nature of relational data and the involved ethical considerations, such as the network exposure of participating DMO member organisations. Appendix 2e provides a detailed description of the survey questionnaire and design, which is adopted during Phase II.

Phase II Methodological Tools and Approaches

Network studies are often carried out by means of survey questionnaires (Kadushin 2012). Network data may also be revealed through a variety of other methods and data sources, such as interviews (Cross et al. 2001), participant observation (Freeman et al. 1989), policies and related strategic documentation (Dredge 2006) to name a few. Each approach is considered to have its strengths and weaknesses (Conway 2014). Amidst a number of available network study approaches, survey questionnaires remain the dominant network data collection approach (Kadushin 2012), as they are able to provide a fuller

picture into studied organisations (Conway 2014). Survey questionnaire is therefore the network data collection approach adopted in this research.

Underpinning methodological approaches adopted during this second phase included:

- SNA Survey questionnaire aimed at DMK's network of member organisations (complete network); Refer to Appendix 2e and Appendix 2f for a detailed description of the online and hardcopy complete network survey questionnaire;
- SNA Survey questionnaire aimed at DMK's wider policy network (ego network). The online ego network survey questionnaire followed similar procedures to the complete network questionnaire as outlined in Appendix 2e and Appendix 2f.

Underpinning methodological tools for data analysis and interpretation adopted during this second phase included:

- Organisational Network Analysis (ONA) Survey platform (Optimice 2016), which allows for building an online version of the survey and provides opportunities to manage the data collection process. Refer to Appendix 2f for a hardcopy version of the adopted survey questionnaire.

Phase II Sampling Technique

Network research tends to study whole populations (e.g. all individuals belonging to a group, such as organisations) and this is often carried out by means of census, rather than by sample (Ahmed 2012). Adopting a census approach involves all individuals, organisations or entities in any given cohort (Galaskiewicz and Wasserman 1993). Collecting network data thus implies that network actors are not independent units of analysis (Scott 1991), but rather embedded in a myriad of social relations, as in the case of this study, where all target organisations are members of DMK.

Phase II Target sample

Within the context of the adopted sampling technique, the Phase II target sample includes a network of 83 member organisations on board DMK. They included businesses representing a number of sectors of the economy related to Milton Keynes, in addition to local authorities, such as Milton Keynes Council and a range of not-for-profit organisations. Refer to Appendix 1 for the full list (Roster) of target organisations and type of senior representatives within these organisations on board DMK. See Appendix 3a for details on the achieved Phase II sample.

Phase II Position of the Researcher

The position adopted by the researcher during this second phase is etic (outsider) perspective (see Young 2005). Adopting an etic or outsider perspective during this phase to provide a helicopter view of the organisation and its network of DMO member organisations in focus and identify a number of structural and relational properties, which are linked with the enactment and practice of DL.

Phase II Ethical Considerations

Important ethical procedures were followed during Phase I in order to introduce target participants to the nature of the undertaken preliminary study, which helps them make an informed decision as to whether to participate in it or not. Target participants were also provided with details on matters of anonymity, network visibility and the adopted approach to data treatment (from data collection, through to data analysis and presentation). The ethical procedures followed during this phase included the use of:

- Network Study Invitation for Phase II (see Appendix 2d);
- Introduction to SNA Study Questionnaire for Phase II (see Appendix 2e).

3.9.3 *Post-network enquiry (Phase III)*

Phase III Overview

Phase III involves a post-network study (*qualitative*) and seeks to address objectives D and E above through the perspective of both industry practitioners from DMK and SEMLEP and policy makers from VisitEngland:

- *Industry practitioners:* Industry practitioners representing member organisations in DMK have the task to interpret Phase II-derived structural and relational properties of the network in focus and visual data (network depictions) in light of developing DL practice; DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations definition and related propositions are also tested with insiders;
- *Policy makers:* Policy makers, who are external to the network of DMK member organisations are asked to build upon the conceptual contribution derived by Phase I by exploring its relevance to reshaped DMOs. Policy makers are asked to identify key challenges to and opportunities for developing leadership on a DMO level by examining the foundations of the DMO Leadership Cycle in addressing Objective D of this study.

Industry practitioners representing DMK member organisations and policy makers from VisitEngland do so by reflecting on Phase I and Phase II findings. Whilst industry practitioners draw on their expertise and experience with the DMO organisation in focus, policy makers provide a sector perspective, which covers England as opposed to DMK solely. During this phase, formulating a response to key challenges to and opportunities for developing network leadership capacity in reshaped DMOs is brought into the spotlight with the aim to advance the current knowledge on processes and practices in leadership development in reshaped DMOs. Phase II insights and Phase III participants both support the advancement of the DMO Leadership Cycle and its Leadership dimension in particular. They also contribute to the development of a set of guidelines on good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs. The latter aim to

strengthen the capacity of DMO networks to act collectively in light of the current landscape for DMOs and destinations.

In this final phase, network visualisations play a substantial role in fuelling the process of theory building, where the latter involves the development of guidelines on good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs. New insights into network investigations can emerge through further examining network depictions (Conway and Steward 1998; Moody et al. 2005) and this phase achieves this by involving Phase II participants in the face of senior leadership representatives of DMK member organisations. Within this context, self-reflective, visually-driven questionnaires pursue practitioner interpretation of network data obtained through Phase II where salient points linked to structural characteristics of the network (Scott et al. 2008a) and patterns of communication and resource exchange (Pforr et al. 2014) may require further exploration. Indeed, as contended by Biddex and Park (2008), network depictions are often used as part of the data collection process as a way of interacting with respondents, as in the case of this research, where Phase III participants build upon key Phase II outputs.

The final goal of the employed methodological framework and Phase III in particular is to construct a set of practitioner outputs, which have implications for reshaped DMOs and contribute to the existing knowledge of DL in a DMO context through theory-building. Social network approaches in studying leadership provide a context for theory-building (Li 2013). New knowledge may potentially result in constructing a set of practical outputs having implications for management and leadership practice on a DMO level. The latter aims to address Objective E of this study.

Phase III Methodological Tools and Approaches

Underpinning methodological approaches adopted during this third phase included:

- Self reflective, visually-driven questionnaires with senior industry practitioners representing DMK member organisations (electronic version);
- Self reflective visually-driven questionnaires with senior industry practitioners representing DMK member organisations (paper-based, posted version);
- Semi-structured expert interviews with policy makers from VisitEngland;
- Semi-structured expert interview with senior leadership in SEMLEP.

Refer to Appendix 2g for a detailed description of the self-reflective, visually-driven questionnaires aimed at industry practitioners. Refer to Appendix 2h for a detailed description of the semi-structured interview questionnaires aimed at policy makers. Refer to Appendix 2i for a detailed description of the semi-structured interview questionnaire aimed at senior leadership in SEMLEP. Underpinning methodological tools for data analysis and interpretation adopted during this third phase included:

- NVivo10, which is a software for qualitative data analysis;
- The DMO Leadership Cycle, which served as a guiding interview framework for policy makers involved at this stage.

Phase III Sampling Technique

DL, which is enacted on a DMO level is arguably grounded in sectoral diversity (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). This study adopts a diversity sampling approach (Andrew et al. 2011) towards its engagement with senior industry practitioners representing DMO member organisations. Diversity sampling involves actions, which seek to deliberately seek variation in the sample (Andrew et al. 2011), which in the case of this research involves variation in Phase II-identified DL champions on board DMK. The adopted diversity sampling approach has three dimensions to diversity of participating organisations:

- Firstly, the sampling approach undertaken includes at least one participant for each sector on board DMK to ensure sectoral diversity;
- At second, sampled DMK member organisations include a mixture of both corporate and non-corporate members to uncover the relationship between existing power relations and emergent DL practice across both membership tiers;
- Thirdly, the sample mirrors the six different types of leaders identified during Phase II of the adopted methodological framework, namely a mixture of network in-community leaders (CC-surfaced), network cross-community leaders (BC-surfaced), highly influential leaders (EC-surfaced), established leaders (IC-surfaced), emergent leaders (IC-surfaced) and resource-empowered leaders (developmental resources-surfaced).

A purposive sampling approach (Bryman 2012) is adopted as part of this study's engagement with policy makers from VisitEngland. The reason being that all three senior individuals representing VisitEngland have specific responsibilities under their remit, which cover themes, such as the destination management, strategic destination and DMO partnerships and policy and analysis. These themes under their remit are key characteristics within the new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (see Coles et al. 2014).

Phase III Target sample

Based on the above sampling technique, the Phase III industry practitioners target sample included:

- Hospitality Sector, Holiday Inn Express, General Manager
- Conferences and Events, Cranfield Management Development Centre, General Manager
- Conferences and Events, Whittlebury Hall, Marketing and PR Manager
- Not-for-Profits, Milton Keynes City Centre Management, Manager

- Not-for-Profits, Milton Keynes Dons Sports and Education Trust, Director of Education
- Not-for-Profits, Community Action Milton Keynes, Director
- Retail and Services, Midsummer Place, General Manager
- Attractions and Activities, SNO!zone, General Manager
- Attractions and Activities, InterMK Ltd (MK Dons), Marketing Executive
- Evening Economy, Milton Keynes Theatre, Business Development Manager
- Evening Economy, Theatre District, Marketing Manager
- Local Government, Milton Keynes Council, Mayor
- Higher Education, Milton Keynes College, College Principal
- Transport, Cranfield Airport, Airport Manager

Based on the above sampling technique, the Phase III policy makers target sample included:

- VisitEngland, Head of Destination Management
- VisitEngland, Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement
- VisitEngland, Head of Policy and Analysis

SEMLEP's CEO involvement in Phase III was limited to identifying key challenges to and opportunities for the development and practice of DL beyond the membership network of DMO member organisations, i.e. within DMK's policy network, which involves LEPs, VisitEngland and other DMOs in the South-East Midlands economic geography (see Appendix 3a for details on the achieved Phase III sample).

Phase III Position of the Researcher

The position adopted by the researcher during this third phase is emic (insider) perspective (see Morey and Luthans 1984). Adopting an insider perspective during this third phase aims to provide a detailed account of key challenges and opportunities to the practice of DL in DMK through self reflective, visually-driven

questionnaires with representatives of DMK member organisations identified as DL champions during Phase II. The questionnaires are designed to assist industry practitioners in the interpretation of network depictions and the provision of a sector-specific perspective. The researcher's position during this third phase also aims to provide a detailed account of key challenges and opportunities to the practice of DL in DMOs more-generally.

Phase III Ethical Considerations

Important ethical procedures were followed during Phase III in order to introduce target participants to the nature of the undertaken post-network study, which helps them make an informed decision as to whether to participate in it or not. Target participants were also provided with details on matters of anonymity and the adopted approach to data treatment (from data collection, through to data analysis and presentation). The ethical procedures followed during this phase included the use of:

- Informed Consent Letter for Phase III (see Appendix 2j);
- Additional Letter of Agreement for Phase III (see Appendix 2k);
- Pre-Phase III Consent Letter (see Appendix 2l).

3.10 Core approaches to data collection for each phase

This section builds on section 3.9, where the underpinning methodological approaches adopted during each of the three data collection phases were highlighted. As such, the following section offers a detailed discussion embedded in existing literature on the core tools and approaches to data collection adopted in Phase I, II and III of the methodological framework. These include:

- Semi-structured expert interviews, case immersion and participant observation (adopted in Phase I);

- SNA network survey questionnaires for DMK's complete and ego networks (adopted in Phase II);
- Expert interviews and self-reflective questionnaires: policy makers and industry practitioners (adopted in Phase III). The rationale behind adopting these is also explored in this section.

Network studies are often linked to survey questionnaires (Ahmed 2012). Network data may also be revealed through a variety of other methods, such as interviews (Cross et al. 2001), participant observation (Freeman et al. 1989), critical review of policies and other strategic documents (Dredge, 2006) to name a few. Each approach is considered to have its strengths and weaknesses (Conway, 2014). The latter is one of the reasons why this study adopts a set of qualitative and quantitative SNA data collection tools in parallel with the specific objectives in focus. Indeed, academia and practitioners are progressively employing mixed methods (e.g. a blend of qualitative and quantitative network methodologies as per Phases I, II, III) in order to derive complementary data (Conti and Doreian 2010; Conway 2014; Edwards and Crossley 2009). In line with this, Conway (2014) contended that while quantitative approaches may be particularly useful in revealing the structure of the network, 'thick' data derived from semi-structured interviews and participant observation are more effective in providing insights into processes, relational content and context of interaction among network actors. Thick network data, in addition, provides insights into processes leading to the development of leadership capacity in networks embedded in organisations (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). This is among the key purposes for undertaking Phase III in the course of data collection.

The overview of research design covered in Chapter 1 has already pointed out key techniques and tools to assist the process of collecting project data, which are discussed in detail in this chapter. Further, where in Section 3.9 of this chapter the focus was on Phases I, II and III of the methodological framework in relation to employed methods, the objective of the following section (Section 3.10) is to expand on the employed methodological approaches (mixed method tools and techniques) and discuss their applicability

in relation to each data collection phase and within the context of the overarching aim and objectives of this study.

3.10.1 Semi-structured expert interviews, case immersion and participant observation (Adopted in Phase I)

Semi-structured interviews and participant observation, both sources of qualitative data, are among the facilitators of generating case study enquiry (Barbour, and Schostak 2011; Yin 2009). When semi-structured expert interviews are adopted as data collection approach, target individuals are often regarded as experts in their respective fields (Sekaran 2003; David and Sutton 2011). This is the case of the Founding and current CEO of DMK, who both have extensive knowledge of the destination and the organisation, namely DMK. The expert interviewee is then integrated into the study not as a single case reflecting on a human being, but as one representing a community, organisation, or institution. Interpretation of expert interviews involves processes of analysis and comparison of the content of the expert knowledge (Flick 2009), which allows for the accumulation of in-depth insights into the DMO in transition. Interviews also serve to uncover insights into initial processes of organisational change, such as the shift towards collective destination decision-making and the enactment of DL on a DMO level.

In addition to conducting semi-structured expert interviews, case immersion (Hyett et al. 2014) seeks to add an in-depth, emic perspective into organisational change in DMK, such as the enactment and practice of DL. The researcher has also been actively involved in the process of developing the first Destination Management Plan (DMP), which required a close work with the network of member organisations and an extensive background research of existing policies for DMK and Milton Keynes to inform the DMP (see Hristov and Petrova 2015). Case immersion allows the researcher to immerse themselves in the organisation and take a close look at processes and practices of organisational change and DL. This has been achieved on two occasions -

throughout the process of shaping the plan and afterwards, when the complete plan is studied for further evidence through content analysis.

Participant observation during meetings in organisations is another valuable source of rich empirical data in case study research (Dubois and Gadde 2002). The adopted methodological framework thus makes use of SEMLEP VEG meetings with the aim to explore the current evidence of collective strategic destination decision-making beyond DMK's network of member organisations. Within this context, the researcher was granted access to SEMLEP VEG meetings agendas and minutes of meetings data. He was also given the opportunity to participate in three live SEMLEP discussions that included organisations from DMK's policy network, such as VisitEngland and other DMOs in the South-East Midlands geography.

3.10.2 SNA network survey questionnaires (Adopted in Phase II)

SNA survey questionnaires aimed at both DMK's network of member organisations and DMK's policy network of organisations beyond its membership network reflect the underpinning methodological approach adopted as part of Phase II. Whilst the former network is seen as a complete one (see Prell 2012) due to its focus on the membership network of all member organisations on board DMK, the latter one is seen as an ego network (see Everett and Borgatti, 2005). An ego network indicated that the investigation is carried out solely through the perspective of the ego, namely DMK.

In essence, network data for both complete and ego networks are obtained by the means of network survey questionnaires, which are usually completed by members of the network in focus (Conway, 2014). Network survey questionnaires facilitate the task to collectively construct and subsequently depict the investigated network (Moody et al. 2005) by using binary network data (see Chapter 2 C). This study builds on the extant network research largely defined by binary data (Hanneman and Riddle 2005) by collecting valued network data in two directions. Valued network data has the potential to provide further insights into the network in focus, including the

distribution of strategic developmental resources, knowledge and communications (Pforr et al. 2014) and their value and impact on individual DMK member organisations. The distribution of strategic developmental resources, knowledge and communications within a network are able to provide both important insights into and evidence of the enactment and practice of DL (Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Hristov and Zehrer 2015).

The analysis of Phase II-collected empirical data is underpinned by Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating leadership development in networks emerging within formal organisational structures. The framework consists of two sets of questions – generic (surfacing emergent leadership in networks) and specific (expanding on emergent leadership developing in networks embedded in formal organisations). These capture both structural properties and characteristics of the network, and patterns of communication, knowledge and resource flows. They all assist in identifying processes related to the enactment and practice of DL. Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework is discussed in detail in the beginning of Chapter 4 B, where it serves as an introduction to the discussion of findings. Refer to Appendix 2e for more details on the content and structure of both the complete and ego network survey questionnaires.

3.10.3 Expert interviews and self-reflective questionnaires: policy makers and industry practitioners (Adopted in Phase III)

The rationale behind adopting a mixed-method approach to this final phase of the underpinning methodological framework is to build upon Phase II network data insights by providing a rich narrative into the enactment and practice of DL in DMK. Phase III also provides opportunities to explore the challenges to and opportunities for building DL in DMK, and as such, the phase contributes to the construction of practitioner outputs. The latter aim to provide implications for leadership practice in reshaped DMOs in England. This opportunity is addressed through an investigation into both industry practitioners (in the face of DMK member organisations identified as leadership champions) and policy makers (highly knowledgeable VisitEngland experts):

- Self-reflective, semi-structured questionnaires with industry practitioners involving DMK member organisations: Insiders are well placed to provide first-hand insights into processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL in DMK, in addition to the challenges and opportunities linked with DL in a DMO context. They play a pivotal role in interpreting Phase II network data and responding to questions arising from the application of Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework;
- In-depth, semi-structured expert interviews with policy makers involving VisitEngland leads: Prominent policy-makers are well placed to provide a policy makers' perspective into the concept of DL in DMO content. They also contribute to advancing the theoretical contribution of this study (the DMO Leadership Cycle) by examining the relevance of the Cycle's three dimensions in light of the current landscape for DMOs and destinations in England;

Refer to Appendix 2g and Appendix 2h for more details on the content and structure of the expert interviews and self-reflective questionnaires with industry practitioners and policy makers.

3.11 Core tools for data analysis and interpretation

This section builds on Section 3.9, where the underpinning methodological tools for data analysis and interpretation adopted during each of the three data collection phases were highlighted. As such, the following section offers a detailed discussion into several software tools adopted for the purpose of analysis and interpretation of both quantitative and qualitative data, considering:

3.11.1 NVivo10 for qualitative data administration and analysis

NVivo10 (QSR International 2013) is a software package for qualitative data administration, interpretation and analysis, which facilitates the organisation and

analysis of Phase I and Phase III data. NVivo10 supports the organisation and analysis of thick data and subsequently - the development of consistent coding schemes (Jennings 2010), as it was the case of this study. Once thick empirical data, such as semi-structured interviews are transcribed verbatim (Hennink et al. 2011), and the resulting 'thick', however, largely unstructured data is used as an input into NVivo10.

NVivo10's strength lies in its ability to facilitate the analysis of thick data through the development of a coding scheme with the aim to uncover emergent themes (Petrova and Hristov 2014). Methodological tools in the form of software packages do not however fully facilitate and perform independently the process of data analysis and interpretation and the manual aspect of data analysis and interpretation is just as important.

Within this context, the procedure that this study follows includes the development of two comprehensive coding schemes, which are comprised of a number of parent nodes and sub-nodes. Nodes within the coding scheme correspond to a range of emergent themes resulting from the application of this study's three-phase methodological framework. The two coding schemes correspond to Phase I and Phase III of the adopted methodological framework. They are grounded in a number of approaches to collecting qualitative data, which have been discussed earlier in this chapter.

3.11.2 Tableau for longitudinal DMO membership insights

Tableau (Tableau 2016), which is specialist data analysis software, allows for the analysis and visualisation of longitudinal data. Tableau is used as part of Phase I of the adopted methodological framework with a view to identify and visualise dynamics in the network of DMO member organisations during the first six months of the 18-month data collection process. Such dynamics in the network of DMO member organisations include changes to the overall membership base of DMK, change in per-sector members in DMK, and identifying any movers and shakers.

3.11.3 Gephi 8.2 for advanced network depiction and graphic manipulation

Gephi (Cherven 2013; Cherven 2015) is employed to provide enhanced visualisations of a range of structural and relational properties of the network in focus and patterns of information exchange and sharing developmental resources, which contribute to the understanding of the enactment and practice of DL. Gephi is also used to produce a range of descriptive statistics derived from Phase II-collected network data, which contribute to identifying leaders within the complete network of DMO member organisations.

Gephi is a comprehensive data depiction and analysis software package, which facilitates the analysis of organisational network data (Bastian et al. 2009; Cherven 2015). Gephi has a number of network and actor level measures, which target structural and relational properties of networks. Gephi also provides a range of network layout algorithms, which are used for transforming network data into readable and insightful network depictions. The strength of SNA lies in its ability to produce insightful network depictions (Cherven 2015; Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015). This allows the network data discourse post Phase II to be driven by visual representations of processes and practices related to enacting DL practice on a DMO level, as opposed to descriptive statistics (common in UCINET).

A range of layout algorithms have been adopted, such as Fruchterman Reingold (Fruchterman and Reingold 1991) and Force Atlas 3D (Levallois 2013) to facilitate the visualisation of network data. Such algorithms allow for an enhanced visualisation of processes and practices related to DL embedded in structural and relational properties of the network. Gephi is thus adopted as the dominant network data tool in facilitating insightful data analysis derived from the investigated sample (census) of DMO member organisations.

3.12 Matters of data trustworthiness and validity

3.12.1 Trustworthiness of interview data (Qualitative Data, Applicable to Phases I and III)

One of the most catalytic influences on the qualitative domain within the past decade has been the dialogue on the nature of language, and particularly the relationship of language to the world it aims to construct (Gergen and Gergen 2003). Within this context, the qualitative domain has been challenged to whether scientific accounts can accurately and objectively represent the world as it is (Gergen and Gergen 2003). This suggests that adopting strategies to ensure the quality and rigour in qualitative research has become a prominent issue (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012).

Quality, integrity and rigour in contemporary qualitative research is commonly associated with trustworthiness (Krefting 1991). Trustworthiness, as argued by Jamal and Hollinshead (2001), relates to a range of criteria and arguments researchers adopt in order to demonstrate that their research findings are worthy of attention. Case studies, which are largely rooted in thick qualitative enquiry (Hua and David 2008; Kitay and Callus 1998), are not an exception of this trend aimed at ensuring that quality and rigour are embedded throughout key research processes, such as data collection, interpretation, analysis and discussion of findings (Yin 2013).

Scholars argue that often in classic case study research, providing an in-depth account of processes of conducting, analysis, and data presentation is somehow disregarded (Yin 2013) and that limited details are given on how data is collected, sampled, analysed and discussed in light of the existing literature (Fiss 2009). As Fiss (2009) argued, this is to a large extent valid for case studies relying primarily on qualitative fieldwork methods. Within this context, Easterby-Smith et al. (2012) outlined a number of considerations related to research transparency, which if taken into account, contribute to ensuring the trustworthiness of the conducted research, namely:

- How researchers gain access to the particular organisation;
- What research processes lead to the selection of informants;
- How data are created and recorded and what processes are used to interpret, analyse and depict it;
- How the data is transformed into ideas and explanations; and
- How the researcher feels about the research (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012).

This study takes key steps to ensure quality and rigour of the conducted research throughout the three stages of the adopted methodological framework. This has been achieved through the above approaches to trustworthiness and also through the adopted study design, transparency and rich narrative surrounding the procedures involving data collection, analysis, presentation and visualisation. These have been covered in detail in this chapter, and in appendices IIb, IIc, IId, IIe, IIj, IIk, and III.

Further, the three-phase methodological framework allows for the facilitation of an iterative process. This iterative process implies moving back and forth between data and theory iteratively (Timmermans and Tavory 2012). An emphasis is therefore placed on facilitating the interplay of new empirical data and existing theoretical contributions. This approach is also in line with the adopted by this study Abductive approach to knowledge accumulation (Peirce 1934), which was discussed in Chapter 3. This iterative approach and the iterative nature of the Abductive (Peirce 1934) approach to acquiring new knowledge are actions, which also address the importance of considering quality and rigour and as such, contribute to the trustworthiness of the conducted research.

3.12.2 Validity of network data (Quantitative Data, Applicable to Phase II)

Validity in data collection and analysis is the extent to which adopted research approaches and subsequent findings provide accurate representation of the phenomena they aim to explore (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012). Ensuring validity in network research is not an exception of this general trend in quantitative research (Conway 2014; Costenbader and Valente 2003) and is often surrounded by challenges and complexities (Ahmet 2012; Hristov, 2015). Within this context, a number of scholars have argued that the central issue related to the overall validity of an investigation in the domain of social networks is the collection, analysis and depiction of network data (Ahmed 2012; Beritelli et al. 2015b; Conway 2014; Costenbader and Valente 2003; Frank 1971; Marsden 1990). SNA analysis implies complex data collection procedures that may be

challenging to execute, or even lead to incomplete or unreliable data (Scott et al. 2008a). Some of these challenges were discussed in in Chapter 2 D and served as an introduction to this chapter.

Network data as part of Phase II of this study were collected over six months (between July 2014 and January 2015) via a survey questionnaire built on an organisational network analysis web platform (ONA Surveys 2015). In addition to basic relational data, the questionnaire captured valued network data in two directions – identifying the frequency of communication and the level of impact of resource exchange over individual DMK member organisations.

Network investigation within the complete network of DMK member organisations (n=70) has been carried out where the response rate was 57%. The challenges of obtaining network data have been well recognised across academics (Ahmet 2012; Conway 2014; Hristov 2015) and practitioners (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). However, in a recent DMO contribution, Beritelli et al. (2015b) argued that even an achieved sample of 50% could provide trustworthy and representative results as long as the network boundaries are specified as in the case of this study. Beritelli et al. (2015b) statement was supported by an earlier in-depth network data validity enquiry undertaken by Costenbader and Valente (2003) - two of the pioneers in network research. Costenbader and Valente (2003) applied 11 centrality measures to their enquiry of 59 networks (network size ranging from n=34 through to n=169) where the response rate ranged from 51% to 100%. Centrality measures included indegree centrality, outdegree centrality, Eigenvector centrality, betweenness centrality, closeness centrality amongst others. Costenbader and Valente (2003) surfaced the average correlation for the 11 both actual and sampled centrality measures computed for their 59 networks to demonstrate that credible outcomes can be achieved even with 50% of the network data missing providing that the boundaries of the network in focus are clear. Hence, the comprehensive study undertaken by Costenbader and Valente (2003) suggests that network data provides credible outcomes even with as little as 50% response rate of the network under investigation, which is well below the response rate achieved in this study.

The methodological approach adopted in this investigation is in line with Cullen and Yammarino (2015) recent call for introducing advances in visualising and measuring the enactment and practice of DL. An SNA software package facilitated the analysis of organisational network data, namely Gephi (Bastian et al. 2009; Cherven 2015). Gephi has a number of network and actor level measures targeting structural and relational properties of networks. The SNA software package also provides a range of network layout algorithms, which are used for transforming network data into readable and insightful network depictions. The strength of SNA lies in network depictions (Cherven 2015; Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015). Hence why the discourse within this study is largely driven by visual representations of processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level. Literature related to network measures and related considerations adopted in this study is embedded in the results section to better integrate the interplay between existing theoretical contributions and emergent empirical evidence in exploring the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level.

3.13 Chapter conclusion

This chapter began with a short introduction to the overarching aim and objectives of this study before providing an in-depth discussion into the research strategy, i.e. the knowledge accumulation approach applied to this study, namely abduction (Peirce 1934) and its ontological and epistemological stance. The chapter then continued with a discussion on the strategy of enquiry involving the application of the case study method and its role in theory-building, followed by details on the unit of analysis (a DMO) and its spatial setting (a destination). The methodological framework was subsequently unfolded to provide an in-depth discussion of the three contrasting, but interconnected phases of data collection and analysis. The discussion also provided details on the applied methodological tools and approaches, sampling technique, target sample and position of the researcher. Two interconnected discussions aimed at the justification of core approaches to data collection and

core tools for data analysis and interpretation for each of the three phases of the adopted methodological framework, were provided. The chapter concluded with a discussion on key matters of data trustworthiness and validity, where the former is related to qualitative data, applicable to Phases I and III and the latter is related to quantitative data, applicable to Phase II.

Section III consisted of Chapter 3 providing both the philosophical and methodological foundations adopted by this study, which aimed to shape a response to the overarching aim and objectives introduced in Chapter 1. The underpinning chapter then provided two prominent discussions, namely a philosophical one and a methodological one. The philosophical discussion introduced the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation, along with its ontological and epistemological stance, which have been adopted in this study. The methodological discussion was aimed at the adopted strategy of enquiry, which involved the application of a case study and debated its role in theory-building. This was followed by details on the case, namely Destination Milton Keynes and its destination. Building on Chapter 2 D, this methodological discussion introduced in detail the developed and adopted mixed-method, three-phase methodological framework, which served to provide a response to key complexities in conducting network studies discussed in the former chapter. Chapter 3 also provided a discussion on the applied methodological tools and approaches, the sampling technique, target sample and position of the researcher. The chapter concluded with a discussion of key matters of data trustworthiness and validity in relation to the methodological framework.

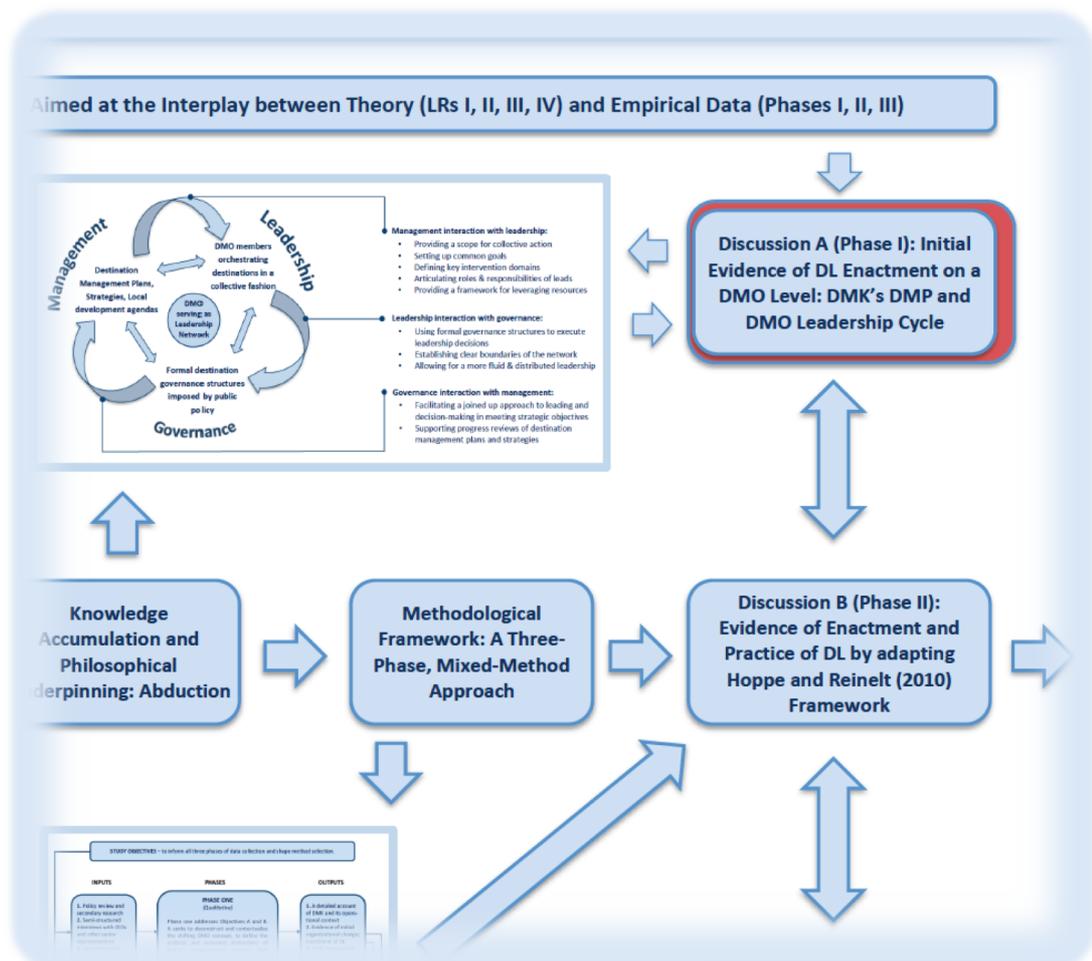
Section IV

Findings and Discussions

Section IV consists of three interconnected discussion chapters, namely Chapter 4 A: Discussion of the Preliminary Phase, Chapter 4 B: Discussion of the SNA Phase, and Chapter 4 C: Discussion of the Post-SNA Phase. All three chapters are devoted to findings derived from the application of Phase I, II and III of the methodological framework and cover both empirical and secondary data. Chapter 4 A provides a discussion of findings resulting from the application of Phase I of the adopted methodological framework and addresses Objective A and Objective B of this study. This chapter discusses the shifting DMO concept, key characteristics of the new funding and governance landscape and its influence on DMOs. It then provides initial evidence of organisational change through the enactment of DL in DMK. Chapter 4 B provides a discussion of findings derived from Phase II of the adopted methodological framework and addresses Objective C of this study. This chapter builds on the initial evidence of the enactment of DL in DMK discussed in Chapter 4 A by providing an in-depth discussion of network data findings related to the enactment and practice of DL through the perspective of senior leadership representing DMK member organisations. Chapter 4 C provides a discussion of findings derived from Phase III of the adopted methodological framework and addresses Objective D and Objective E of this study. Building on network data evidence into the enactment and practice of DL in DMK discussed in Chapter 4 B, this chapter provides an in-depth discussion into key challenges to and opportunities for embedding DL practice in two directions. This includes DMOs in general and also DMK from the perspective of industry practitioners from DMK and policy makers from VisitEngland respectively.

Chapter 4 A

Discussion of the Preliminary Phase



CHAPTER 4 A: DISCUSSION OF THE PRELIMINARY PHASE

4.1.A Chapter introduction

This is the first of three discussion chapters devoted to the findings which emerge from the application of Phase I of the adopted methodological framework. Phase I involved both preliminary and exploratory (qualitative) investigation and addresses objectives A and B in this study. It involves a blend of policy network analysis undertaken through desk-based research, participant observation, case immersion and semi-structured expert interviews. The sample achieved during Phase I is covered in Appendix 3a.

The chapter begins by providing a discussion of secondary data findings, which surface the new policy network within a new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. Emergent organisations and context characteristics of the operational environment for DMOs within this new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (as per Objective A) are first covered. The chapter continues with a discussion on primary data findings, which unfold the structure and characteristics of the DMO network in focus, namely DMK. Primary data insights also provide initial evidence into the enactment of leadership and its distributed dimension within DMK and also within DMK's wider policy network.

Hence the emergence of DMO-level leadership and regional leadership alliances, in light of the introduction of the new Destination Management Plan (DMP) for Milton Keynes as a shared statement on the role of developing leadership for both the organisation and its destination and SEMLEP Visitor Economy Group (VEG) meetings, is then discussed. The DMP is the first empirical evidence of leadership developing on a DMO level and mirrors initial organisational change processes of DMK (Objective B) triggered by the new landscape of destination management in England.

Semi-structured expert interviews with DMK's founding and current CEOs (see Appendix 3c), coupled with a review of strategic papers and in-depth analysis of the DMP provide evidence of emergent DL practice on a DMO level and unveil the aspirations of the membership network towards developing a joined-up approach to strategic destination decision-making. Participant

observation carried out across a number of SEMLEP's VEG meetings and the interview with SEMLEP's CEO of this partnership organisation (see Appendix 3d), draw the focus on leadership developing on a policy network level, where the VEG is used as a medium between DMK and SEMLEP in co-creating strategic destination decision-making unlocked by LEP funding.

The chapter concludes with acknowledging this study's initial conceptual contribution, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle, which is a product of the interplay between existing destination and DMO theory and Phase I data. A link is then established between Chapter 2 A, Chapter 3 and the current chapter.

4.2.A Secondary data findings

4.2.1.A The policy network in the DMO and destination domain in England: From public policy to policy networks

The new tourism policy network in England, introduced by the 2010 coalition government, sets the scene for a number of challenges and opportunities facing destinations and destination organisations within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. Traditionally, government has had a key role in tourism policy development and implementation (Dredge and Jenkins 2007; Hall 2005). However, in times when neoliberalism is the dominating political ideology, public policy is largely underpinned by corporatist philosophies (Dredge 2010). As a result, the policy and planning landscape expects the inclusion of a large number of communities and organisations representing diverse sectors of the economy (Cooper and Hall 2008; Timur and Getz 2008). This has contributed to the rise of policy networks (Dredge and Jenkins 2011; Tyler and Dinan 2001). Policy networks capture the dynamics of the tourism policy domain (Pforr 2006), whilst also having a number of implications for policy makers (Dorry and Decoville 2013). Policy networks, i.e. policy-driven communities (Wattanacharoensil and Schuckert 2014) are a recent phenomenon involving a government–industry–community nexus in the development of public policy and beyond (Dredge 2006; Pforr 2006; Thompson and Pforr 2005). Networked approach to policy-

making is seen as an opportunity to promote and establish a more collaborative, transparent and inclusive policy-making (Howlett and Ramesh 1995; Rhodes 1997; Scott et al. 2008b), particularly in light of rapid globalisation, changing roles of government and economic restructuring on a local-to-global scale (Schneider 2005).

Besussi (2006) argued that policy networks mirror a set of relationships which are largely non-hierarchical and interdependent in nature linking organisations sharing a common vision and developmental goals. Organisations nested in policy networks share resources as a means to achieving their common vision and meeting developmental goals (Börzel 1997). Collaboration is therefore deeply rooted in their work. Contemporary DMOs often capture diverse member organisations (Beritelli and Laesser 2014). They tend to have flatter, non-hierarchical structures (OECD 2013) and recognise the resource and knowledge interdependency within their network (Hristov and Zehrer 2015), as such, they may well be seen as policy networks. The case of England is not an exception to these recent developments and trends.

English destinations were once heavily dependent on the public purse, mainly through regional government support (Fyall et al. 2009) provided by nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The responsibility for management and development of tourism was therefore in the hands of these regional development structures (Her Majesty's Stationary Office 1998) and to a lesser extent also the responsibility of tourist boards, namely Regional Tourist Boards (RTBs), which were well-placed to oversee the implementation and delivery of national and regional tourism policy (Development of Tourism Act 1969; Shaw et al. 1998). These former RTBs had been largely backed up by RDAs. RDAs were the main source of funding and development support for tourism on a regional scale (Kennell 2011). However, in 2010, a new chapter for tourism governance in England began. In existence for the last four years, the new funding and governance landscape led to organisational and policy restructuring across English destinations (Kennell and Chaperon 2013). The balance of influence shifted to the private sector (Coles et al. 2014). The trigger for this restructuring of tourism governance was, to a large extent, the new political regime, i.e. the coalition government that came into power in 2010 (Cameron 2010; Coles et al. 2012), coupled with the 2008 global financial crisis.

Arguably, this global financial crisis has had, and continues to have significant consequences for economic and political thinking in England and beyond (Preston 2012).

The wider field of political science is extrinsically linked with policy development processes in tourism (Garcia 2014). These new conditions of the new funding and governance landscape are a major contributor to the changing public sector support for destinations in England (Dinan et al. 2011), namely the decline of state funding for tourism management and development. In line with its neo-liberal ideologies (Duffy 2008), the 2010 coalition government focus has been on DMOs as successors of RTBs adopting a private sector-led approach to destination management and development (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2010; Penrose 2011). This “re-engineering of destination marketing organisations” (Bieger 1998, p.4) called for the lead organisations, namely RTBs to be reshaped and RDAs abolished. This brought into the spotlight the importance of adopting a more locality-centric approach to management and planning of tourism and the visitor economy (Coles et al. 2012; Kennedy and Augustyn 2014; Penrose 2011). In other words, predominantly businesses, some Local Authorities (LAs) and other interested groups were expected to provide evidence of greater involvement and contribution to destination management and development (Coles et al. 2014), concurrent with a significant reduction of government-available funding streams for destinations (Dinan et al. 2011). This was captured in the new 2011 Government Tourism Policy (Penrose 2011) launched by the 2010 coalition government and carried out by VisitEngland to support the transition in the landscape of destination management (Kennell and Chaperon 2013). This policy required the local collaborative development of Destination Management Plans (DMPs). DMPs offer an opportunity (but not a guarantee) for government funding to support specific actions related to tourism development in destinations (Hristov and Petrova 2015).

This new model of destination management by the 2010 coalition government has brought considerable challenges for DMOs across England (Kennell and Chaperon 2013). Destination leads were expected to have a more broadly-based mandate (Dinan et al. 2011), whilst operating in a heavily resource-constrained environment. Reshaped DMOs then have sole

responsibility for ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of their own organisations (Penrose 2011). In addition, they are expected to do so by providing value to their destinations, and equally, supporting the growth of local businesses and regeneration of host communities through exploiting opportunities to further develop tourism.

Establishing strong collaborative practices within the new policy community of local government, businesses and not-for-profit organisations are seen, within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England as fundamental to DMOs' ability to lead and shape areas of tourism and visitor activity (Department for Business, Education and Skills 2010; Morgan 2012). These collaborative practices provide a scope for appropriate interventions in destinations in light of the post-austerity era (Haven-Tang and Sedgley 2014). The resulting changes are not unlike other contexts, where destination management practitioners aim to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the fluid, overarching visitor economy (Deloitte 2013). They do so by putting in place local authority and business-led partnership structures – DMOs (Penrose 2011) – and working with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), the successors of RDAs being yet another enterprise-driven organisation evolving with the new tourism policy network in England (Hristov 2014).

Processes of organisational restructuring and shifting funding arrangements have also been evident in other countries, such as Switzerland (Beritelli et al. 2013), Australia (Pforr et al. 2014) and China (Wang and Ap 2013). Within a turbulent economic and political environment, DMOs are expected to play a critical role in managing economic, environmental, and social resources in destinations (Beritelli et al. 2015b; Kozak and Baloglu 2011; Pechlaner et al. 2012). Indeed, balancing the interests of various stakeholder groups in destinations is among their core functions (Beritelli and Laesser 2014). This is clearly stated as the intent of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* (Penrose 2011). In light of this context, the focus of local tourism strategies and plans is expected to extend beyond meeting tourists' needs and increasing visitor numbers to local attractions, but also emphasise the quality of life and local communities implying a more holistic and inclusive approach to managing destinations (Morgan 2012) and involving a greater number of

organisations (e.g. LEPs, VisitEngland, LAs), which emerge within a new tourism policy landscape. LEPs and VisitEngland are important allies to reshaped DMOs. These DMO allies are expected to co-fund destination development projects, provide expertise and research outputs amongst other activities (Hristov 2014). This new partnership network is subject of discussion later in this chapter.

Within a new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, one may well argue that the focus has shifted from public policy to policy networks. In brief, a challenging economic context is present, a significant change in the way tourism is managed, reduced government funding, combined with a broader mandate for DMOs. So DMOs have been expected to concurrently secure their own long-term financial stability, while at the same time, work to establish and coordinate collaborative partnerships including a range of local and regional actors from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. This study captures the approach taken by one such DMO in England – Destination Milton Keynes – to adapt to these changes and develop a DMP for the future, which is discussed later in this chapter.

The discussed process of restructuring of the governance model in destinations has been covered in greater detail as part of a policy network analysis, which can be found in Appendix 3b.

4.2.2.A The DMK network of member organisations explored

Exploring the organisational structure of DMK and its membership mix is vital prior to conducting a full network study. Hence, this step is a prerequisite to developing and implementing Phase II data collection tools and techniques (see Figure 3.1 discussing the employed methodological framework in Chapter 3). This is where the survey instrument is developed by taking into account the span of DMK's membership network boundaries, and key data on DMO member organisations, e.g. sector of the economy, membership type, size of business.

DMK captures a diverse network of hospitality, attraction, transport and other businesses, some local government bodies, along with a range of not-for-profits, community organisations and sustainability trusts. Within this context, preliminary findings have identified nine types of organisations on board DMK, namely Hospitality Sector, Not-for-Profit, Conferences and Events, Retail and Services, Evening Economy, Attractions and Activities, Local Government, Higher Education and Transport. This Phase I classification serves as an input for Phase II where the main network study is carried out.

The membership portfolio of DMK consists of founding (corporate) and non-corporate members. Founding (corporate) members initially established the DMO in 2006, and member organisations joined later, i.e. post-2006 (see network roster in Appendix 1) up until January 2014 when this study commenced. Corporate members contribute 18.5% of the overall DMO membership network, whilst non-corporate members contribute 81.5%. Clearly, the investigated network itself is diverse, i.e. a number of key sectors of the economy are represented on board (Table 4.A.1), where hospitality establishments and not-for-profit organisations are dominant stakeholder groups (sectors defined as per the above classification) with 24.7% and 18.5%, respectively.

Table 4.A.1 The DMK Network by Sector (as from January 2014)

Type of organisation	Network share (%)
Hospitality Sector	24.7
Not-for-Profit	18.5
Conferences and Events	14.8
Retail and Services	13.6
Evening Economy	9.9
Attractions and Activities	8.6
Local Government	6.2
Higher Education	2.5
Transportation	1.2

4.3.A Empirical findings

Where Section 4.2 provided an introduction into the new tourism policy network and shifting destination management landscape by drawing on secondary data, this section is strictly focused on the organisation being studied (DMK), its member organisations and prospective partners nested in the wider policy network. Section 4.3 draws on predominantly empirical insights, i.e. outputs resulting from the application of Phase I of the adopted methodological framework (see Chapter 3).

4.3.1.A Former and current CEO insights (Key challenges facing DMK)

Both, the former and current CEO insights provided evidence on the challenges facing DMK within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England and particularly the shifting funding regime for destination marketing and management for DMOs across England. The limited post-2011 public intervention in destination management and provision of support for DMOs questions the extent to which DMK is now able to deliver value to member organisations and destination Milton Keynes as a whole. Indeed, the former CEO of DMK who has been in the membership organisation since its launch in 2006 pointed out that,

“As a result, since 2011 when the coalition cabinet took over the governance of the United Kingdom, DMK has been existing solely on membership fees which led to reducing the capacity of tourist and visitor information provision and other core functions of the organisation.”

(Founding CEO, DMK)

Arguably, since then the focus has shifted towards the importance of strategic partnerships and local networks in nurturing destination development. Networks are now high on the agenda and their vital role in destinations has been acknowledged by the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* and DMK. Networks serve as a means of bringing a wide array of interested parties together thus creating partnership opportunities, facilitating access to vital resources and

providing the ability to share costs with organisations with common functions and objectives:

“So DMK had to rethink its practices and look at how the organisation can get to pots of money and share costs ... the role of partnerships in reshaped DMO organisations is absolutely essential”

(Founding CEO, DMK)

The challenges facing DMK within the new funding regime are further captured in the following section and provide basic longitudinal insights that reveal the scale of impact on an organisational (DMO) level.

4.3.2.A Network dynamics during Phase I (January-July 2014)

This preliminary (Phase I) study was carried out over six months between January 2014 and July 2014. When an initial study of the structure and characteristics of the network in focus commenced in January, the network of DMK member organisations captured 83 hospitality and other businesses, local government representatives, community and a number of not-for-profit organisations (see Appendix 1). The network of DMK member organisations then had to be revisited again in July prior to developing the SNA survey instrument, which has been employed in Phase II. The survey instrument was a transition point between Phase I and Phase II of the methodological framework employed (see Chapter 3) and once developed, it served as an input into Phase II. The researcher has taken this opportunity to explore how the network composition has changed over the six-month period (January 2014 – July 2014) and thus provide basic longitudinal insights into the effects of the recent transition involving public to private leadership post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. The outcomes of this network review, which yielded some basic longitudinal insights, carried out in July 2014, indicated that DMK has lost nearly 10% of its members, particularly hospitality and not-for-profit members, as evident from Figure 4.A.1, resulting in losing four (from 21 down to 17) and five (from 16 down to 11) member organisations, respectively. As already outlined, this downward trend occurred over the six months when

Phase I was carried out, which suggested that DMK was experiencing challenges in retaining its membership network.

This downward trend however can also be seen as an opportunity for DMK to rethink its existing approach to providing value to its member organisations and allow member businesses, local authorities and not-for-profit organisations to participate in vital decision-making processes, i.e. have a voice in defining the future direction of DMK, particularly in light of DMPs – an approach introduced by the 2010 coalition government to help destinations and DMOs with the public-to-private transition of leadership.

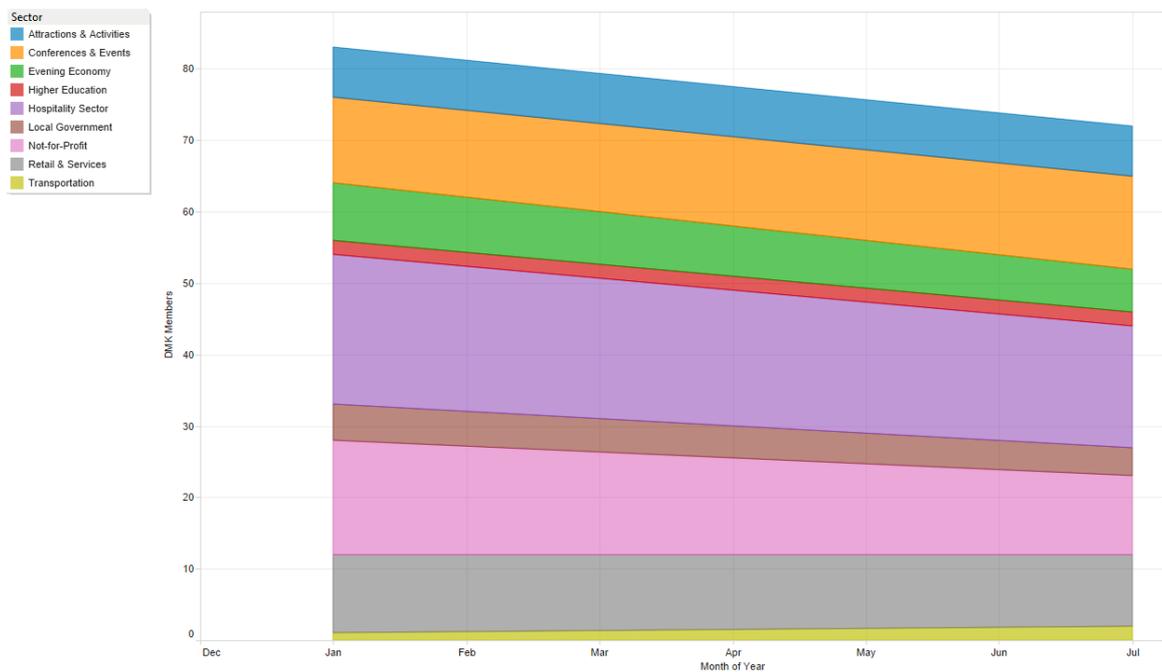


Figure 4.A.1. Basic Longitudinal Insights of DMK (January 2014 – July 2014)

These challenges were, nevertheless, expected in light of the new operational environment for DMOs in England surrounded by considerable complexity and uncertainty (see Hristov and Naumov 2015), and particularly the influence of shifts in political and economic thinking on reshaped and financially-constrained destination management bodies.

The *2011 Government Tourism Policy* along with the 2010 coalition government’s vision for the new locally-positioned DMOs brought into the spotlight important trends and issues deserving further attention. Both free-

riding and fluid membership introduced in the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* were deemed to be practices, which are, arguably key to the economic sustainability of reshaped DMOs and DMK in particular. They capture some of the key characteristics of the operational environment brought by the challenging new landscape of destination management in England. Free-riders are destination organisations who may not be members of a local DMO but nevertheless benefit from the collective and focused marketing and management efforts of DMO member organisations as these non-members operate in the same area. This practice is currently present in DMK, as confirmed by its former CEO:

“When I was CEO we had some key organisations who thought that they should not be paying towards a membership ... despite the fact that we bring visitors to Milton Keynes and we can only live by being supported by memberships ... we can only collectively market the area and make sure that people want to come and visit us”

(Former CEO, DMK)

Among the key reasons behind free-riding could be that DMOs may not be able to provide value and voice to destination organisations having a stake in the visitor economy – an important issue, which is discussed in Chapter 4 C. Free-riding is not an isolated phenomenon, which is particularly bound to the case of DMK. Rather, it has been among the consequences of adopting the new landscape of destination management in England as is the case with the second practice, i.e. fluid membership opportunities for destination businesses and other organisations. This practice implies that destination organisations are now free to join and leave DMOs and are even becoming members of bodies operating well beyond their usual geographies. This raises the question of whether DMOs are able to retain their members over time within a challenging funding and governance landscape. The basic longitudinal insights captured in Figure 4.A.1 provide evidence of the impact of fluid membership on DMK and thus further challenge the projected benefits (if any) of this key characteristic of the new landscape for destination management in England.

4.3.3.A DMK's Destination Management Plan 2014

In addition to introducing some major challenges to DMOs (as evident from the above discussion), the shifting landscape of destination management has also brought opportunities for these organisations to rethink their strategic agendas and capitalise on the value behind building strategic partnerships and local networks and their role in influencing destination development, facilitating a more inclusive destination management and leadership amongst others. In this sense, the new DMP for Milton Keynes can be seen as evidence of concentrating efforts towards providing a voice for DMK members in decision-making, creating a shared vision for the destination and indeed suggesting that DMK is an emergent leadership network of strategic importance to destination Milton Keynes. This plan sets the scene for a potential response to the challenges introduced by the shifting funding and governance landscape (Coles et al. 2014). Indeed, Evaggelia and Vitta (2012) have concluded that leadership can emerge from a context and is often demonstrated by a variety of members of an organisation. The discussion below aims to provide evidence of how leadership and DL in particular is enacted within the context of this study, where the latter has played a major role in triggering change on an organisational level.

Collaborative approach to developing the plan (Plan development process)

In line with the 2010 coalition government's *localism* plan (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2010; Penrose 2011) and VisitEngland's vision for reshaped DMOs, the DMP is a partnership document co-ordinated by DMK. It was produced and also intended to be delivered in conjunction with other organisations with a stake in and an influence over the visitor economy (DMK 2014). The DMP sets out more broadly-based priorities for DMK and involves a wider set of organisations and communities (DMK 2014) in decision-making processes. By creating and implementing this, labelled by the CEO to be a 'master plan' (DMK 2013), DMK aims to address the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* and VisitEngland's criteria for what reshaped DMOs in England should

look like in their efforts to collectively lead destinations. Below, the discussion on the plan surfaces some important insights on how effective and efficient management and leadership in destination Milton Keynes is projected to be carried out over the next decade. Kotter (2007) argued that successful organisational transformations require a 'leadership coalition' from within the organisation, where among its key strategic tasks is to come together and develop a shared commitment, such as a vision for the future. And the process of developing the DMP for DMK and Milton Keynes is seen as a shared commitment developed by a collective of leadership-committed leaders on board DMK.

Developing the DMP for Milton Keynes captured a rather complex collective process and involved multiple phases (see Figure 4.A.2). DMK initiated a partnership with a local Higher Education Institution (HEI) to support the development of their DMP. Key destination leaders, local residents, along with research and masters students, academics and practitioners provided input before the plan was fully developed (the plan was officially launched in July 2014).

The first phase of the plan development captured an overview of existing strategies of its key stakeholders and an evaluation of whether these included a convergence of strategic objectives between different stakeholders. As seen in Table 4.A.2, such strategies can be numerous and their influence and impact rather complex. This phase saw the involvement of tourism management academics and postgraduate students in reviewing over 40 existing city strategies ranging from the *Destination Milton Keynes Business Strategy 2011-14*, *Transport Vision and Strategy* and *Public Art* through to *Inward Investment* and *Smart City* agendas (the full list of these is in Table 4.A.2).

Although initial areas of convergence were identified, existing and future priorities were wide ranging. The DMP needed to capture *current* developments and reach a shared agreement with DMK stakeholders of the key priorities the lead destination organisation should focus on over the next 10 years. In light of the work undertaken in the initial phase, a visioning workshop hosted by Destination Milton Keynes and facilitated by academics from the local HEI was the starting point for the second phase (Figure 4.1.2).

Table 4.A.2. A Snapshot of Milton Keynes Strategies and Plans

Milton Keynes Strategies and Plans	
A Sustainable Future Plan 2010	Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan
Accessibility Strategy 2007	2014
Arts and Public Art Strategy 2014–23	MK and Bucks Rural Strategy 2008–
Arts Strategy 2010–14	2012
Arts Strategy Action Plan 2012	Neighbourhood Regeneration
Business Plan 2012–13	Strategy 2008
Business Strategy 2011–14	Open Space Strategy 2007
Core Strategy 2013	Parking Strategy for Central MK
Council Corporate Plan 2012–16	2013
Cultural strategy 2006–12	Public Art Strategy 2006–11
Community Strategy 2004–34	Public Art Strategy Action Plan 2012
Cycling Strategy 2013	Public Open Space 2012
Economic Development Strategy 2011–	Road Safety Strategy 2013–18
16	Rural Development Strategy 2008
Future Ready MK 2012	SEMLEP Strategic Economic Plan
Green Infrastructure Plan 2008	2015–20
Heritage Strategy 2008	Smart City Strategy
Heritage, Museums and Archives	Sport and Active Communities
Strategy 2014–23	Strategy 2014-23
Housing Strategy 2012–17	Sport and Leisure Strategy 2009–14
Inward Investment Plan 2013	Sub-Regional Strategy 2005
Local Investment Plan 2013	Sustainable Construction Policy
Low Carbon Living Strategy 2010–20	2007
Low Carbon Action Plan 2010–20	Transport Vision and Strategy
	2011–31
	The Parks Trust Strategic Plan 2011
	Walking Strategy 2003
	Workforce Development Strategy
	2010–14

In this phase, workshop hosts and facilitators were tasked with enabling an in-depth discussion, running a number of brain-storming activities with the aim to surface important stakeholder viewpoints. The ultimate purpose was to filter out key strategic priority areas for Milton Keynes that DMK should be leading on over the next decade. Participants in this workshop included representatives from the event, hospitality and other destination businesses, local government bodies, not-for-profit and community organisations all being members of DMK and having an interest in leading and shaping the direction of destination Milton Keynes.

The initial screening and analysis of strategic policy documents of Milton Keynes, followed by a visioning workshop and follow-up discussions with key destination stakeholders, informed the development of a Draft Consultation Plan serving as an input for the final phase (Figure 4.1.2). The consultation plan was then published on the official DMK website for public consultation as the purpose of this last phase was to seek opportunities to capture the views of a wider range of both - destination communities and the diversity of DMK members, and indeed, ensure that everyone has a voice in shaping this strategic destination plan. Various destination organisations and communities were thus given the opportunity to 'shout out loud' what they think is important via the official DMK website. DMK took the position that in order for this ten-year plan to be effective and provide leadership for the city, it needed to reflect the objectives and strategies of all DMK member organisations and equally, consider the opinions and suggestions of the people of Milton Keynes (DMK 2014).

The above provides evidence that the recently launched DMP is seen as an initial response of DMK to capitalise on the opportunities to lead destination Milton Keynes collectively through its membership network of organisations, i.e. opportunities introduced alongside and influenced by the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. This discussion surfaces some opportunities arising to orchestrate the destination and indeed, the DMP is seen as a commitment to the enactment of DL within DMK's network of member organisations, as is evident later in this chapter.

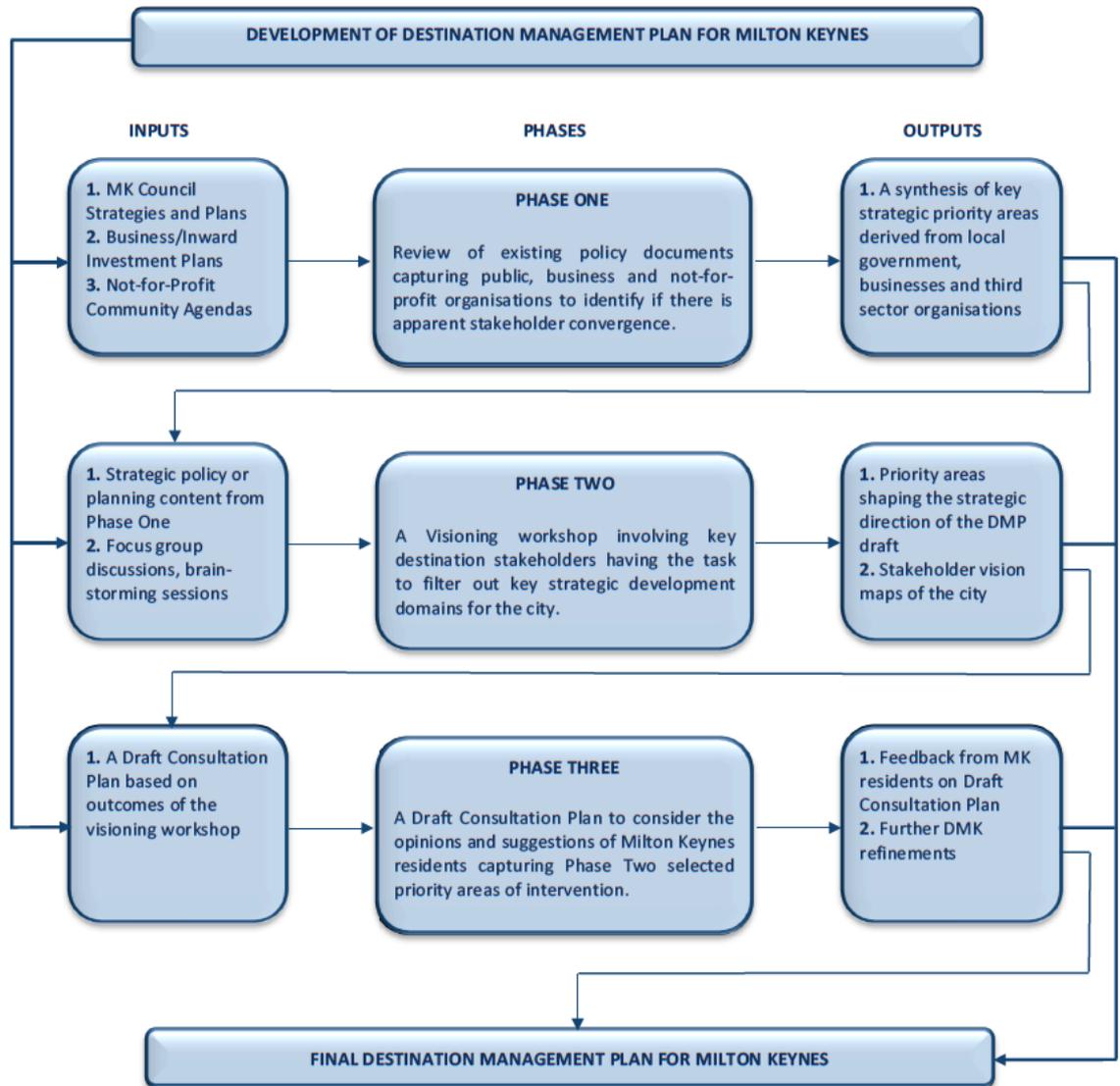


Figure 4.A.2. Developing Milton Keynes’ Destination Management Plan (Adapted from Hristov and Petrova 2015)

Core intervention areas and involved organisations (Plan delivery process)

The DMP reflected the wider remit expected of DMOs discussed above (economic, environmental, and social). Structured alongside five major themes, the plan captured key strategic areas of intervention, namely (i) enhancing the visitor experience; (ii) strengthening partnerships with local businesses; (iii) sport, arts, heritage and leisure; (iv) image enhancement and marketing; and (v) education. The following strategic intervention areas provide insights into initial

processes of the enactment of leadership and DL on a strategic organisational (DMO) level through mobilising resources and expertise residing in multiple DMK member organisations. Further, a collective of DMK member organisations were invited to have a lead responsibility in the delivery of the plan. This distribution of roles in strategic destination decision-making across all five areas of intervention provides insights into the enactment of leadership, which is distributed in nature. The following breakdown discussion of the plan aims to unfold the highlighted intervention areas and debates the enactment of DL on a DMO level:

Enhancing the Visitor Experience is indeed central to the plan, where core deliverables cover the improvement of transport infrastructure, centralisation of information provision to visitors of Milton Keynes and importantly, taking actions aiming to turn the city into a destination that is accessible to all. Accessible tourism is an emergent issue that has only recently started to draw the attention of academics and practitioners and is of particular importance to urban destinations. In the case of destination Milton Keynes, the first step to that was the development of an accessibility statement in partnership with Milton Keynes City Centre Management and key council bodies. These and other DMK member organisations, such as the Parks Trust and Milton Keynes College, are leading on the development and implementation of these interventions, which implied the distribution of leadership roles in strategic destination decision-making and across this theme. It may well be argued that competitive destinations also mean accessible destinations and DMOs should be able to take the accessibility agenda forward in order to address the needs of current and prospective visitors. DMK intends to take this strategic step and influence decision-making, improve the overall experience and thus lead on initiatives aimed at enhancing the visitor experience through its network of member organisations.

Strengthening Partnerships with Local Businesses was the second major theme in the DMP, looking to sustain, yet expand on the existing collaborative practices among both DMK member businesses and a wide array of visitor economy organisations in the city. It also captures core partnership initiatives, such as new product development and provision of leisure packages, again - through collaborative efforts among destination businesses from various sectors

of the economy, such as hospitality, transport, attractions and more (Table 4.A.1). The distribution of roles in strategic destination decision-making across this theme is also evident, where the plan defines multiple DMK member organisations to champion and have a lead responsibility in the delivery of strengthening partnerships with local businesses – Milton Keynes Council Arts and Heritage, Milton Keynes Theatre, Living Archive, Milton Keynes Gallery and others. The plan recognises the increasing role of local business networks and indeed, the importance of collective action in leading on stimulating local growth and improving the market visibility of the destination – a role that is now largely within the remit of DMK. The importance of smaller local businesses and entrepreneurs in tourism is also recognised in the DMP as a means of enhancing the competitiveness of individual stakeholders and in destinations as a whole.

Sport, Arts, Heritage and Leisure are also high on the agenda and hence considered as a third theme in the DMP for Milton Keynes. This offering is of particular importance to urban destinations and Milton Keynes is not an exception. Arts and heritage are, for instance, considered to be at the core of the visitor experience in Milton Keynes, whilst developing an International Sporting City aims to raise the profile of this locality through hosting mega sporting events, such as the Rugby World Cup in 2015. The success of this agenda is a function of the collective action of a number of DMK member organisations and this was also pointed out during the interview with DMK's former CEO. The plan again proposed a collective of DMK member organisations, which have lead responsibility in the delivery of sport, arts, heritage and leisure – amongst these are Milton Keynes Gallery, Milton Keynes Museum, Milton Keynes Council, Milton Keynes Dons SET and others. Arts and heritage initiatives, along with sporting events of such a scale, are fuelling inward investment opportunities and support the regeneration of destination communities. These opportunities are to be harnessed by a number of DMK members as they boost visitor numbers (e.g. as a consequence of hosting mega sporting events) and equally, have a positive impact on destination image. Evidence of increased visitor numbers is also an opportunity for Milton Keynes to showcase their cultural, in this case arts and heritage, offering across both urban and rural areas of the destination in focus.

Image Enhancement and Marketing are central to any contemporary destination that is to successfully compete on a global–local scale against a highly diverse and saturated destination market. Brand is therefore fundamental to development of the city image. In line with this, “there is a need to harness the quirky side of Milton Keynes and embrace it for positive local, national and international PR” (DMK 2014, p.15). The plan has therefore recognised that competitive destinations should have in place a strong marketing and public relations (PR) strategy: importantly, one that has both global and local dimensions. The global dimension captures Milton Keynes’s aspirations to seek further opportunities for growth and compete internationally. However, the plan has acknowledged local and regional marketing that remains equally important in capturing the existing core market base and the current provision. The future expansion of visitor information centres and collaboration across the membership network is an expression of DMK’s intention to attract more visitors reflecting on local and regional markets. The latter has been cemented through a number of action points outlined in the plan. Within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, marketing and PR strategy should be seen as one that has global–local scope: in other words, promoting ‘staycation’ amongst home tourists and visitors as a means to support the national economy in austerity times, whilst also adopting a proactive approach to attracting overseas niche markets and improve competitiveness. Key action points in the plan provide evidence that such approach to brand leadership can be undertaken by a number of DMK members in accordance with the key action points outlined in the new DMP.

Education is the fifth key strategic theme building on existing strengths of destination Milton Keynes, implying a long-term approach to planning, forward-thinking and also promising potential growth. A large number of knowledge-intensive start-ups and well-known blue-chip companies have established their headquarters in Milton Keynes. DMK will be pursuing opportunities to develop degree courses relevant to the visitor economy, and in the longer term, attract international business visitors via the joint efforts of higher and further education institutions placed within its membership network (e.g. University of Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes College). This can expand the Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) market, which offers considerable opportunities for further

growth of destination Milton Keynes. This theme is not however solely about capitalising on the VFR market expansion opportunities. Instead, leading on higher and further education interventions aims to lessen the gap between education content and workforce needs of local businesses to secure the future of a flourishing tourism and visitor economy in Milton Keynes. The inclusion of the education sector in the plan is of high relevance to the destination in focus having a substantial proportion of knowledge-intensive industries that are either directly or indirectly related to supporting and further developing tourism and the wider visitor economy. Again, the plan defined a collective of DMK member organisations, which together have lead responsibility in the delivery of this fifth strategic theme, amongst these being UCMK, Milton Keynes Council and Milton Keynes College.

The above discussion captures DMK's intention to provide a long-term vision for the destination and serve as a leadership network across a number of key sectors of the economy whilst also assigning lead responsibilities a diverse set of destination organisations, the majority of which are members of the DMO. The visionary role of DMOs, i.e. shaping a long-term destination agenda has been considered as one of the key leadership roles of these membership organisations (Morrison 2013). Further, the existence of multiple leaders provides evidence of the enactment of DL. As Fitzsimons et al. (2011) argued, DL is a form of leadership, which is enacted by multiple individuals within the organisation.

Collective lead responsibilities: The enactment of distributed leadership

By taking forward this plan, DMK is projected to be leading on tasks and reviewing the progress of all involved stakeholders as evidenced in the DMP. Coordinated by DMK members, the reviews are taking place in light of each objective (area of intervention). VisitEngland advocates that DMPs are unique as they may identify areas of responsibility and actions of a number of key stakeholders, not only DMOs and their member organisations. However, DMPs support the intended leadership functions of DMOs and the discussion on the plan suggests that DMK is uniquely placed to take this strategic agenda forward

by assigning lead responsibilities to its member organisations. The DMP, which is a shared statement of intent and provides a shared vision to lead on strategic agendas for destination Milton Keynes, may well be seen as evidence of emergent leadership in DMK and this was confirmed by both the current CEO of the organisation and the DMP itself:

“As the official tourism organisation for Milton Keynes, DMK will take this plan forward; leading on tasks ... the plan is an opportunity for DMK to drive the work of local stakeholders ... DMK is positioned to oversee the delivery of this plan.”

(DMP 2014–2024, p.19)

Indeed, Pearce (2004) sees the creation of a shared vision as an important manifestation of emergent DL practice. Further, at the official launch of the new *Destination Management Plan 2014-24* for Milton Keynes, which took place in July 2014 at the 2014 Visitor Economy Conference, the current CEO of DMK pointed out that:

“This Destination Management Plan is the framework on how Milton Keynes should be managed as a destination in the next 10 years. This plan is important as the visitor economy has fuzzy boundaries.”

(CEO, DMK)

This implies that there may well be a need for the adoption of a visionary tool to facilitate and coordinate collective leadership efforts across the network with an emphasis on lead roles and responsibilities and the recently launched DMP can be seen as such a strategic guiding framework. As pointed out by VisitEngland’s CEO who introduced the plan to the audience of the 2014 Visitor Economy Conference, his opinion was that “this plan will take destination Milton Keynes forward” (18 July 2014).

Leadership explored through a more traditional lens has often been seen as a role of the individual (see Chapter 2 A and the discussion on the shifting concept of leadership) up until recently when more shared, perhaps distributed forms of leadership are gradually gaining wider recognition. DMK however is a diverse network of member organisations – a not-for-profit organisation with a more fluid structure. The latter creates wider opportunities for embedding joined-up planning and collective decision-making. Hence DMK has the

opportunity to facilitate and encourage distributed forms of leadership (an opportunity, which has been addressed by the initial conceptual contribution of this study, i.e. the DMO Leadership Cycle introduced in Chapter 2 A):

“The Plan is a shared statement of intent to manage our destination ... DMK is a lot more than a marketing organisation and we will work together to produce world class results.”

(CEO, DMK)

This plan is the first step towards the enactment of DL (see Chapter 2 B for definition) as it is “co-ordinated by DMK, but is produced and will be delivered in partnership with other organisations having a stake in and influence on the visitor economy” (DMP 2014-2024, p.2). Indeed, the role of collaboration and the importance of sharing roles and responsibilities in times of limited public support for destination organisations is strategic consideration that was reinforced by VisitEngland’s CEO:

“The partnership behind Milton Keynes is a real strength for tourism and we can only achieve good things in destinations through partnerships.”

(CEO, VisitEngland)

Further, the subsequent discussion on processes and practices related to the development of the DMP for Milton Keynes serves as the first point of evidence of the enactment of DL on a DMO level. This has been captured in the collaborative nature of shaping the plan and its strategic priorities. The visioning workshop itself provided insights into the willingness of DMK member organisations to recognise their interdependence and thus work together towards the enactment of a leadership model, which is distributed in nature. The process of developing the DMP and the DMK member aspirations behind it is seen as initial empirical evidence of leadership and its collective dimension, which is enacted on a DMO level. This mirrors initial organisational change processes of DMK (Objective B) triggered by the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (Hristov and Naumov 2015).

Hairon and Goh (2014) contended that building leadership capacity and enacting leadership is mirrored in leadership actions, namely influencing and empowering others, making strategically-important decisions and

communicating a clear vision. Evidence of building leadership capacity and enacting DL has been evident in the case of DMK through surfacing processes and practices related to shaping and implementing the new DMP and empowering a collective of DMK member organisations through assigning lead responsibilities. These actions provide evidence of the enactment of DL, which, as pointed out by Hairon and Goh (2014), is a characteristic of the DL construct. The distribution of roles in strategic destination decision-making across all five areas of intervention (strategic DMP themes) provide evidence into the enactment of leadership, which is distributed in nature. The above discussion suggested that multiple DMK member organisations have lead responsibility in the delivery of the Plan. Ruark and Mumford (2009) argued that DL allows for bringing diverse skills and expertise to the table and DMPs may well enable DMOs to benefit from pooling diverse expertise, skills and even resources.

Further, a recent paper debating the future of reshaped DMOs based on the outcomes of the 2nd Biennial Destination Management Forum in St Gallen, Switzerland (Reinhold et al. 2015) questioned the prospective role of heroic leadership in destination management and leadership practice. Reinhold et al. (2015) debated whether and to what extent a sole individual or key destination organisation can work towards building a consensus in strategic destination decision-making in times when resources, expertise, leadership influence, and skills can be located in a number of destination actors. This prompts further discussions into embedding and nurturing leadership, which is distributed in nature in membership networks within DMOs (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Or what Reinhold et al. (2015, p.4) referred to as 'polycentric governance structures' and also pointed to the general lack of research surrounding such governance structures.

Indeed, the discussion and the plan itself provide insights into how DL is being enacted on a more strategic organisational (DMO) level. Contemporary DMOs are now increasingly assuming visionary roles and are thus fundamental to shaping a long-term agenda for their destinations (Morrison 2013), as in the case of the adopted DMP for Milton Keynes articulating the destination's vision, mission and aspirations. Valente et al. (2015) identified the articulation and communication of goals and actions to be among the prominent leadership themes in a DMO context. Hence, DMK through its network of member

organisations is well positioned to assume visionary functions and oversee the implementation of the plan, in addition to leading on a number of initiatives aimed at developing key sectors of the local economy. This has the potential to establish a strong local leadership network and equally, strengthen DMK's position as a key influencer of collective action.

The discussion below goes beyond destination Milton Keynes to unveil and debate the strategic importance of the wider, policy network in local leadership and destination development. In addition to being the leadership organisation for Milton Keynes, DMK is also seen as part of a wider leadership network, i.e. going beyond DMK's usual geography and thus involving SEMLEP – the LEP operating across the South East Midlands area where Milton Keynes is nested.

4.3.4.A SEMLEP's visitor economy group: Leadership developing on a regional level

DMOs are required to change their modus operandi and hence look for and enter partnerships with organisations beyond their membership network, which are also interested in the wider visitor economy. LEPs have been identified as such organisations to serve as allies to DMOs (see Coles et al. 2014). Undoubtedly, the economic downturn and its global–local implications are among the key drivers of change on an organisational level as confirmed by some DMK informants. That, coupled with the new political agenda in England has led to ceasing central government funding for DMK as it became evident by the undertaken analysis of the shifting policy network in the DMO and destination domain in England (Appendix 3b).

DMK and SEMLEP – Common vision and objectives

Indeed, the embeddedness of lead organisations, e.g. DMOs, in other networks is also worth exploring particularly with regard to opportunities that this lead organisation is able to exploit (Müller-Seitz 2012). DMK as a lead organisation

in destination Milton Keynes is also part of a wider destination management and development-interested network. This network may well be seen as the new tourism policy network for England, which takes into account the presence of VisitEngland, SEMLEP and other interested organisations on local, regional and national level. The 2010 coalition government has introduced LEPs operating across wider functional and economic areas to support the functions and mission of reshaped DMOs (Coles et al. 2014). SEMLEP has been projected as an example of such external to the DMK membership network organisation (Figure 4.A.3) that is interested in capitalising on visitor economy opportunities and thus further developing destinations. Is, however, capitalising on the visitor economy a sound approach to DMOs if they are to secure funding? It can be argued that new, wider-reaching DMOs, expected to form a nexus of public, private and not-for-profit bodies (Penrose 2011) are better at capturing the multifaceted visitor economy and the discussion on primary data suggested that DMK is not an exception. This was indicated by the organisation's current CEO and is explored further later in this chapter. Further, the visitor economy concept is thought to be central to DMK's visitor-oriented agenda for destination management and development and the new DMP for Milton Keynes provided such evidence. A shift away from nurturing solely tourism activity and capitalising on the visitor economy implies more roles and responsibilities for DMOs (Hristov 2014). DMK is keen on exploring opportunities to embark on this agenda.

Equally, such a shift introduces more opportunities for developing the tourism and visitor destination and perhaps 'outsourcing' leadership functions as is evident in the case of Milton Keynes. Interviewees supported the statement that the visitor economy is that element of the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England that may be driving opportunistic behaviour of DMK to tap into this opportunity and capitalise on partnerships with the external network of organisations interested in developing Milton Keynes as a visitor destination and beyond. The latter statement was also covered as part of VisitEngland's Visitor Economy Forum in December 2013 and again in October 2014, although empirical insights capturing best practices on destination management and development alliances between DMOs and LEPs have not been highlighted.



Figure 4.A.3. SEMLEP and DMK on the Map (Source: SEMLEP 2014).

An emergent nexus between DMK and SEMLEP in light of the visitor economy does arguably represent such a scenario (Hristov 2014) and this was reflected in, and serves as the basis of the Visitor Economy Group (VEG) launched by the latter organisation. The group was specifically charged with realising the opportunities presented by the visitor economy, encouraging investment in the sector and promotion with the aim to attract visitors to the SEMLEP area. Indeed, going beyond DMK boundaries and thus considering the wider destination management network is just as important, particularly when meeting organisations with common vision and objectives. SEMLEP have recognised that the visitor economy has very significant prospects of playing a key role across destinations.

“The sector is very much part of our economy. The relationship we have with the sector and the key organisations delivering the prospects for destination growth will remain fundamental to our philosophy.”
 (CEO, SEMLEP)

Further, SEMLEP's CEO emphasised the opportunities that Milton Keynes holds as a prominent SEMLEP destination and the role of DMK in capitalising on these by initiating key partnerships:

"I can tell you that certainly DMK is ambitious partner with wider offering and there is even a prospect for the 2023 bid for European Capital of Culture Programme ... we have a uniqueness in Milton Keynes as a destination in its own right and I would say that there is a primary opportunity to go forward and galvanise some of this uniqueness"
(CEO, SEMLEP)

Equally, DMK have also recognised the importance of partnering with SEMLEP and thus leading on local development in the South East Midlands geography (Figure 4.A.3). DMK is an important partner of SEMLEP. Milton Keynes is, in addition, a key destination and visitor spot across the area, as pointed out by the former CEO of DMK:

"Being centrally placed in the SEMLEP area is important and certainly a major opportunity and in this sense Milton Keynes is well-positioned ... DMK is at the core of the SEMLEP area."
(Founding CEO, DMK)

Regional leadership at the forefront

There is evidence that the gap left by the public sector stepping back from supporting DMOs could be bridged through cross-organisational destination development alliances such as the one between SEMLEP and DMK. This collaboration may be carried out in light of capitalising on the visitor economy as clearly functions and core objectives of reshaped DMOs are altering to adopt a more holistic approach to management and even assume leadership of diverse economic, environmental and societal attributes of a destination (Hristov 2014).

Using the VEG as a platform, SEMLEP member organisations have been presented with the opportunity to put forward project proposals in order to bid for funding intended to cover small through to medium-sized and big-scale projects with the aim to improve the inward investment climate, visitor offering and infrastructure in their destinations. An EU funding pot of £2bn became

available for 2014–20 to cover sound project proposals for destination development, enhancing the visitor experience and improving the quality of life of local communities as discussed by SEMLEP’s CEO on the VEG meetings.

The external (policy) network means access to developmental resources and the VEG may be seen as an emergent SEMLEP–DMK nexus where DMK will have the opportunity to gain access to EU Structural Funds with the view to support its strategic development agenda. There is however evidence that the recently established partnership between DMK and SEMLEP extends beyond destination development initiatives to capture leadership of strategic destination resources. The VEG is an expression of such a partnership:

“VEG is the mechanism by which we can help focus some of our strategic thinking ... our intention is to try and grow the sector and make sure we support the right types of intervention across SEMLEP destinations.”

(CEO, SEMLEP)

SEMLEP’s CEO, in addition, brought attention to the collective dimension of leading on destination development in the SEMLEP area:

“The most important fact we should bear in mind is that partnership is at the core of SEMLEP; our strength is therefore the collective strength, not the individuals’ strength.”

(CEO, SEMLEP)

The intention of SEMLEP to strengthen its partnership network, provide research outputs and economic support for destinations in the area and Milton Keynes in particular was further cemented in their recent *Strategic Plan for Arts, Heritage, Sports, Visitor Economy, Cultural and Creative Industries* launched in July 2014. SEMLEP’s strategic plan provides a snapshot of the diversity of the discussed key sectors and their impact on the economy of the South East Midlands area (SEMLEP 2014).

“The South East Midlands is an area rich in arts, heritage and culture comprising a diverse range of natural assets, visitor attractions, world-class sporting facilities and a growing craft and creative industry sector”

(SEMLEP 2014, p.1)

Milton Keynes captures much of these industries, which are directly linked to the visitor economy. SEMLEP’s strategic plan has recognised the advantages of working collaboratively across geographical and sectoral boundaries and thus sees Milton Keynes as a prime location in the area. The destination has the highest concentration of key assets, namely attractions and events, in the whole South East Midlands area (Figure 4.A.4), which calls for concentrating SEMLEP efforts and resources with the aim to further support the development of the visitor economy.

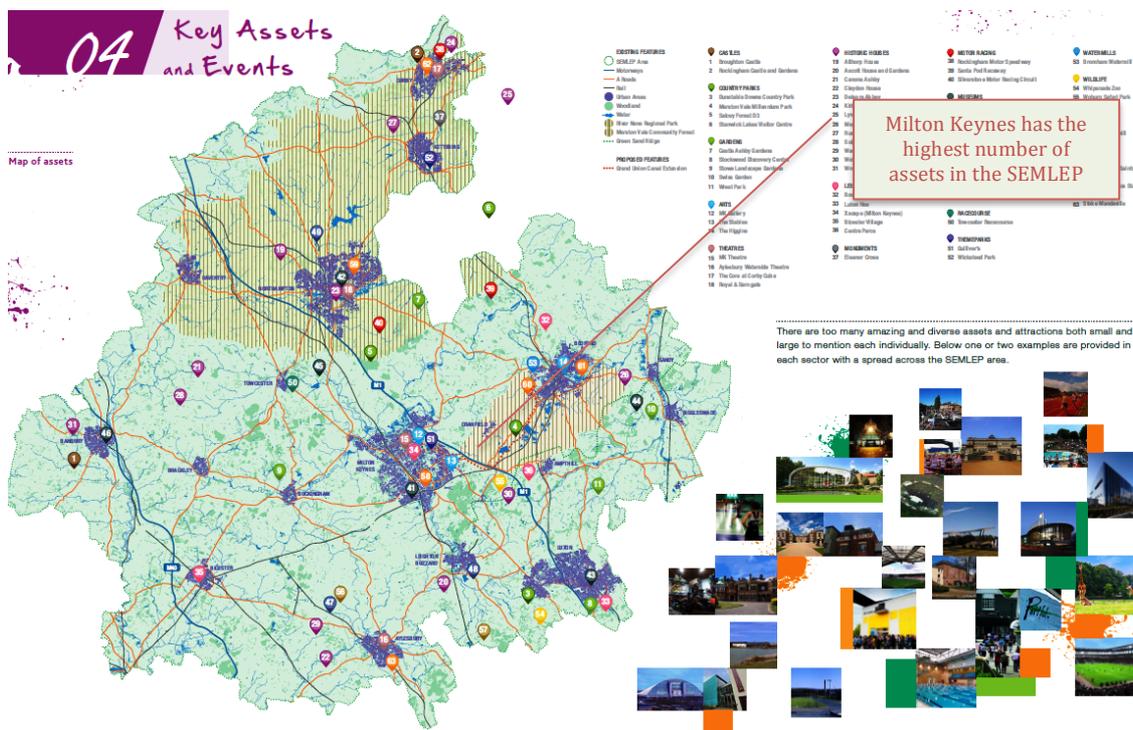


Figure 4.A.4. Assets Map in the SEMLEP area (Source: SEMLEP 2014)

As a next step, the strategic plan encourages the development of an action plan and identifying further opportunities for collaborative working. The latter, as projected by the SEMLEP strategic plan, will assist with exploiting the opportunities and overcoming the challenges (SEMLEP 2014) faced by the above sectors. In that sense, the focus has been found to be on supporting development projects to improve the infrastructure and visitor base in the area, i.e. capturing one of the core objectives of VEG. The 2015 Rugby World Cup to hosted in Milton Keynes has been among the headlines and indeed, an opportunity to support the growth of businesses. It was therefore recognised by

SEMLEP's strategic plan. The above insights do not simply suggest the commitment of SEMLEP to supporting DMK in its efforts to further develop destination Milton Keynes and realise its growth potential. They also provide evidence that DMK and SEMLEP are collectively leading on the delivery and realisation of the benefits of such projects, which are of benefit to both DMK and its network of member organisations and the wider policy network where SEMLEP and DMK are nested.

The discussion provides evidence that DMK and SEMLEP can work together to integrate destination management and leadership into wider economic strategies. Studying powerful emergent dyads beyond DMOs inter-organisational network in a dynamic, yet uncertain operational context may prove to be beneficial, particularly with an emphasis on provision of resources and exercising leadership functions in tandem with other organisations nested in the wider policy network (Hristov 2014). Despite being in its infancy stage, the partnership between SEMLEP and DMK in further developing the visitor economy is an expression of that. This emergent coalition between DMK, SEMLEP and other organisations from the wider policy network are further investigated as part of a network study carried out in Phase II, and an in-depth interview with the CEO of SEMLEP in Phase III.

Phase I insights derived from empirical data (an interview with SEMLEP's CEO and VEG participant observation) suggested that SEMLEP's VEG provides a platform for shaping strategic destination leadership decisions, which involve both DMK and SEMLEP. As such, and going forward, the group may serve to facilitate the enactment and practice of DL between DMK, SEMLEP and potentially other strategic partners from the wider policy network, such as VisitEngland and other DMOs.

4.4.A The DMO Leadership Cycle: Product of the interplay between theory and data

Chapter 2 A has been written in parallel with Chapter 4 A – the reason for the DMO Leadership Cycle being in Chapter 2 A is that the emergent concept is a logical continuation of the discussion of key theoretical contributions and

progress on research covered there. The emergent concept nevertheless draws on empirical insights provided by Phase I and has its place reserved in this chapter as a prominent finding derived from empirical insights resulting from the application of Phase I. Arguably then, the DMO Leadership Cycle is a product of the interplay between existing theoretical contributions and new empirical data. This interaction between theory and data is a fundamental characteristic of abduction, which has been employed in this study as a logical approach to enquiring new knowledge. In this research, the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation is captured in advancing the theoretical understanding of emergent leadership practice and distributed forms of leadership in particular; how leadership evolves on a strategic organisational and network (DMO) level. The relationship between theory and data is an interactive one (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012; Timmermans and Tavory 2012) in order to facilitate the production of new knowledge (Reichert 2009). This has been discussed in Chapter 3, where the abductive approach to knowledge accumulation was first introduced and critically examined; its relevance to and potential contribution in achieving the overarching aim and objectives of this study were then argued.

Identifying initial evidence of organisational change within DMK, which is influenced by shifts in the landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, has been the focal point of Phase I and the above discussion of insights related to this preliminary study. Emergent leadership practice on a DMO level leading to providing initial theoretical contribution and indeed constructing a framework to explain how reshaped DMOs in England might serve as leadership networks in destinations can be seen as “surprising research evidence” (Timmermans and Tavory 2012, p.170), which is a fundamental building block of abductive reasoning as discussed in Chapter 3. This initial theoretical contribution is advanced throughout Phase II and III with more empirical insights by ensuring a constant interaction between existing theory and novice empirical data and thus acknowledges the role and contribution of abduction in achieving the objectives of this research.

The discussion of empirical findings covered in this chapter suggests that a variety of committed destination organisations (DMK member organisations) can be developing and exercising leadership functions within formal governance structures (DMK) with clear boundaries and being guided by a

collaborative agenda providing common vision (DMP 2014–24). The latter was captured in the initial conceptual contribution, i.e. the DMO Leadership Cycle introduced in Chapter 2 A. Current knowledge on the DMO Leadership Cycle and the transition of contemporary DMOs towards assuming leadership functions and serving as leadership networks in destinations is advanced throughout Phase II and Phase III by building on empirical insights provided by the main network study and subsequent interview agenda, respectively.

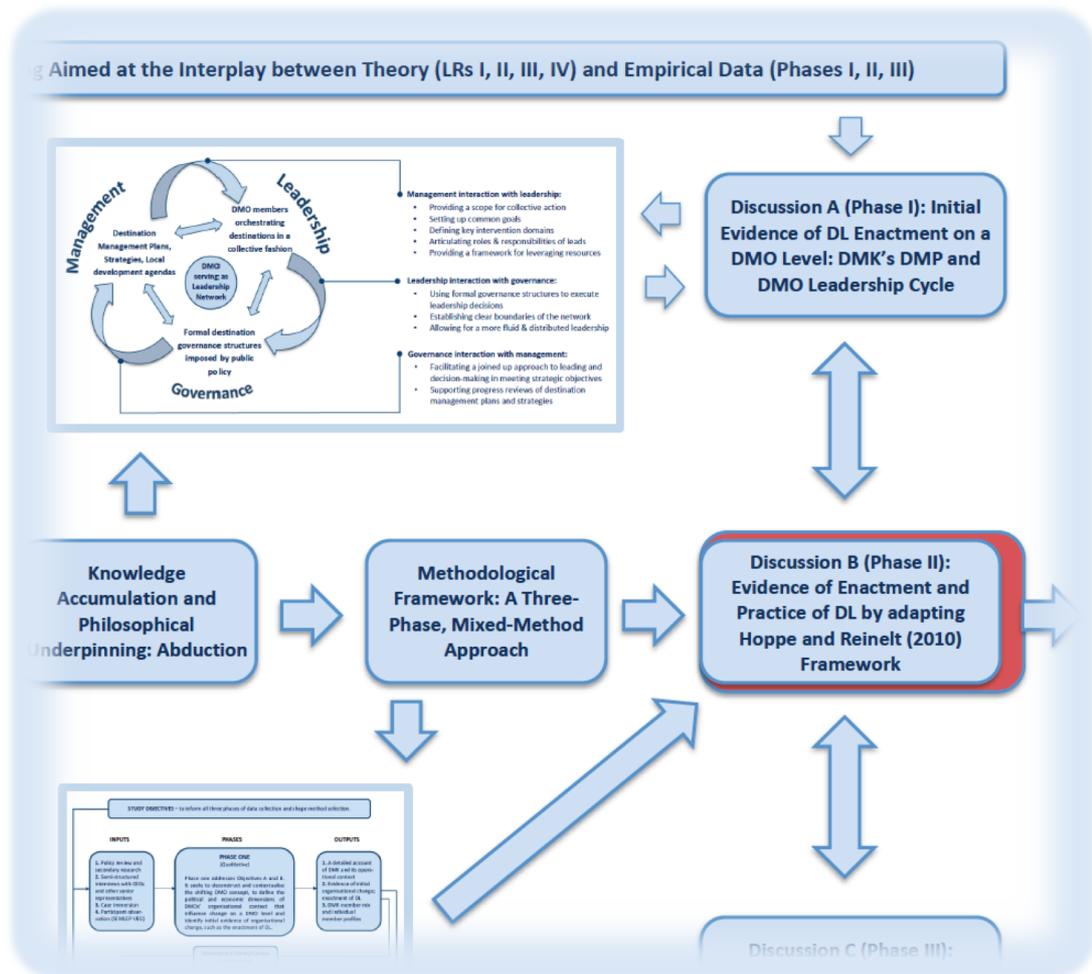
4.5.A Chapter conclusion

This first discussion chapter provided an in-depth discussion of findings resulting from the application of Phase I of the adopted methodological framework. The chapter discussed a number of secondary data findings, which surfaced the new policy network within a new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. Emergent organisations and context characteristics of the operational environment for DMOs within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England (as per Objective A) were initially discussed. The chapter subsequently discussed the structure and characteristics of the DMO network in focus, namely DMK. Primary data, which largely stems from the researcher's immersion in the organisation and its context, provided initial evidence of the enactment of DL on a DMO level through DMK's DMP. Enactment of DL is evident in DMP's distribution of roles in strategic destination decision-making, where a collective of DMK member organisations have been assigned lead roles and responsibilities across the five strategic themes in the DMP. The chapter concluded with a short discussion of this study's initial conceptual contribution, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle, seen as a product of the interplay between existing theoretical contributions in the domain of DMOs and destinations and empirical Phase I data. The rationale behind discussing the DMO Leadership Cycle in this chapter is driven by the research approach adopted to knowledge accumulation, namely abduction. Chapter 5 provides a detailed, process-driven

visualisation of the trajectory followed by this research and the place of abduction in it.

Chapter 4 B

Discussion of the SNA Phase



CHAPTER 4 B: DISCUSSION OF THE SNA PHASE

4.1.B Chapter introduction

Having identified evidence of the enactment of DL under Phase I, this second discussion chapter goes on to provide a detailed discussion of key insights into the practice of DL within DMK's network of member organisations and also between organisations across DMK's wider policy network. This second discussion chapter is grounded in visual SNA network insights and network metrics, namely structural and relational properties derived from the application of Phase II (the main network study underpinning the adopted three-phase methodological framework). The achieved sample during Phase II is covered in Appendix 3a. In line with Objective B, the previous chapter provided evidence of initial processes of organisational change, namely the enactment of DL on a DMO level and across a collective of DMO member organisations. This evidence was captured in the recently launched DMP for DMK. Contemporary DMOs are then seen as visionaries for their destinations, where shaping a long-term agenda (e.g, a DMP) is fundamental to their leadership role (Morrison, 2013). Hence the following discussion goes onto exploring processes of DL development in detail through adopting an in-depth SNA investigation in two directions – DMK's membership network and DMK's wider policy network.

The Phase II data analysis, which is translated into the following discussion is underpinned by Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, which is a set of both generic and specific organisational network questions for evaluating leadership development initiatives in networks embedded in formal organisations (addresses Objective C). Indeed, understanding the process of leadership development implies understanding of the development of social interactions within that process, which in light of this research, has been undertaken by adopting an SNA approach. The investigated network is conceptualised and thus presented as one developing and exercising leadership functions or in other words – there is evidence of emergent socially-constructed DL. This action follows for empirical evidence, i.e. the DMP, which was seen as evidence of leadership development initiative on a network level and discussed in the previous chapter. The DMP was launched in July 2014.

The SNA commenced shortly after the launch of the plan in July 2014 in order to delve into Phase I-surfaced DL development practices on a DMO level.

The chapter first explores the network behaviour of DMK member organisations (complete network) in relation to the development and practice of DL. This is achieved through an investigation into a number of structural and relational properties of the network, patterns of knowledge and resource exchange by adapting a range of specific and generic questions, in addition to related network measures, which are part of Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework. Figure 4.B.1, which provides a small-scale version of Figure 3.2, depicts the route taken in this study with regard to adopting and adapting the framework by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010).

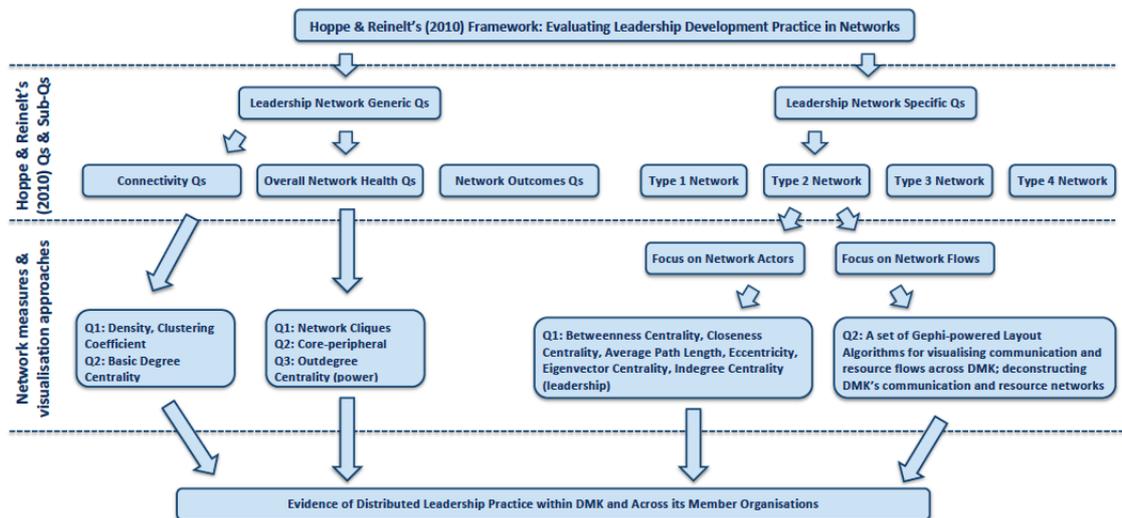


Figure 4.B.1. Adapting and Adopting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) Framework: The Route

The chapter then provides a basic surface analysis of the network behaviour of DMK and its allies in the wider policy network (ego network) in light of developing and exercising DL practice in the SEMLEP area seen solely through the perspective of DMK (the ego), whilst also providing some longitudinal insights into the rising importance of the wider leadership network beyond DMO boundaries. In so doing, insights from the investigation carried out in Phase II build upon the existing conceptual contribution being the product of Phase I, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle, which demonstrates how reshaped DMOs

in England assume leadership functions in destinations and serve as leadership networks. The chapter concludes by outlining the questions arising from network depictions and thus serves as the basis for Phase III and the last discussion chapter below.

4.2.B The internal DMK network: Adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework

As previously discussed in Chapter 2 A, Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) introduced a framework with the view to demonstrate the use of SNA in the evaluation of leadership development initiatives in networks embedded across organisations and communities. Their framework for evaluating leadership development practice mirrors both generic and specific questions. That is both mainstream leadership network development questions and more specific organisational leadership network development questions aimed at networks embedded in formal organisations, such as DMOs.

Going back to this study, the focus of the first literature review chapter was drawn on the DMO Leadership Cycle – a product of the interplay between existing theoretical contributions in destination leadership and Phase I-derived empirical data (see Chapter 2 A). Drawing on preliminary evidence, the Cycle revealed how DMOs evolve as flatter and more fluid organisations which serve as leadership networks in destinations by adopting Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) leadership networks classification and particularly the one where leadership networks emerge within formal organisational structures. As already pointed out under Chapter 2 A, leadership networks, e.g. social networks among destination leaders), as contended by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) can be classified under four types:

- (i)** Peer leadership networks, relying on personal trust and providing access to resources;
- (ii)** Organisational leadership networks, which emerge within formal organisational structures and are focused on increasing network performance and impact;
- (iii)** Field-policy leadership networks charged with shaping the

environment;

(iv) Local, bottom-up collective leadership networks, which emerge on a self-organising basis.

Organisational leadership networks (the leadership network classification adopted in this study), according to Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) capture:

“...the informal relationships that exist alongside the formal structure within an organisation ... Organisational leadership networks also refer to systems of multiple organisations that work together to more efficiently deliver services or produce a product”

(Hoppe and Reinelt 2010, p. 607)

In light of this and on an inter-organisational level, *“leadership networks support organisations with shared interests to produce a product or deliver a service more efficiently”* (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010, p.601). This has been the case of DMK member organisations leading collectively and following a coherent strategy and vision, i.e. the DMP Plan within DMO boundaries and driven by the common interest to put Milton Keynes on the map. Indeed, leadership within organisations considers the strength of collective action, aligning resources and inspiring others to participate (LeMay and Ellis 2007), which is aligned with the new vision for DMK unveiled in the recently launched DMP. In light of this, Pearce (2004) sees the creation of a shared vision as an important manifestation of emergent DL practice.

It is therefore within the context of the second leadership network type defined by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010), namely organisational leadership networks, which emerge within formal organisational structures, that the DMO Leadership Cycle debates the existence of lead functions among DMO members embedded in their inter-organisational network. This was demonstrated through the interplay between theory and Phase I empirical data resulting in the above initial conceptual contribution. It is important to note that, whilst Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) do not explicitly refer to DL development in their framework, they emphasise the fact that organisational leadership networks may well be seen as *“systems of multiple organisations that work together”* (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010, p.607), which implies the existence of

distributed forms of leadership in line with definitions of DL discussed in Chapter 2 B and this is certainly the case with the membership organisations in focus.

Further, Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) argued that organisational leadership is seen as the ability to plan, organise, implement and evaluate projects. The developed and already implemented DMP is an expression of that. The new DMP for DMK and Milton Keynes was the central theme of discussion under Chapter 4 A. The DMP can be seen as evidence of DL development initiative and this was demonstrated through the discussion of Phase I outcomes under Chapter 4 A. The DMP was launched in July 2014. The SNA, which mirrors Phase II, commenced shortly after the launch of the plan and was completed in January 2015. If Phase I outcomes provided initial arguably limited evidence of leadership developing on a DMO level, this chapter goes onto exploring leadership development on a DMO level in detail through carrying out a comprehensive SNA investigation on the network in focus.

However, one should bear in mind that evaluating leadership networks is still a challenge in the field of leadership development and thus *"established standards for evaluating networks do not currently exist"* (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010 p.47). This is particularly the case when dealing with leadership development initiatives in networks embedded in organisations, where Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) provide only a limited number of questions for evaluation and some indicative SNA measures to capture structural and relational properties in networks. Hence the following investigation draws on Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) framework for evaluation of leadership development initiatives in networks being the only contribution thus far, which provides some guidance in two directions – network-generic and organisational network-specific leadership development practice as discussed above. The analysis of Phase II network data is therefore influenced by and is derived from the arguably seminal work of Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) and their leadership network classification framework where the DMO under investigation is seen as an organisational leadership network consisting of multiple organisations working together towards meeting specific objectives.

Further, the framework provided by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) is arguably the first attempt of academia to bridge the gap between network analysis (SNA) and DL development in networks embedded in organisations, e.g. systems of

multiple organisations working together towards a common goal, and as such, it does not provide comprehensive guidelines on SNA's structural and relational network measures to be studied. Instead, Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) refer to "potential questions for evaluation" (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010, p.605), which in the case of this study, are answered by mainstream network analysis concepts and measures, such as bridging, clustering, core-periphery, centrality amongst others.

Hence, in line with adopting and adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating leadership practice in networks embedded in organisations, this study borrows a series of network analysis concepts and measures, which correspond to structural and relational network properties introduced in the literature review discussing networks in theory (see Chapter 2 C). These network analysis concepts and measures build upon the seminal work of Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) and thus facilitate the analysis of both generic and specific question discussions below – sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 respectively. It is important to note that the SNA measures have been selected on the basis of their relevance to Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) generic and specific questions. An SNA software package facilitates the analysis of organisational network data as discussed in Chapter 3, namely Gephi (Cherven 2015). Gephi has a number of network and actor level measures targeting structural and relational properties of networks. The SNA software package also provides a range of network layout algorithms, which are used for transforming network data into readable and insightful depictions (refer to Chapter 3 for further details on SNA software packages). Gephi is therefore seen as a dominant software tool in facilitating insightful Phase II data analysis and thus shaping the discussion below.

4.2.1.B Hoppe and Reinelt's generic SNA questions: Structural properties and relational properties of the network

Within this section discussing generic leadership development evaluation questions, Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) proposed three common evaluation topics of interest, namely connectivity, overall network health and network outcomes

and impact. Whilst adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating leadership development in networks embedded in organisations (Figure 5.2.1), this study makes use of a wider set of question-relevant SNA measures than the originally proposed ones by the authors and in doing so, it builds upon the proposed generic investigation questions. The latter also mirrors an attempt to include perspectives related to DMOs and destinations so that their framework is better aligned with the objectives of this study.

Connectivity Questions

The primary purpose of the connectivity topic of interest introduced as a sub-set of evaluation questions related to Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) generic leadership network development questions, is to highlight the present structure of the investigated DMO network by employing a set of standard network connectivity measures. Connectivity questions also seek to explore the overall density of the network and surface whether the current structure of the network is able to effectively bridge the diversity of sectors and members with contrasting membership status being on-board DMK.

The first of two connectivity questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) is interested in whether the structure of the network in focus enables efficient sharing of information, ideas, and resources. The SNA measures that have been selected on the basis of their relevance to the first connectivity questions include network density and clustering coefficient.

Density mirrors a fundamental structural property of networks. When using valued networks, as in the case with this study, density is defined as the sum of all present ties divided by the number of all possible ties (Hanneman and Riddle 2005). In other words, density is interested in how close a network is to complete. A complete network has all possible ties and its density equals to 1. Following a standard Gephi operation, DMK's membership network demonstrated density of 0,096, which is close to 0,1. The latter figure is equal to 10%, i.e. 10% of all possible ties within DMK are currently present, which indicates a relatively low level of density. A more-dense leadership network allows for easier facilitation of DL practice through either enhanced

communication or wider distribution of DMO resources across various actors in the network, which may be problematic in light of the relatively low density across DMK at present. Measuring density is the first step towards identifying clusters (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010) and this operation can be done through the clustering coefficient. The latter is seen as a more advanced density measure.

Clustering coefficient (CC) captures the average of the densities of all complete network members' neighbourhoods (immediate communities) – a network measure first adopted by Watts (1999). The CCoef analysis carried out as part of Phase II draws on two operations undertaken via Gephi – the overall complete network clustering coefficient (global level) and clustering involving the densities of the immediate communities for each network actor (local level). The clustering coefficient of individual network actors is important network measure when identifying the proportion of present ties in relation to the total number of possible ties (Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015) for each member organisation within DMK. This serves as an indicator of the extent to which an actor is linked to its immediate neighbours and can influence such neighbours. Indeed, CCoef carried out at local level aims to understand the influence of a single node within its own neighbourhood (Cherven 2015). The latter is arguably a key prerequisite for embedding DL practice across network communities and sub-groups within DMK.

Layout algorithm: Radial Axis Layout (Groeninger 2012)

On Spotlight: Clustering Coefficient (by Sector)

Network Data: Undirected, Binary

Data Key: Minimum value 0, Maximum value 1. The clustering coefficient is a real number between 0 and 1, which is zero when there is no clustering, and one when there is evidence of maximum clustering. Estimating the clustering coefficient for each network actor is valuable in surfacing DMO members, who may be isolated from the rest of the network, as well as DMO members championing linking communities across DMK and being key influencers within their neighbourhoods. The bigger a node is in Figure 4.B.2, the higher the clustering coefficient of that node.

When compared to the relatively low overall network density ($d=0,096$), the average clustering coefficient for DMK was $CCoef=0,412$ indicating a figure

being over four times higher. The results of global level CCoef suggest that whilst having 10% of all possible links, DMK member organisations are actually much better connected within their own network communities (neighbourhood), which may or may not be tied to particular sectors on board DMK and members with contrasting membership statuses. Figure 4.B.2, however, provides local level CCoef evidence that not all DMO member organisations appear to be well-linked with others within their own communities (neighbourhoods) and sub-networks in DMK, where all small-scale nodes on the figure (DMK member organisations) have a clustering coefficient of 0.

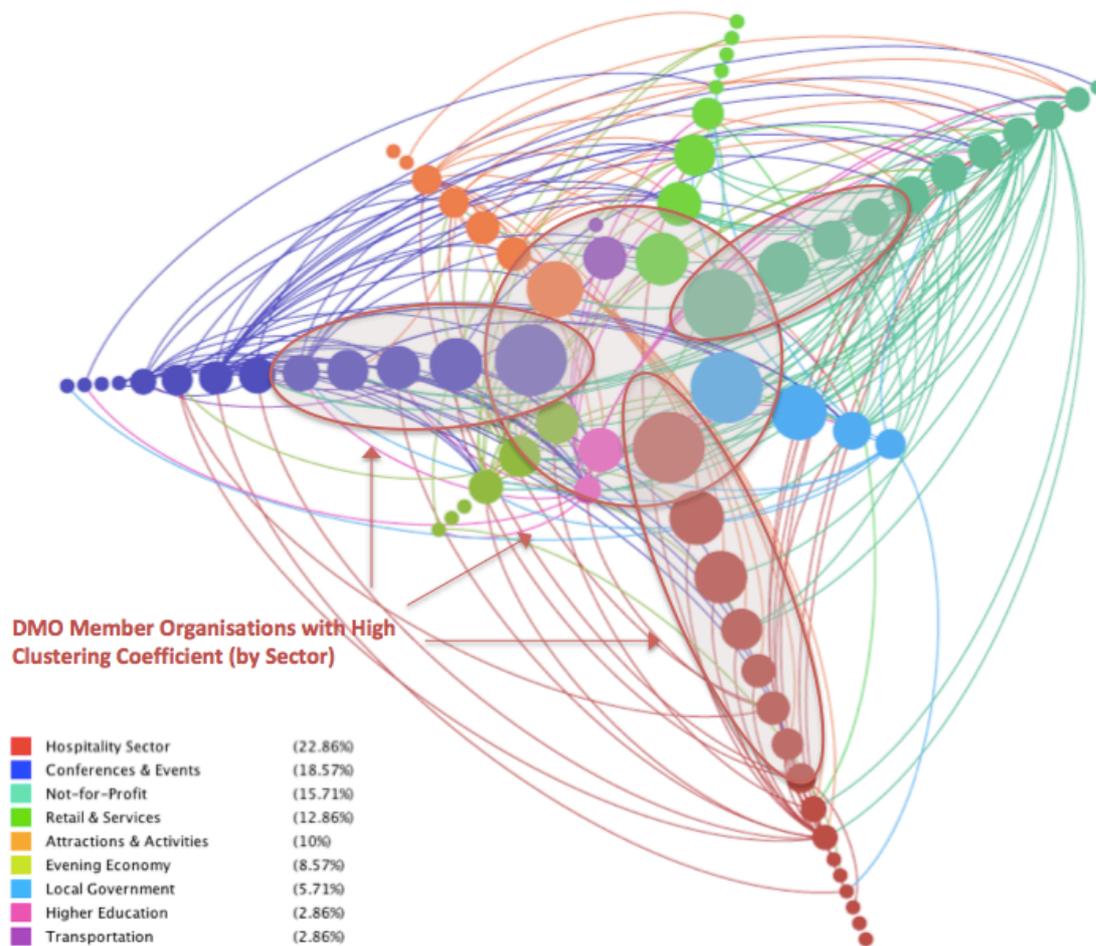


Figure 4.B.2. CCoef of DMK Member Organisations (by Sector)

This trend is also evident in Table 4.2.1, which depicts the clustering coefficient of DMK, where most network members have either CCoef=0 or ranging CCoef=0,25 – 0,75. When observing such trends by sector, then one can

clearly see that the Hospitality Sector appears to be less embedded within the network despite having the largest proportion of member organisations (22,86%) being on board DMK, where six of these member organisations have a clustering coefficient of 0. In contrast, other sectors, such as Local Government (5,71%) and Attractions and Activities (10%) tend to be well-clustered within their own communities and sub-networks in DMK despite having fewer sectoral members on board DMK. In total, 22 member organisations demonstrated clustering coefficient, which equals to 0, whilst only four member organisations achieved $CCoef=1$ capturing single Conferences and Events, Hospitality Sector, Local Government and Not-for-Profit members (Table 4.2.1). These results leave the other five sectors on board DMK without champions who can demonstrate maximum clustering within their communities, which may or may not be tied to particular sectors on board DMK. These DMO member champions may be crucial to the promotion of DL practice across network communities, including the distribution of resources and knowledge, as they are influential across and can access more of their immediate neighbours regardless of the sector of the economy they operate in. Full statistics mirroring the clustering coefficient for each of the 70 DMK member organisations are captured in Appendix 4.

When exploring the network by using the same network layout algorithm and structure of sectors on board, however, this time colouring DMK by membership status (Figure 4.B.3), it appears that nearly half of the corporate members are not well connected within their communities and sub-networks. This is particularly the case with the Retail and Services sector in DMK, where four out of six corporate or founding network members demonstrated $CC=0$. Figure 4.B.3 indicates that non-corporate DMK members have more opportunities for championing linking various communities across DMK. Indeed, the four member organisations achieved $CCoef=1$, were all non-corporate members (the biggest nodes in Figure 4.B.3). This may well provide more opportunities for empowering individual DMK member organisations beyond corporate membership and thus facilitating DL practice among non-corporate members of DMK.

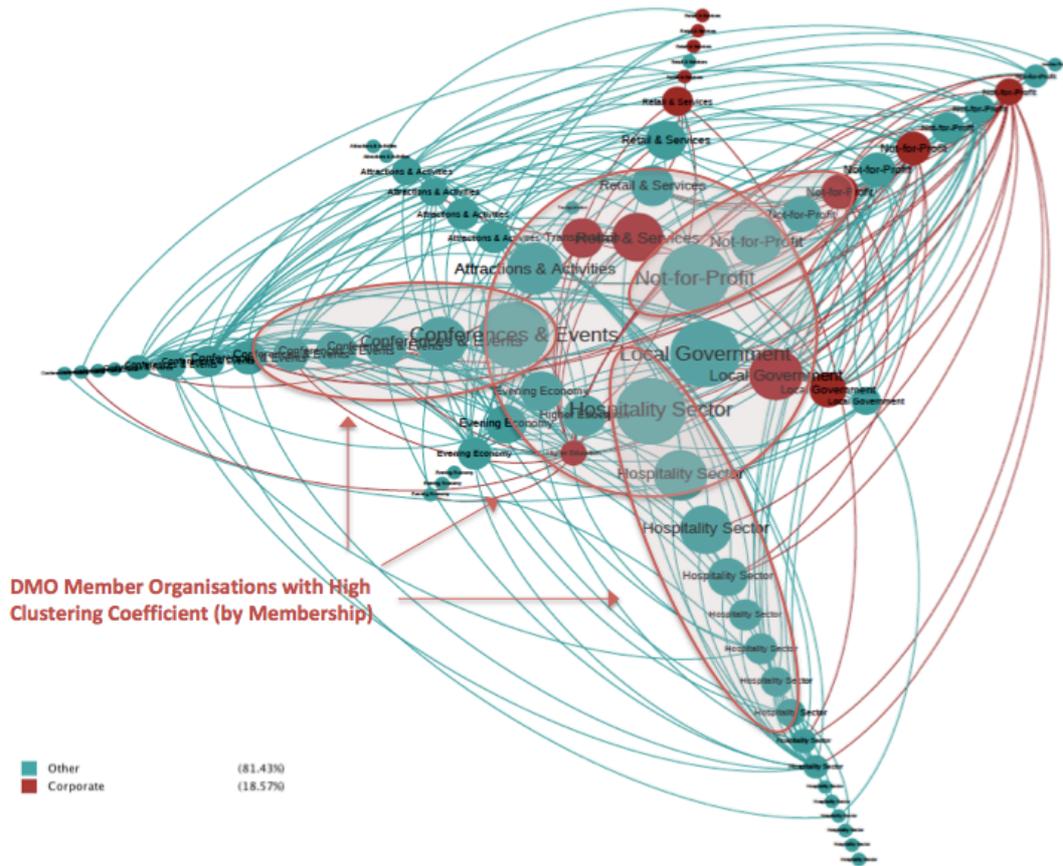
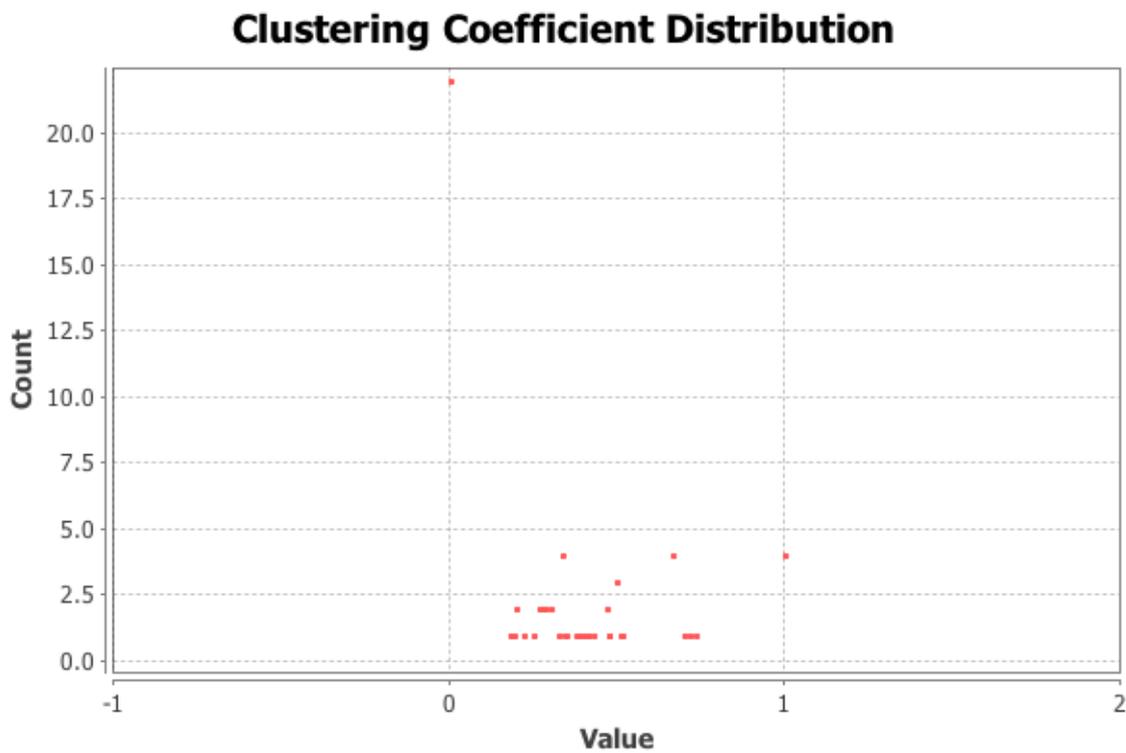


Figure 4.B.3. CCoef of DMK Member Organisations (by Membership)

Table 4.B.1. CCoef Distribution across DMK



The second of two connectivity questions is interested in whether the network in focus can effectively bridge clusters, e.g. sectors, communities, fields, and perspectives. The SNA measure, which has been selected on the basis of its relevance to this second connectivity question is basic degree centrality. Where the first question identified network actors who are well-clustered within their immediate communities, the second one has its focus in whether individual DMO members can effectively bridge these clusters across different sectors and membership tiers. Such DMO members with high degree centrality can act as hubs (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010).

Degree centrality in simple terms means that certain network actors have many ties. Because they have many ties, they often have access to, and be able to call on more of the resources of the network as a whole (Hanneman 2001). Moreover, degree centrality is seen as a measure of the actor's level of involvement or activity in the network (Prell 2012), or in other words – how connected individual DMO members are to the rest of the network (Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015). The bigger the proportion of network actors with high degree centrality, the more connected the network members are and hence more opportunities for the practice of DL across the network exist. Basic degree centrality does not, however, consider whether an actor may be seen as a network leader or on the other side of the spectrum - seen as one having power and influence over destination decision-making, e.g. power over destination decision making and distribution of resources. The latter is subject to investigation in Section 4.2.2, where Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) organisational leadership network-specific questions are adopted to this enquiry. Basic degree centrality surfaces active and involved network champions and their proportion, who are best placed to facilitate DL practice across their communities, which may or may not be tied to a particular sector on board DMK or membership status.

Layout algorithm: Circular (Groeninger 2012)

On Spotlight: Basic Weighted Degree Centrality (by Membership)

Network Data: Undirected, Valued

Data Key: Minimum value 0, Maximum value 62. The basic degree centrality captures a number between 0 and 62, where 0 indicates the lowest possible

degree centrality and 62 indicates the highest possible degree centrality in the investigated network. The higher the degree centrality of an actor, the higher the level of involvement and activity of this actor is across the DMO network. Arrow colour mirrors the source node.

Basic degree centrality is an important indicator of centrality, connectivity, involvement and importance (Opsahl et al. 2010) of individual DMK member organisations in the network. As depicted in Figure 4.B.4 above, nearly half of DMK's member organisations can be defined as having relatively low to none degree centrality, i.e. 50% of the network has degree centrality $DC=7$ or lower in light of $DC=62$, which is the highest degree centrality figure demonstrated by a single corporate DMK member representing the Higher Education sector (Figure 4.B.4). Indeed, the left half of the network depicted above has fewer links in contrast to the right half, which suggests the relatively low involvement and activity in the network of the former group.

Whilst there is a scope for DL across the network, such leadership practice may not be easily distributed at present due to the relatively low degree centrality and thus involvement evidenced across 50% of the network. However, the top 10 champions in involvement in the network capture seven out of the nine sectors on board DMK (Figure 4.B.4) and thus leaving out only the Conferences and Events and Transportation sectors. This provides evidence of significant sectoral diversity when considering DMK member centrality and involvement, which may be crucial for enabling DL across various sectors and communities within DMK.

The latter is of particular importance to empowering and involving in strategic destination decision-making 50% of the network, which demonstrated $DC=7$ or lower. As evident from the above, one ignores directions of ties when exploring basic degree centrality. Directions of ties could, however, reveal insights into power relationships and alternatively – a collective of network actors being key to developing DL, i.e. uncover multiple leaders existing in a network, which has been done later in this chapter.

and Fernandes 2013), particularly in times when the future of destinations across UK is shaped by organisations extending well beyond the public sector.

The first of three overall network health questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) is interested in how diverse the network under investigation is and whether diversity spreads across the complete network. In the case of DMK, has been captured in terms of both sectoral and membership diversity. The SNA measure, which has been selected on the basis of its relevance to the first overall network health question, involves detecting cliques, i.e. DMK member organisations who have formed powerful alliances within the complete network.

Identifying network cliques is key to surfacing evidence of existing DL practice within and across sectors on board DMK. Such cohesive groups are often seen as multiple leaders within a network providing a role model for others in the network to follow (Borgatti et al. 2013). However, cliques are often regarded as evidence of existing power relations within the network (Miller 1958), particularly when certain network communities have been excluded from cliques. Network cliques represent extremely cohesive, i.e. closely and intensely tied to one another actors (Hanneman and Riddle 2005). In fact, cliques capture the maximum number of actors who have all possible ties present among themselves. Cliques are therefore likely to be leading on and being a source of power and influence within and across various sectors on-board DMOs and different membership groups. This operation is carried out in Gephi via the Clique Detector. The latter is a tool, which aims to surface the maximum possible number of DMK member organisations in a clique (the size of a clique - k), and the number of cliques and network members involved in relation to the complete network.

Layout algorithm: Force Atlas II (Levallois 2013)

On Spotlight: Cliques (by Sector)

Network Data: Directed, Binary

Data Key: K indicates clique size, i.e. the maximum number of DMK members having all possible links with one another in a single clique. Minimum value 1, Maximum value 4, where 1 indicates that a member of the network is involved

in a single clique (small-scale node) and four indicates that a member of the network is involved in four cliques (large-scale nodes).

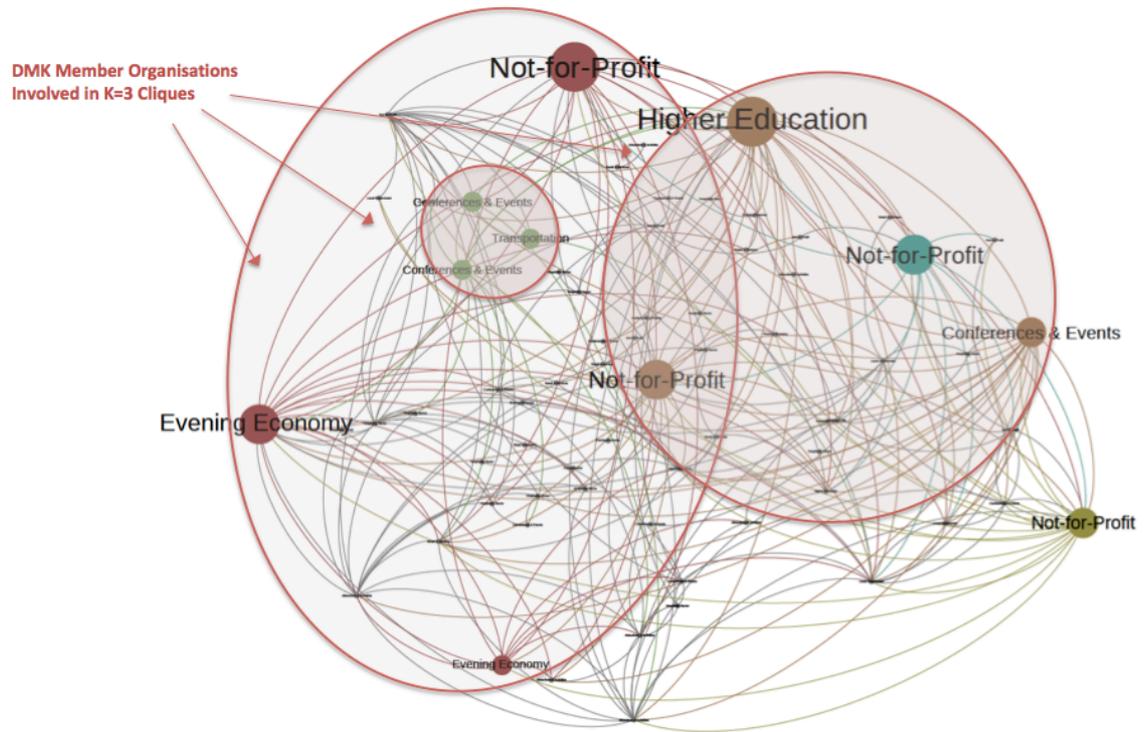


Figure 4.B.5. Network Cliques of Size K=3 across DMK (by Sector)

As Chapter 4 A covered, there are nine sectors of the economy on board DMK, namely the Hospitality Sector, which makes up 22.86% of the complete network, Conferences and Events (18.57%), Not-for-Profit (15.71%), Retail and Services (12.86%), Attractions and Activities (10%), Evening Economy (8.57%), Local Government (5.71%), Higher Education (2.86%) and Transportation (2.86). The clique detector yielded eight cliques with maximum clique size $k=3$, where all possible links exist (both incoming and outgoing) within each $k=3$ clique of DMK member organisations. In total, 11 DMK member organisations were involved in eight cliques of size $k=3$, where the maximum number of involved DMK members would otherwise have been 24. This allows for joining multiple cliques, where some DMK members have been involved in more than one clique (up to four) as captured in Figure 4.B.5 above. The bigger a node is, the more cliques of size $k=3$ that node has been involved in. This trend is again reflected in the size of certain nodes in Figure 4.B.5, e.g. Higher Education and

Not-for-Profit members have been involved in four out of the eight cliques within DMK.

The Not-for-Profit sector has four members in cliques and all of them appear to be involved in more than one clique (Figure 4.B.5), which suggests that this sector is the dominant one in the majority of cliques surfaced within DMK. In a recent DMO contribution, Valente et al. (2015) indeed recognised the important role that Not-for-Profit organisations have to play in leadership. Equally, not all sectors on board DMK have been involved in the eight size $k=3$ cliques, where Figure 4.B.5 suggests that four sectors are not part of any cliques. This leaves out crucial to the visitor economy sectors, namely the Hospitality and Attractions and Activities sectors, which are predominantly business-led. Corporate or founding members then tend to be involved in a higher number of cliques across DMK since clique champions involving the Not-for-Profit and Higher Education sectors have either been established or largely supported by public sector bodies, e.g. Milton Keynes Council. The latter group was once predominantly responsible for destination leadership in the Milton Keynes geography.

This imbalance of sectoral and membership diversity in cliques suggests that DMK is still influenced by public sector organisations. Leaving out of influential cliques key sectors of the destination offering, i.e. Hospitality Sector, Attractions and Activities, provides evidence in favour of the latter statement. Largely public sector-led cliques may pose certain challenges to wider stakeholder inclusion in strategic destination decision-making and nurturing DL across the diversity of sectors on board DMK. Further to that, cliques with size $k>3$ have not been identified, which indicates that cliques at present are on a small scale and rather fragmented and thus tend to involve power groups consisting of fewer DMK member organisations. Large-scale cliques, e.g. $k>3$, allow for involving a greater number of DMK members from diverse sectors. Hence more opportunities for DL to penetrate across the complete network through empowering network communities exist.

The second of three overall network health questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) is interested in whether the full network's structure is appropriate for the mission of the network. This question builds upon the first of two connectivity questions above as it goes down to network member level, i.e.

individual DMK member organisations. The SNA measure that has been selected on the basis of its relevance to this second overall network health question involves a basic core-periphery visual analysis via an Erdos Number (Grossman and Ion 1995) computation of the complete network in Gephi.

Core-periphery structure in networks is evident in the case of a high number of centrally-positioned actors, who have a disproportionate amount of connections, while actors in the periphery maintain fewer links with others in the networks (Hojman and Szeidl 2008). The network core can be seen as a dominant central cluster, whereas the periphery has relatively few connections (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). Lower core-periphery figures and network structure allows for a wider distribution of destination resources across the network. Lower core-periphery network structure also breaks down barriers between key destination players and smaller, often peripheral organisations to provide the latter group with a voice in strategic destination decision-making, i.e. involvement in DL and wider opportunities to access network resources and knowledge.

Layout algorithm: Fruchterman Reingold (Fruchterman and Reingold 1991)

On Spotlight: Core-periphery Network Structure (by Sector)

Network Data: Directed, Binary

Data Key: The Erdos Number surfaces individual network actors' distance from a network's core. Minimum value 0, Maximum value 4, where 0 indicates the DMK member organisation with the highest basic degree centrality, i.e. the member which is seen as the network's core (Erdos proxy) and four indicates DMK member organisations being the furthest from the network's core – either connected or isolated. The smaller a node the closer to the network's core that node is and thus demonstrating a lower EN number.

The Erdos Number (Cherven 2015) has been adopted as an indicator for surfacing core-periphery network structure within DMK. The number implies the level of embeddedness (or alternatively - the lack of embeddedness) in collaborative activity of individual DMK member organisations. Actors with the highest Erdos Number are peripheral DMK members. Drawing on the network champion in basic degree centrality, the Erdos Number has taken into account

the Higher Education sector member as a central (core) node within the network and thus a starting point for the EN analysis called Erdos proxy.

Figure 4.B.6 provides a network depiction with a strong core, which comprises of the majority of DMK members. However, there is a considerable proportion (19% of the complete network) of peripheral DMK members with a high Erdos Number either EN=3 (peripheral) or EN=4 (disconnected), where the latter group consisting of 10 organisations has been depicted in dark red. These predominantly private sector-led peripheral actors then tend to be either isolated or within a long distance from the network's core, which provides fewer opportunities for distributing resources and knowledge across the complete network and wider inclusion in destination leadership practice. DMK's network structure at present may not therefore be considered as fully appropriate for the overall mission of the network, where securing the future of DMK is no longer a task of individual public sector member organisations and wider involvement of business-led DMK members (diversity of resource and expertise holders) in strategic destination decision-making in line with the recently launched visionary document for Milton Keynes (the DMP plan) is prerequisite to flourishing visitor economy and positioning Milton Keynes on the map.

Building on insights from the last two questions, the third overall network health question proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) has its focus explicitly on the power relationships within the network and their influence on processes involving leadership development in networks. Power is indeed seen as a property of social relations (Emerson 1962) as in the case of DMK where power is embedded in the existing relationships amongst member organisations. Harris (2013) noted that issues of power, authority and inequality are inevitably overlapping with DL practice and as such, they need to be studied *in situ* and where DL practice occurs. The SNA measure, which has been selected on the basis of its relevance to this third overall network health question, involves surfacing the Outdegree Centrality (OC) of individual DMK member organisations. Outdegree centrality is indeed a key network measure in surfacing power relationships across organisations or individuals (Robbins 2009). Power is therefore not necessarily seen as an attribute of individual network actors, but is embedded in relationships (Emerson 1962). It is the

power relationships that help surface power actors within a DMO (Blichfeldt et al. 2014).

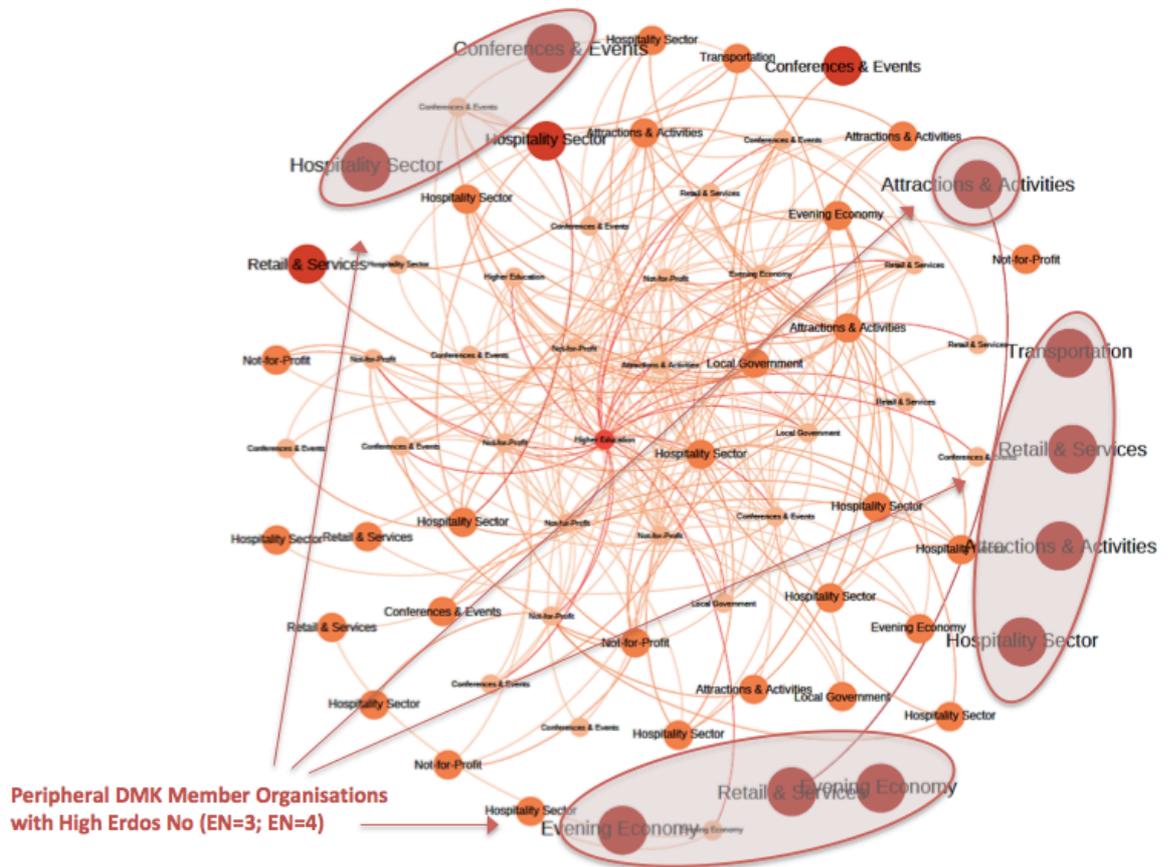


Figure 4.B.6. Core-periphery Patterns of Member Organisations across DMK (by Sector)

In light of the basic degree centrality, which simply captured the level of involvement and activity of individual DMK member organisations, outdegree centrality is far more likely to imply power (Ang 2011) and network actors with high outdegree centrality are seen as ones who traditionally have power and influence over destination decision-making and thus within DMOs. Network actors with high outdegree centrality are not therefore generally seen as enablers of DL. In fact, a large proportion of actors with high outdegree centrality may be seen as an obstacle to embedding DL practice across the network, as they are traditionally perceived as power actors, e.g. Council bodies, founding or corporate DMO members. In other words, the lower the power relations and influence of individual DMK member organisations, the

higher the opportunity for a wider stakeholder inclusion and embedding DL practice across the complete network.

Layout algorithm: Fruchterman Reingold (Fruchterman and Reingold 1991)

On Spotlight: Weighted Outdegree Centrality (by Membership)

Network Data: Directed, Valued

Data Key: Minimum value 0, Maximum value 56. The outdegree centrality captures a number between 0 and 56, where 0 indicates the lowest possible outdegree centrality (i.e. a node, which demonstrates low power) and 56 indicates the highest possible outdegree centrality (i.e. a node, which demonstrates high power) in the investigated network. The higher the outdegree centrality of an actor, the bigger the node of this actor on the network depiction and the higher the power and influence of this actor is across the DMO network (Huffaker 2010). Arrow colour mirrors the source node, i.e. power links are depicted in source to target node direction.

The analysis of network data in relation to outdegree centrality indicates a small proportion of network members with very high outdegree centrality (big-scale nodes in Figure 4.B.7). In other, words, the top 10 champions have an outdegree centrality ranging OC=16-56, whereas this figure for the remaining 60 member organisations within DMK is OC=0-12 (see Appendix 4). Within the remaining group of 60 DMK members with OC=0-12, 31 or nearly 50% of the complete network have demonstrated 0 outdegree centrality. Hence such member organisations were unable to demonstrate any outgoing power relations or influence over others within the complete network and this is not unusual practice. As Harris (2013) noted, issues of power, authority and inequality are inevitably overlapping with DL practice. DMK members with low OC are therefore considered as recipients of power relations and influenced by others with OC>0. More peripheral DMK members tend to be predominantly recipients of power links, which may have been inherited from the structure and functions of the pre-2011 *Government Tourism Policy* membership organisation. Indeed, DMK members with low OC represent predominantly business-led DMK members, e.g. Hospitality Sector, Evening Economy, which indicates that power is still largely demonstrated by public sector members and some key founding DMK members.

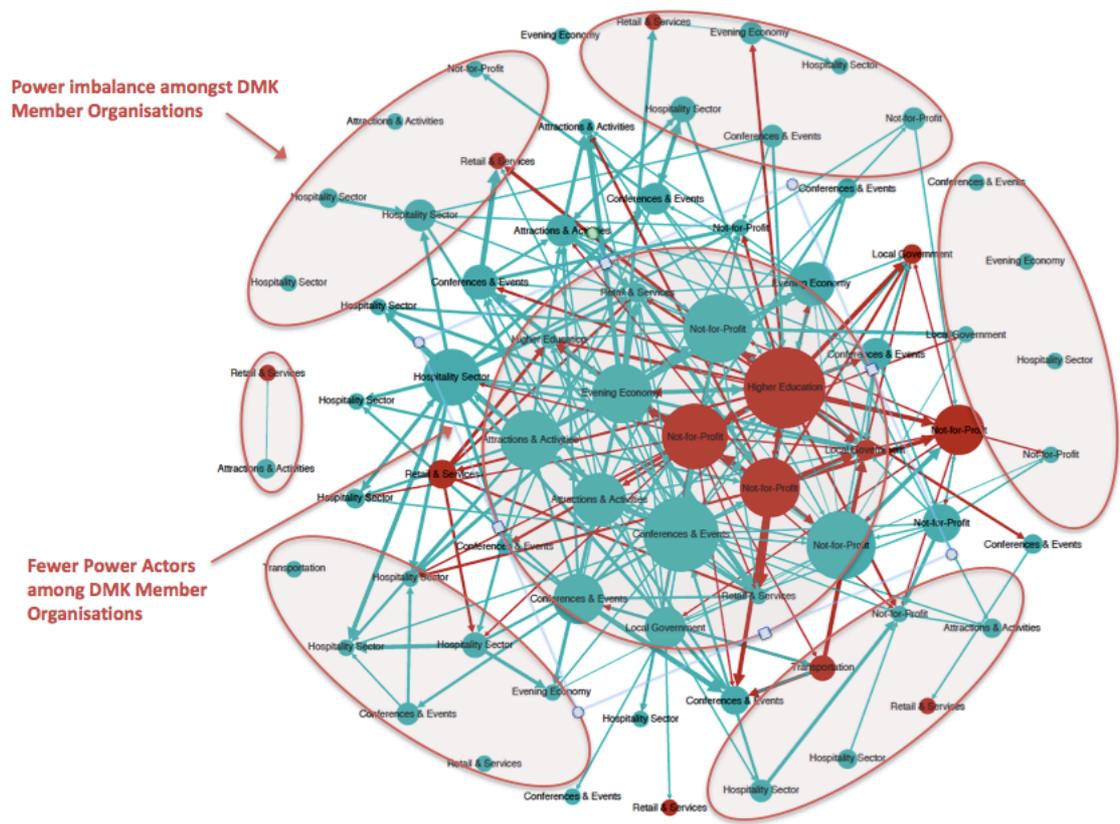
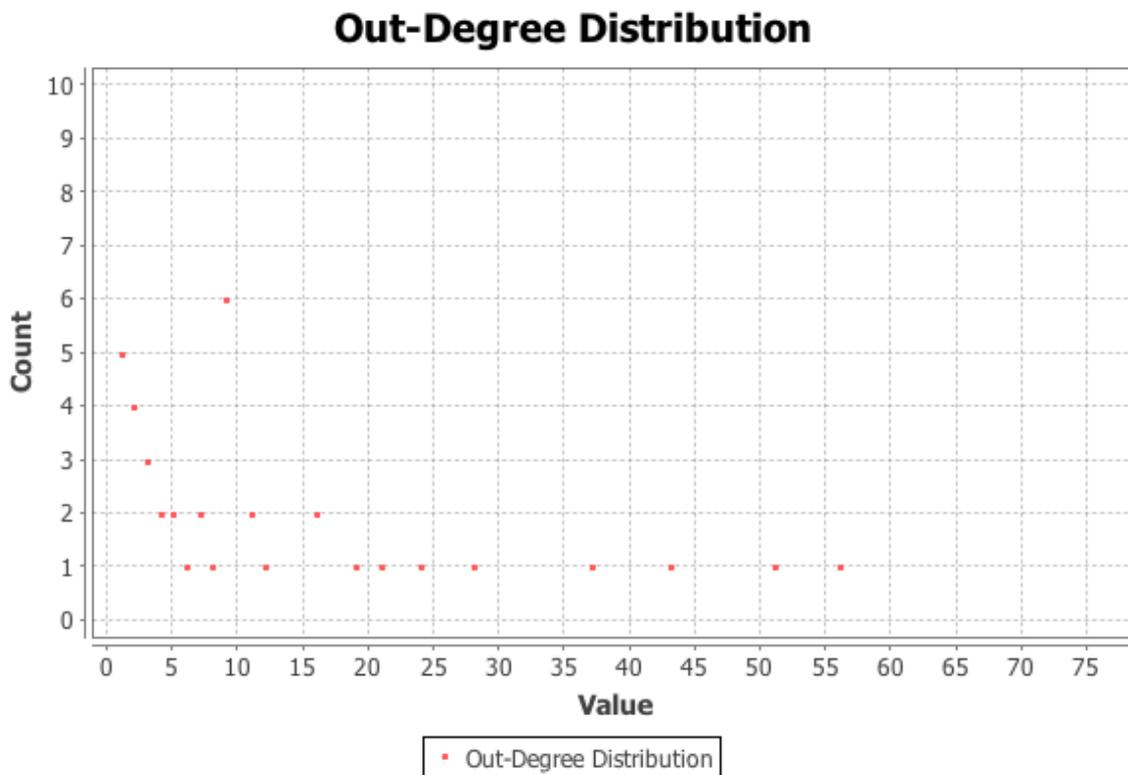


Figure 4.B.7. OC of DMK Member Organisations

Regardless of the fact that Figure 4.B.7 implies a balance between corporate (red) and non-corporate (green) DMK members championing high outdegree centrality, corporate or founding members represent only 18,57% of the complete network. The latter provides evidence of power imbalance, where processes of exercising power and opportunities for empowering peripheral actors are not evenly distributed across the network's OC champions and non-corporate DMK members in particular, who represent 81,43% of the complete network (Figure 4.B.7). This trend has also been captured in Table 4.B.2 depicting the outdegree distribution of individual DMK members. The fewer DMK member organisations with a very high OC=16-56 (nine organisations or 13% of the complete network) may well be seen as a barrier towards the provision of a wider voice in strategic destination decision-making and the promotion of DL practice across the diversity of sectors and organisations with contrasting memberships on board DMK. Power relationships then lead to fewer opportunities for DL to be enacted and practiced by the diversity of member organisations on board DMK.

Table 4.B.2. OC Distribution across of DMK Member Organisations



Network Outcomes and Impact Questions

In evaluating network outcomes and impact of leadership interventions, i.e. the third topic of interest introduced as part of the generic questions (Figure 4.B.1), this study aims to surface current evidence of greater collaboration within the network and investigate resource distribution across the network, as a result of such leadership development intervention. However, surfacing network outcomes and impact of leadership development interventions requires an approach allowing for establishing a baseline to benchmark against, which is not achievable in light of this exploratory study delving into a previously untapped phenomenon, i.e. emergent DL practice at a DMO level and more importantly – within an organisation where such network study has not been carried out before. An SNA investigation in network outcomes and impact in cases where a longitudinal approach to enquiry is adopted is not within the remit of the underpinning study.

Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) provide an alternative perspective into studying such questions. A detailed investigation of network outcomes and impact, as argued by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) require alternative to SNA, perhaps, 'thick' approaches to data collection, such as interviews. Interviews are able to yield rich insights into the outcomes and impact of leadership interventions, e.g. the launch of the DMP plan. This study addresses this opportunity in Phase III, when DMO member organisations are involved in surfacing the impact of leadership development interventions, i.e. the DMP, and the challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL in DMK. The latter suggests that there are fewer direct uses of SNA in evaluating network outcomes and impact. Hence Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) suggested the use of multiple evaluation methods (Phase III) to supplement adopted network approaches to enquiry.

4.2.2.B Hoppe and Reinelt's specific SNA questions: Structural properties and relational properties of the network

Network Actors Focus: The Relationship between Power and Leadership

Unlike the more generic and wider set of network leadership development questions covered so far, Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) proposed only a limited number of evaluation questions when posing specific leadership network questions. Specific leadership network questions correspond to organisational leadership networks, i.e. leadership networks, which emerge within formal organisational structures), which is the leadership network classification adopted in this study. Whilst adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating leadership in networks embedded in organisations, just as in the case of the previous (generic) section, this study expands on the few proposed leadership development-specific questions to include a wider set of structural and relational network considerations and perspectives related to DMOs and destinations so that the authors' framework is better aligned with the overarching aim and objectives of this study. In doing so, the discussion builds on Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) set of specific questions.

The specific leadership development questions follow from the more generic set of questions for evaluating leadership development in networks and cover measures related to strategic considerations for network actors and network flows in developing leadership capacity on a DMO level (see Figure 4.B.1 depicting the process of adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework to this enquiry). Some of these key strategic considerations cover surfacing bridging roles of individual network actors facilitating emergent distributed DL, exploring matters of access and patterns of communications, knowledge and resource distribution across the network, and defining already established and emergent leaders within the network and their respective proportion.

The first of two specific organisational leadership network questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) has its focus on network actors and is interested in whether there are appropriate bridgers in the network who connect disparate network communities and sub-networks. The SNA measures that have been selected on the basis of their relevance to the first specific organisational leadership development question include betweenness centrality, closeness centrality, eccentricity, eigenvector centrality and indegree centrality. Centrality measures are key to surfacing emergent leadership practice in networks (Estrada and Vargas-Estrada 2013). Contractor et al. (2012) also proposed the use of centrality measures in surfacing DL practice in networks.

Betweenness centrality, takes into consideration the rest of the network when establishing a score to surface the status of each member of the studied network. Betweenness centrality does not, however, look at numbers. Instead, it is interested in where an actor is placed within the network, namely its location amongst other actors in the network. Network members with high betweenness centrality can act as network bridges. They connect network members and link network communities, which are not otherwise be connected (Stienmetz and Fesenmaier 2015). High betweenness centrality then indicates bridging (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). Hence, network members who act as bridges between network communities have high betweenness centrality. Network actors with high betweenness centrality can be seen as agents of DL and can provide distant actors and communities with the opportunity to shape strategic leadership decisions, influence destination decision-making and facilitate wider representation of peripheral network actors and loosely embedded network

communities. Network actors with high BC also play an important role in spreading information, knowledge and resources across the complete network (Hanneman and Riddle 2005).

Layout algorithm: Radial Axis Layout (Groeninger 2012)

On Spotlight: Betweenness Centrality (by Membership, network constructed by Sector)

Network Data: Directed, Binary

Data Key: Minimum value 0, Maximum value 543,3. The bigger a node in Figure 4.B.8, the higher its betweenness centrality. The closer a node to the network core, the lower its betweenness centrality. DMO member organisations with high betweenness centrality are considered as boundary spanners. The latter facilitate communication and resource flows across loosely connected sub-networks and communities; promote DL practice across the complete network.

The network depiction in Figure 4.B.8 demonstrates that high betweenness centrality is evident across a relatively few DMO member organisations, where the Higher Education and Not-for-Profit sectors have actors with the highest betweenness centrality of 543,3 and 297,4 respectively. However, on the other side of the spectrum, 50% of all DMK member organisations have demonstrated BC=0 (see Appendix 4). These results indicate that half of the network is unable to bridge peripheral communities and actors or these DMK member organisations represent such loosely embedded communities or actors themselves. This low betweenness centrality is also captured in Table 4.B.3, which demonstrates that 35 network members do not currently have the capacity to act as network bridges. Despite having its champions in linking distant network communities and sub-networks, Figure 4.B.8 above suggests that these champions are tied to a limited number of sectors on board DMK, e.g. Higher Education, Not-for-Profit.

Further, Figure 4.B.8 also demonstrates that having a number of corporate members across a sector of the economy on board DMK, e.g. Retail and Services, is not a guarantee for high betweenness centrality. This is the case with the Retail and Services sector, which has six corporate members on board. However, the sector has the lowest betweenness centrality, i.e. low

capacity to connect network communities and individual actors across the complete DMK network, which in turn makes the sector dependent on other sectors on board DMK with higher capacity to bridge loosely embedded groups and communities.

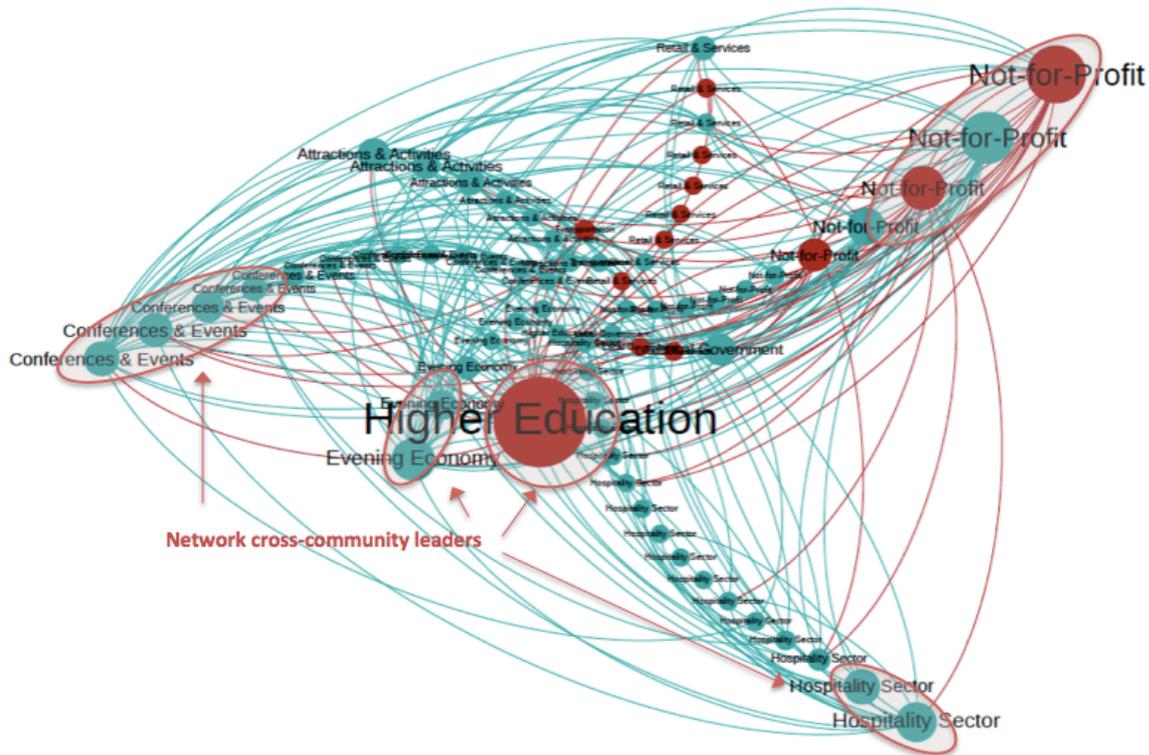
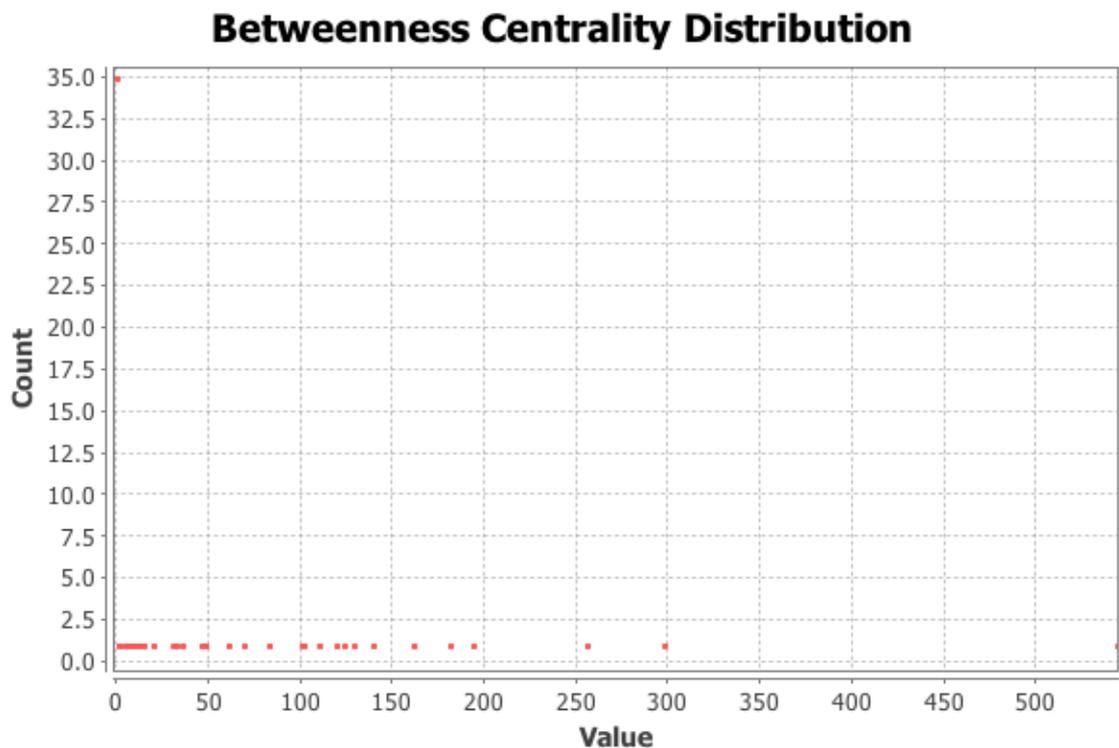


Figure 4.B.8. BC of DMK Member Organisations

Table 4.B.3 which depicts DL distribution also suggested that the number of boundary spanners with high betweenness centrality, i.e. DMK member organisations acting as agents of DL across the complete network is relatively low. As DL implies brokering and facilitating the leadership of others (Harris 2013) as in the case of BC champions on board DMK, the above results can potentially create barriers to active participation in destination leadership across the complete network. Whilst, the Retail and Services sector is one such example, other sectors on board DMK having a high number of member organisations, e.g. the Hospitality Sector – 22.86% of the complete network, experienced absence of BC champions to ensure that such large network communities are well connected with other sectors and have opportunities to participate in strategic destination decision-making. These BC champions are best placed to promote DL practice across the network.

Closeness Centrality (CC) is another important SNA measure, which is useful in identifying salient actors, who are able to link disparate actors within the complete network. If basic degree centrality of the network took into account only the immediate links that a DMO member has in order to identify central actors, closeness centrality is interested in the distance of a network member to all others in the network. CC is therefore focused on the distance from each network member to all others (Hanneman and Riddle 2005), which helps surfacing the level of closeness of individual DMK member organisations to the rest of the complete network as CC champions have a number of direct links with others within their own network communities or sub-networks (Cherven 2015). In other words, these are members of the DMK network, who are highly connected to others within their own network communities and sub-networks. If betweenness centrality was interested in DMK member organisations bridging otherwise distant network communities, closeness centrality has its focus on champions having the same function.

Table 4.B.3. BC Distribution across DMK Member Organisations



However, this time, within and not across network communities. Closeness centrality allows for surfacing DMO network members who act as gatekeepers. They have the highest number of direct links within their own network communities and are thus able to facilitate distribution of resources that may otherwise be difficult to access in cases where communication tends to be rather patchy. Whilst network actors with high closeness centrality may not be central to the overall network, they play an important role within their own communities or sub-networks. These actors are seen as agents of DL practice within their own communities, which may or may not be tied to a particular sector or membership status within DMK.

Layout algorithm: Radial Axis Layout (Groeninger 2012)

On Spotlight: Closeness Centrality (by Sector, by Membership)

Network Data: Directed, Binary

Data Key: Minimum value 0, Maximum value 3,74. Higher values of closeness indicate higher centrality of certain actors in communities or sub-networks within a DMO, where 0 indicates the absence of centrality and 3,74 is the highest closeness centrality, where nodes with high closeness centrality are closer to all other actors in the network.

As discussed above, closeness centrality is a network measure, which captures network champions, who are well-placed within their own communities and sub-networks which are part of DMK. These actors therefore have an important role on a sub-network level as they act as gatekeepers to certain communities and groups. Figure 4.B.9 above demonstrates that DMK member organisations with a relatively high closeness centrality are well distributed across sectors on board this DMO. DMK member organisations representing the Retail and Services, Hospitality and Not-for-Profit sectors had the highest closeness centrality scores across the complete network. Further, at least one DMK member of each sector has closeness centrality value of at least 1,95. The latter suggests that within all sectors on board DMK, at least one representative of these sectors can champion embedding DL practice, as champions are well-placed member organisations within their own network communities and sub-networks.

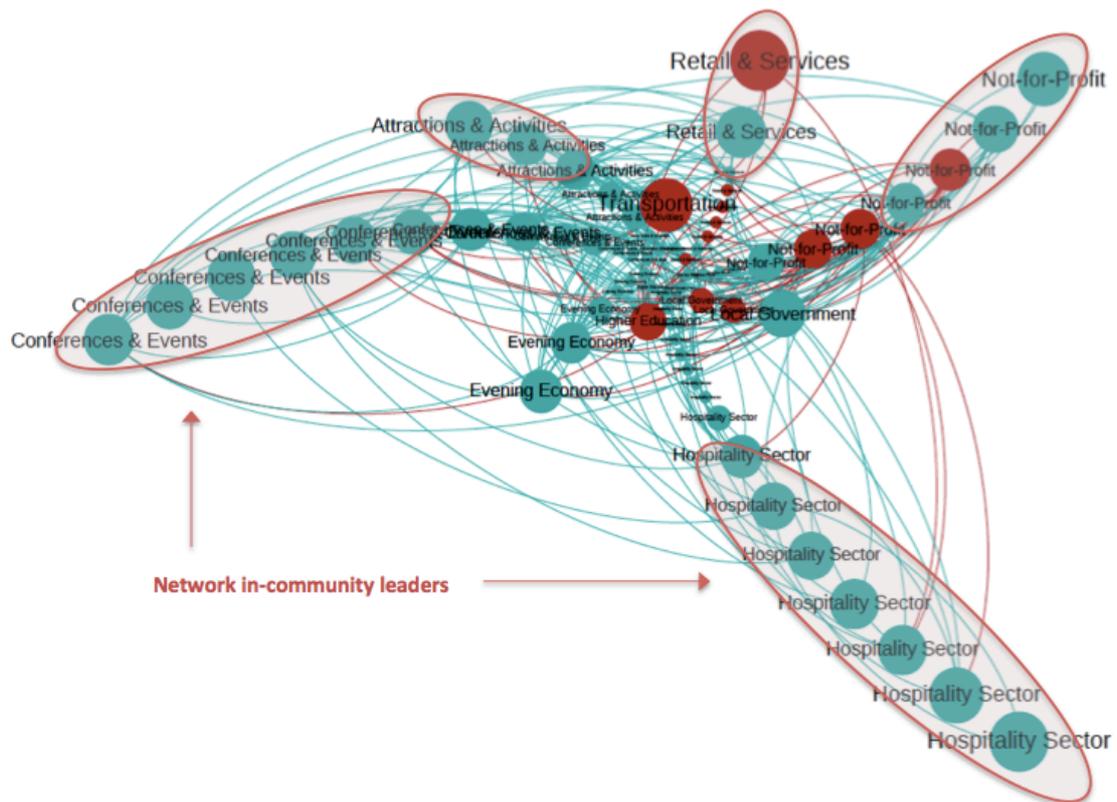


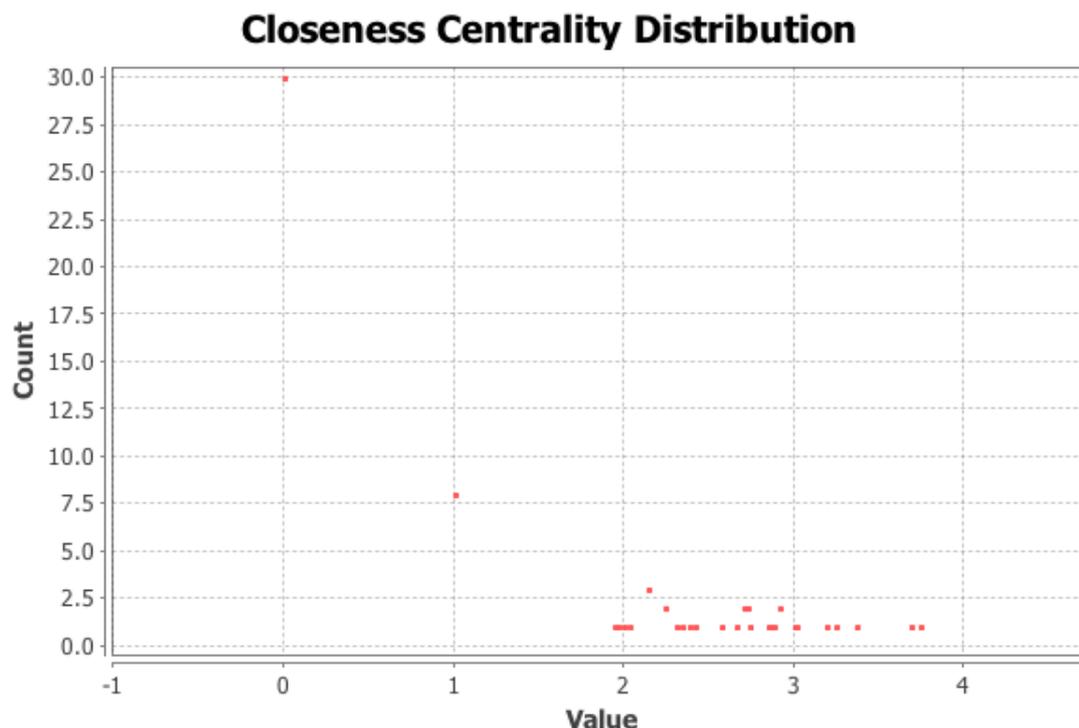
Figure 4.B.9. CC of DMK Member Organisations

However, as Table 4.B.4 suggests, nearly half of the complete DMO network (30 member organisations) have $CC=0$, which is identical with the case of BC. This indicates that nearly half of the network is dependent on champions within their communities and sub-networks demonstrating high CC. The latter scenario may well lead to power imbalance on a sub-network level and thus create obstacles to embedding DL practice across DMK. However, DMK member organisations with $CC=0$ can be championing BC. A cross-comparison of Figures 4.B.8 and 4.B.9 suggests that BC champions differ significantly from the CC ones and this is particularly evident in the case of both the Higher Education and Not-for-Profit sectors. Both sectors championed BC (Figure 4.B.8). The same actors, however, performed relatively low when filtering out CC of individual member organisations within DMK (Figure 4.B.9). This cross-comparison suggests that the complete membership network depends on different sectors to promote the benefits of DL practice and empower peripheral actors both within and across network communities. The fact that diverse member organisations champion BC and CC and thus assume brokerage roles,

breaks down barriers to distributing leadership within and across the network's communities. Indeed, brokers within DMOs play a key role in spreading communication and resource flows (Beritelli et al. 2015b).

Average Path Length (APL) of the complete network and Eccentricity (E) for individual actors in the membership network in focus have also been calculated. They provide useful insights into the structure of the network and positioning of individual network actors in light of facilitating efficient communication and resource distribution (Cherven 2015). APL captures the average of the shortest path for each DMK member to the rest of the network (Cherven 2015). When computed in Gephi, DMK's APL stands at 2.640407288317256, which indicates that each DMK member organisation is able to reach everyone else within the network in 2,6 degrees on average (Table 4.B.4). Networks with high APL often have a more fragmented structure and as a result, it may take longer in communicating information or distributing resources across all actors within the DMO. On the other side of the spectrum, networks with lower APL are relatively more efficient in distribution (Cherven 2015), which is the case of the one computed for the complete DMK.

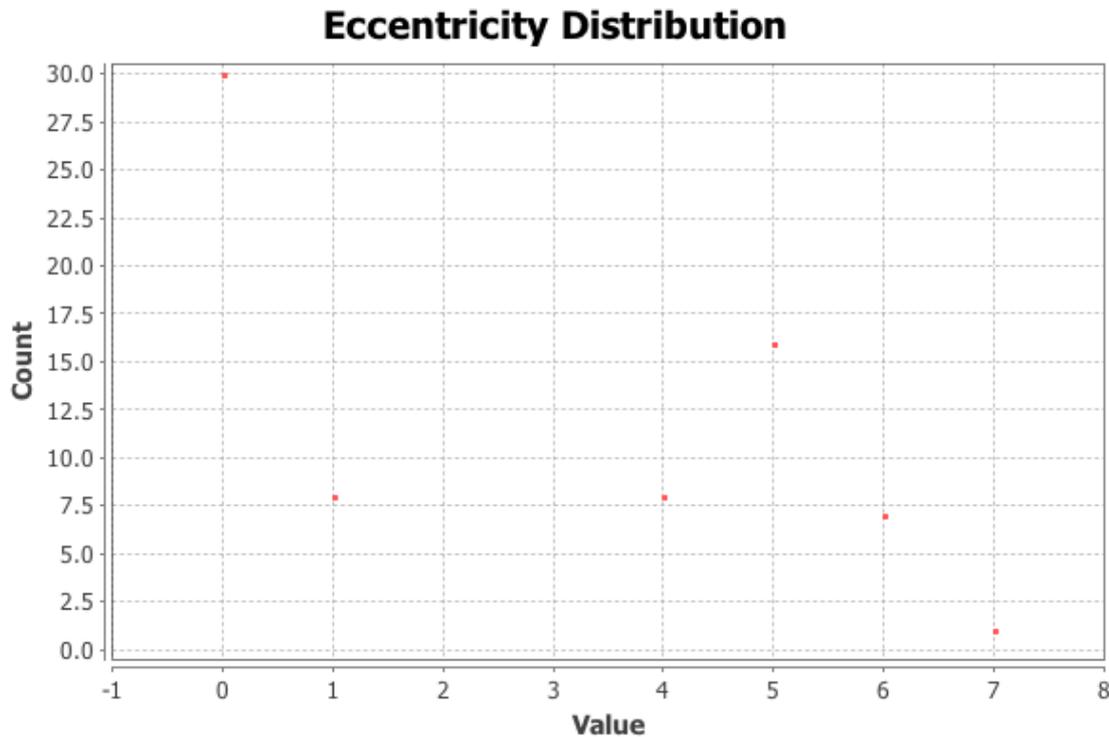
Table 4.B.4. CC Distribution across DMK Member Organisations



However, this is not the case with all DMK member organisations. Eccentricity is often seen as a more refined APL, which captures the distance between a network actor and the network actor that is furthest from it within a given network for all members within a network. In line with this, findings from the eccentricity computation demonstrate that DMK has a network diameter of 7, which mirrors the longest of all shortest paths for individual members of DMK. As a result, some DMK members should go through six degrees in order to reach everyone else in the network (Table 4.B.5). However, this is not the case of the majority of DMK members as noted in Table 4.B.5, where 38 member organisations (60% of the network) have either $E=0$, i.e. direct access or $E=1$, which is one degree access to everyone else in the network. The remaining 40% of the complete network demonstrated eccentricity averaging between $E=4$ and $E=7$. This leaves a gap where no DMK members have demonstrated eccentricity of $E=2$ and $E=3$ suggesting that DMK members are either within a short or very long distance from anyone else in the network. This lack of embeddedness evident in DMK member organisations demonstrating $E=4$ through to $E=7$ (see Table 4.B.5) may lead to lack of inclusion in DL practice across the network. This is seen as another confirmation of a core-periphery structure of the complete DMK network in addition to surfacing the network's Erdos Number earlier in this chapter. The average APL and computed E for individual DMK member organisations provide evidence that diverse BC and CC champions are vital to facilitating distribution of information, knowledge and resources within and across network communities and particularly amongst CC champions demonstrating eccentricity of $E=4$ through to $E=7$. Regardless of the current evidence of existing core-periphery structure within DMK, BC and CC computations suggest that wider distribution is achievable throughout the complete network.

Eigenvector centrality (EC) is often seen as a refined version of the basic degree centrality. EC is the sum of a network member's connections to other actors, weighted by these actors' degree centrality (Prell 2012). This measure implies that network members are reliant upon other members' ties to establish themselves as leaders.

Table 4.B.5. Eccentricity Distribution across DMK Member Organisations



EC thus provides opportunities for wider influence of well-connected individual actors across different communities within DMK as followers of EC champions are also well-connected network actors. High eigenvector centrality network members then tend to be leaders in the network who are surrounded by other well-connected actors (Borgatti et al. 2002) and thus becoming more influential leaders. Their ideas, resources and influence can reach large number of individual network actors, network communities and sub-networks within DMK. If actors with high eigenvector centrality mirror the sectoral diversity on-board DMOs, this then provides wider opportunities to embedding DL practice by these highly influential leaders across the diversity of sectors which are present in the network.

Layout algorithm: Force Atlas 3D (Levallois 2013)

On Spotlight: Eigenvector Centrality (by Membership); Surfacing highly influential leaders in the network

Network Data: Directed, Binary

Data Key: Minimum value 0, Maximum value 1. Eigenvector centrality is a real number between 0 and 1, where 1 is an indicator for a well-connected DMO member organisation, who have established links with other well-connected member organisations. The bigger a node, the higher the EC, i.e. the leadership capacity to shape influential leaders of that node.

As discussed above, network actors with high eigenvector centrality tend to be highly influential leaders in the network, who are surrounded by other well-connected actors (Newman 2008). However, the analysis suggests that the nine champions with high eigenvector centrality do not mirror sectoral diversity on-board DMK, where only member organisations representing five out of the nine sectors of the economy on board DMK have eigenvector centrality of value above 0,5 (DMK members with $EC > 0,5$ correspond to only 13% of the complete network). These champions can be noted on Figure 4.B.10, where the higher the EC of individual actors, the bigger their node. The remaining 87% of DMK demonstrated $EC = 0,5$ or below. This trend can also be noted in Table 4.B.6, which depicts eigenvector centrality distribution across all DMK member organisations. DL practice on a DMO level implies recognition of the diversity of sectors of the economy on board DMOs (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). The above EC results, however, suggest a case, which calls for a wider inclusion, where the importance of involving the diversity of DMO member organisations as they often collectively shape destination identity and thus provide more opportunities for further developing the visitor economy and destinations is emphasised.

Further, it is interesting to note that a DMK member organisation representing the Local Government sector is the only network actor with eigenvector centrality value of 1. This trend can be explained with the central role once held by the public sector, e.g. MK Council, in orchestrating destination Milton Keynes's trajectory of development and distributing strategic leadership resources across the network. However, Figure 4.B.10 depicting EC distribution across the network suggests that there is a balance between corporate and non-corporate EC champions. That coupled with private sector-led member organisations which are amongst these champions (Retail and Services, Evening Economy), provides evidence of emergent DL practice, which goes beyond traditional destination leadership models, which place the public sector at the centre of destination leadership. On the other side of the spectrum, 10

DMK member organisations or 14% of the complete network demonstrated eigenvector centrality of 0 (Table 4.B.6). The latter suggests that 14% of all members on board DMK can be considered as peripheral actors, who are not seen as influencers, nor they are connected to or following any influencers in the network thus limiting the opportunities of these actors for shaping strategic destination development initiatives and developing DL practice.

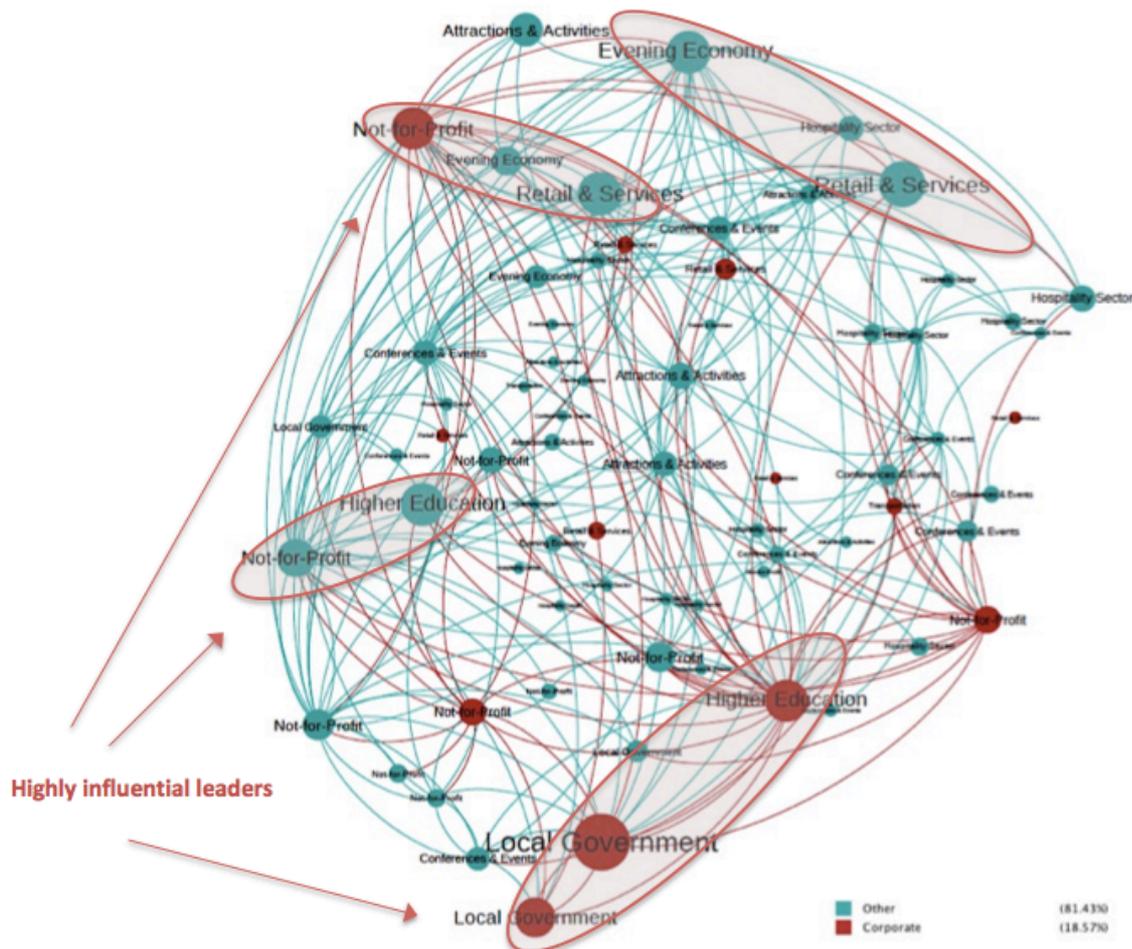
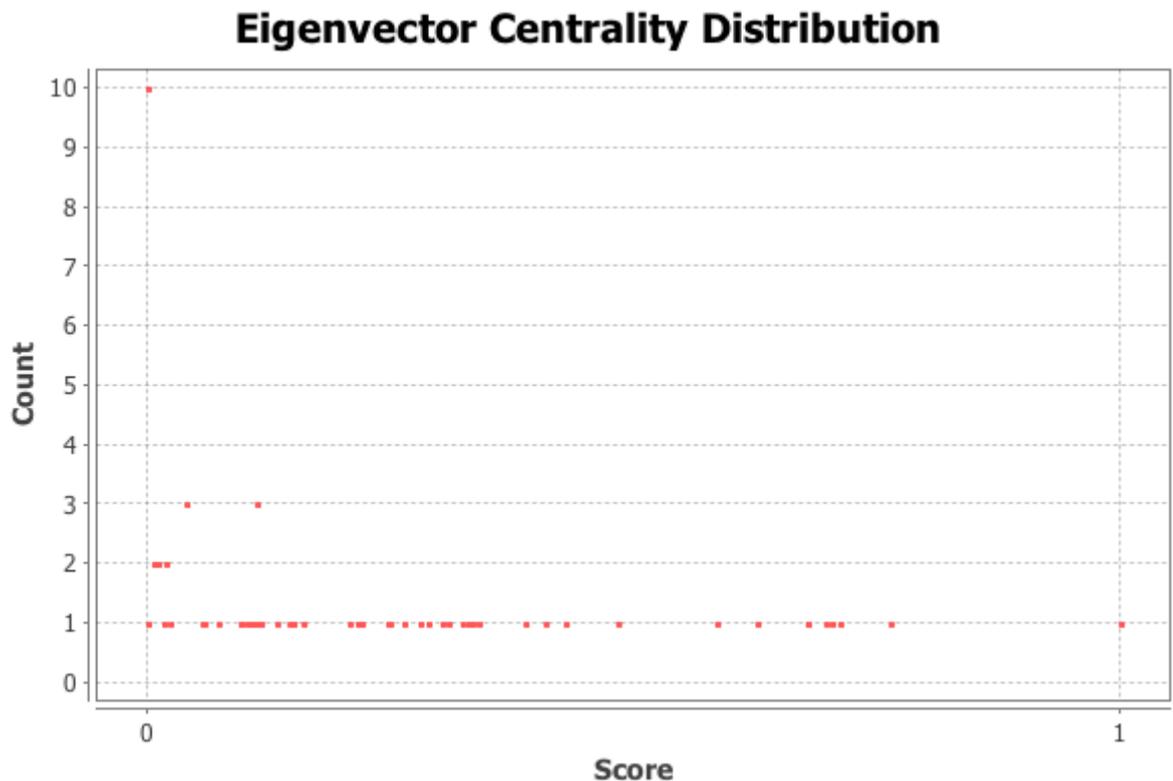


Figure 4.B.10. EC of DMK Member Organisations

Whilst OC is far more likely to imply power, i.e. network actors with high out-degree are seen as power actors (Ang 2011), Indegree Centrality (IC), in contrast, is well positioned to evaluate emergent and already established leaders in the network (Balkundi et al. 2009; Scott 2012; Valente 2010) as this SNA measure indicates the existence of leadership practice within a network (Panda et al. 2014). Indegree centrality is a measure, which allows for nominating organisations which are a source of leadership in the network

(Contractor et al. 2012) Computing the number of follower links aimed at both already established and emergent leaders is one way of achieving this goal. Indegree centrality also helps uncover perceived influence (Cherven 2015; Freeman 1979) as a result of leadership development (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). Influence is one of the key traits of demonstrating leadership. Indegree centrality is arguably well-positioned to surface the already established leaders in the network, who may have traditionally been linked to corporate members. Emergent leaders, in contrast, are more likely to be tied to non-corporate members.

Table 4.B.6. EC Distribution across DMK Member Organisations



Layout algorithm: Fruchterman Reingold (Fruchterman and Reingold 1991)

On Spotlight: Weighted Indegree Centrality (by Membership); Surfacing established and emergent leaders in the network

Network Data: Directed, Valued

Data Key: Minimum value 0, Maximum value 29. The indegree centrality captures a number between 0 and 29, where 0 indicates the lowest possible

indegree centrality and 29 indicates the highest possible indegree centrality in the investigated network. The higher the indegree centrality of an actor, the higher the number of followers, level of empowerment and acquired resources of this actor across the DMO network, which demonstrates evidence of DL practice. Further, the higher the proportion of network actors with indegree centrality, which is different than 0, the more opportunities for embedding DL practice across the complete network through both established and emergent leaders. Unlike outdegree centrality where arrow colour mirrors the source of power, the arrow colour in the case of indegree centrality mirrors the target node, where follower links are depicted.

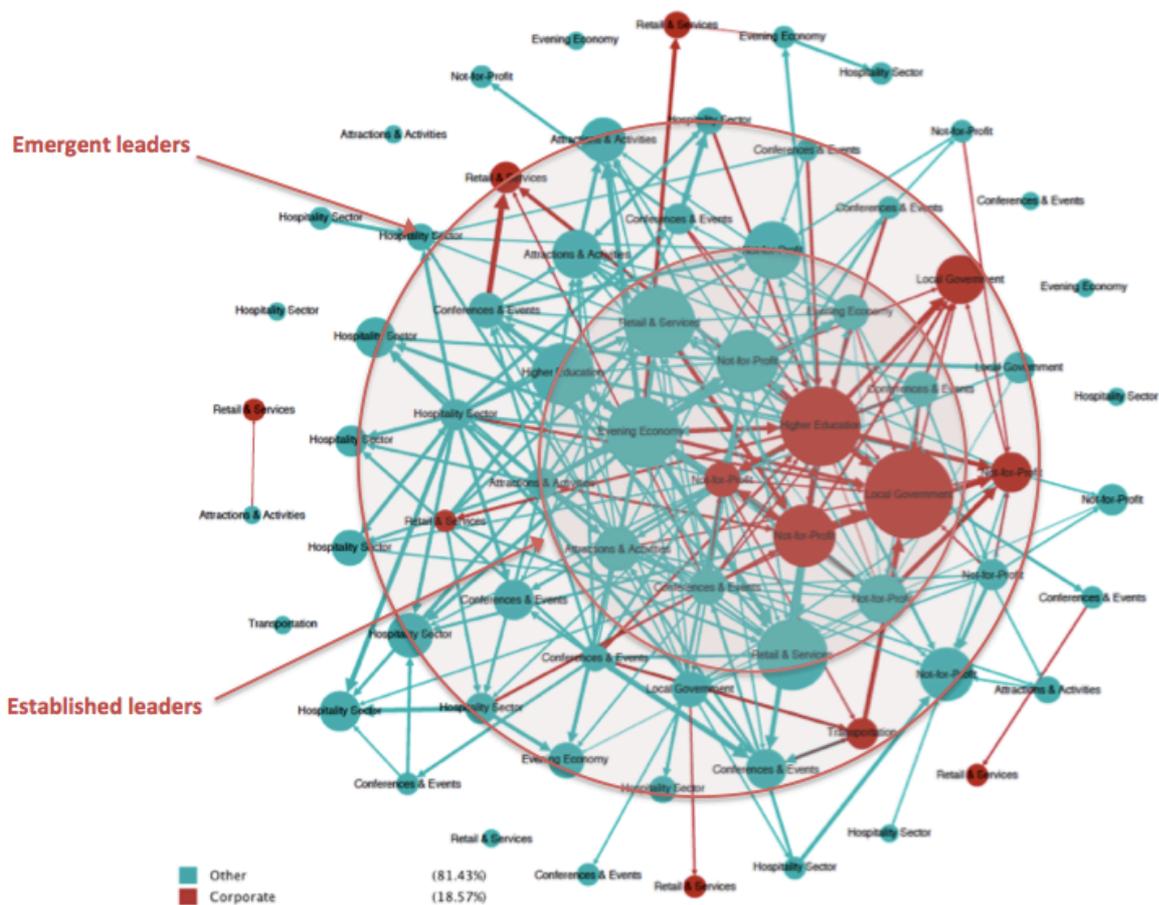


Figure 4.B.11. IC of DMK Member Organisations

Unlike the outdegree centrality network, where 50% of the complete network demonstrated $OC=0$, the proportion of DMK member organisations demonstrating $IC>0$ is over 84% (see Appendix 4 for a full table of IC statistics). This figures leave only 16% of the complete network with $IC=0$, i.e. no followers.

DL advocates broad empowerment and engagement (Martin et al. 2015) and the above figures provide evidence of DL practice where 84% of DMK's member organisations are recipients of information, knowledge and resource flows and are followed by at least one other member of DMK thus allowing for their voice to be heard. This scenario presents a case whereby traditional followers become co-producers of leadership through their interactions with established leaders (Harris 2005), as it becomes evident further down where emergent leaders are surfaced within DMK. Surfacing emergent leaders is a process, which is amongst the applications of the set of specific questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010). Further, Figure 4.B.11 demonstrates clearly the isolates or non-recipients as they are in the network periphery, where DMK members from the Evening Economy and Hospitality Sector have two actors each.

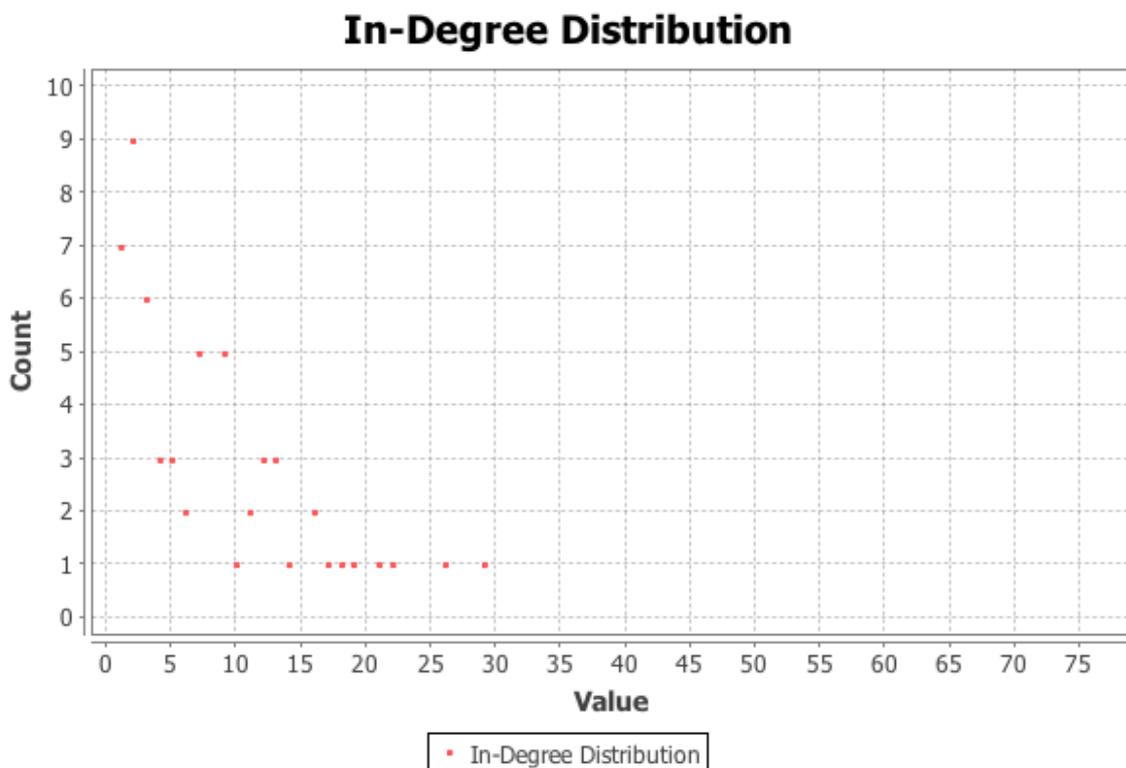
If the highest OC of a single DMK member organisation was 56, the highest IC was positioned at 29. The lower the highest indegree centrality, the more opportunities for DL and wider recognition of the importance of most (if not all) DMO member organisations. However, indegree centrality (Table 4.B.7) tends to be more evenly distributed across the network when compared to OC (Table 4.B.2). Table 4.B.7 provides the overall picture of both already established and emergent leaders within DMK, where the former group captures predominantly individual DMK members of Count=1 with high IC=15-30 and the latter one captures multiple DMK members of Count=1-5 with medium IC=5-15.

Established leaders with the highest IC, as Figure 4.B.11 suggests, are corporate (founding) members of DMK, such as Higher Education and Local Government member organisations, followed by some non-corporate members from the Retail and Services and the Not-for-Profit sectors (large-scale nodes on Figure 4.B.11). They capture nine organisations on board DMK (13% of the complete network). Emergent leaders, in contrast, are largely non-corporate members. In light of these above figures for emergent and established leaders, Table 4.B.7 also suggests that 25 of the organisations on board DMK (35% of the complete network) may be considered as emergent leaders. Amongst the defining features or facets of DL, as contended by Harris (2008), is the presence of a more broad-based leadership, which involves both formal and

informal leaders at multiple levels. The above IC-surfaced leaders *in situ* include both formal (corporate) and emergent (non-corporate) leaders on board the DMO. This serves as evidence of DL practice on board DMK. In the context of DL, established and emergent leaders are regarded as important gatekeepers, who have the potential to empower and enable others to participate in leadership and important destination decision-making processes (Tian et al. 2015). This is the case with IC champions with contrasting membership statuses, who capture 48% of the complete network (13% established leaders, 35% emergent leaders).

These figures suggest that the current state of IC across DMK, where a healthy balance of both established and emergent leaders representing 48% of the complete network is present, could provide conditions for empowering and wider penetration of leadership practice of the other 52%, who do not belong to either of the above leader groups in the network.

Table 4.B.7. IC Distribution across of DMK Member Organisations



Network Flows Focus: Deconstructing DMK's Communication and Resource Networks

The second specific organisational leadership network question proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010), unlike the first one, has its focus on network flows. This question is therefore interested in whether information, resources and knowledge flow seamlessly through the network so that they are accessible to network members when they need it (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). In doing so, the following question builds upon the first of two connectivity questions introduced earlier in this chapter. DL is founded on interactions, rather than actions (Harris 2005; Harris and Spillane 2008). Hence knowledge and resource exchange are fundamental ingredients of DL practice (Tian et al. 2015) and as such, they have been further explored in light of this study's objectives. There have not been any SNA measures that authors of the framework proposed on the basis of their relevance to this second specific organisational leadership network question. In light of this framework limitation, the study adopts OC logics in surfacing knowledge and communication flows and IC logics when identifying developmental resource flows. It then draws on insightful depictions capturing communication and resource flows across the network in order to find out whether and to what extent the above information, knowledge and resources are accessible to the majority if not all DMK member organisations. The impact of resource exchange over individual DMO members and key communicators across the complete network have also been uncovered.

This second and last specific question is key to evaluating DL practice across DMK as nurturing active communication and distribution of knowledge and resources on a DMO level is an important indicator of developing DL practice (Hristov and Zehrer 2015) and so is the case with mainstream leadership networks embedded in organisations (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010), i.e. DL practice. Indeed, DL recognises that leadership practice is constructed and ultimately founded on shared action and interaction (Harris 2005), and distribution of resources, knowledge and expertise (Spillane 2006).

If the first specific question provided more detailed network insights into the structural and relational properties of DMK, including roles and network positions of individual member organisations, the following discussion in

contrast aims to shed light into DL practice through the perspective of network flows, which capture both – communication and resource flows. The presence of a wider distribution of strategic network resources across the network and open communication, which covers the majority (if not all) network members provide evidence of existing DL practice (Harris 2005; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010; Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Hence, the following section provides a discussion related to network flows which are vital to DL practice in the complete network in light of the various sectors on-board DMK and taking into account contrasting DMO membership statuses. This approach aims to yield important insights into how communication, expertise and resources are distributed across the complete network.

As discussed earlier, the network depiction tool facilitating the analysis of Phase II data, namely Gephi provides a range of network layout algorithms, e.g. Fruchterman Reingold, Circular, which are used for transforming network data into readable depictions. As part of the network study aimed at surfacing structural and relational properties across DMK, participants were also given the opportunity to rate their relationships with other DMO member organisations using a 5-point Likert scale targeting both frequency (when frequency of exchange of information is considered) and impact (when impact of sharing developmental resources over individual member organisations is considered) of relationship (see Appendix 2e).

When surfacing communication patterns and exchange of information, edge colours correspond to the colour of source nodes to depict the initiators of this communication, i.e. network actors who reported a link with other DMK member organisations. This approach is helpful as it yields the key communicators, who are often the key knowledge and expertise holders across the network (Panda et al. 2014). Importantly, the approach aims to surface how and whether knowledge and communications champions connect with diverse sectors on board DMK with the aim to communicate a common vision, e.g. the recently launched DMP and facilitate DL practice, e.g. distribution of developmental resources. Indeed, sharing resources and expertise across the network allows for planting the seeds of DL practice (Tian et al. 2015) and frequent communication is key to facilitating such processes (Angelle 2010).

Communication is also key to collective visioning, which is at the heart of DL (see Siraj and Hallet 2013).

Layout algorithm: Circular (Groeninger 2012)

On Spotlight: Knowledge and Communication Flows (by Sector) – Outdegree Logics Used

Network Data: Undirected, Valued, Outdegree Logics Used

Frequency Scale: 5-point Frequency Likert (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, Biannually to none), where 'Daily' mirrors the highest and 'Biannually to none' the lowest frequency of communication and knowledge exchange.

Data Key: Edge (communication flows) correspond to the colour of source, i.e. identifying key communicators. The thicker a link, the higher the frequency of communication and knowledge exchange between the source node and the target node. The bigger the node, the higher the capacity of that node to act as a key communicator, i.e. distributor of important information and knowledge across the complete network (incl. organisation's vision and mission).

Figure 4.B.12 provides a helicopter view of all interaction flows related to communication and exchange of information across the network and thus surfaces key champions in this practice across sectors on board DMK. Identifying key communicators, i.e. champions of knowledge and information distribution with numerous links with other DMK member organisations is also vital to embedding a leadership vision (e.g. the recently launched DMP) across the complete membership network. Valente et al. (2015) identified the articulation and communication of goals and actions to be among the prominent leadership themes in the domain of destination organisations, e.g. DMOs. Indeed, contemporary DMOs are now increasingly assuming visionary roles and are thus fundamental to shaping a long-term agenda for their destinations (Morrison 2013). It is important that shared meaning, vision, aspirations and goals are generated and communicated throughout the organisation so that it can move in the same direction (Owen and Dietz 2012) and this is also valid in the case of DMK, where vital developmental resources are now located within the diversity of DMO member organisations. Communication and knowledge flows are indeed amongst the building blocks of DL networks and as such, they deserve further attention (Harris 2005).

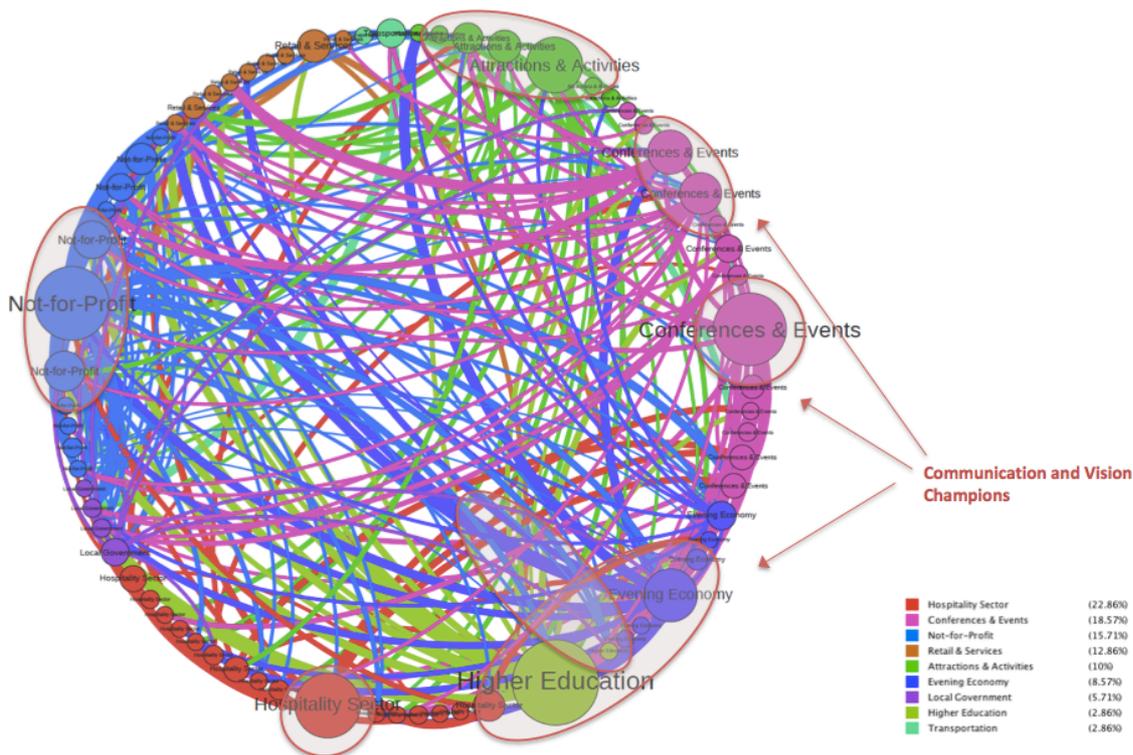


Figure 4.B.12. Communication and Exchange of Information Flows and Key Communicators across Sectors on board DMK

Hence, deconstructing DMK’s communication network (Figure 4.B.13) can provide important insights into the strength of links across the 70 member organisations and thus opportunities for distributing leadership and communicating a shared vision throughout the network captured in the recently launched DMP. Despite the highly dense communication network evident on Figure 4.B.12, when deconstructed in light of the 5-point scale mirroring frequency of communication, DMK’s complete communication network appears to be particularly weak, where:

- 2.26% of all interactions between member organisations occur on a daily basis;
- 7.52% of all interactions between member organisations occur on a weekly basis;
- 13.53% of all interactions between member organisations occur on a monthly basis;
- 23.68% of all interactions between member organisations occur on a quarterly basis;

- 53.01% of all interactions between member organisations take place biannually or less frequently (Figure 4.B.13).

These figures indicate that over half of all network links mirroring communication and exchange of information flows within DMK take place biannually or less frequently, whereas another 24% of the complete network's interactions take place on a quarterly basis (Figure 4.B.13). Hence the level of engagement in communication and knowledge exchange of over 75% of the complete membership network is relatively low when examined in light of the frequency of interactions. On the other side of the spectrum, just over 20% of the complete network is engaged in interactions occurring on a monthly, weekly or daily basis (Figure 4.B.13). Frequent interaction through communication and information exchange, are key to communicating every organisation's vision, values and direction (Patel et al. 2012), which lacks at present within DMK as evidenced on Figure 4.B.13.

Further, outdegree centrality logics, has been employed to uncover the communication and knowledge champions across sectors within the membership network (Figure 4.B.12). The figure suggests that individual member organisations representing six out of nine sectors on board DMK can be considered as communication champions (evidenced in large-scale nodes). However, Figure 4.B.13 suggests that these fewer influential actors vis-à-vis agents of shared vision distribution are less-successful in establishing strong links with the rest of the network due to their less frequent engagement with other member organisations. As already outlined above, Figure 4.B.13 demonstrated that 53.01% of the communication takes place biannually or less frequently, whereas only 2.26% of the interaction between DMK member organisations is carried out on a daily basis and does not involve the majority of identified champions. Indeed, it is evident from Figure 4.B.12 that outgoing communication flows reflect all sectors on board DMK. However, the high proportion of small-scale nodes indicates that fewer DMK member organisations champion knowledge and information distribution. This builds upon OC insights where it became evident that nearly 50% of all member organisations have not been able to provide evidence of any outgoing power and influence others through communication.

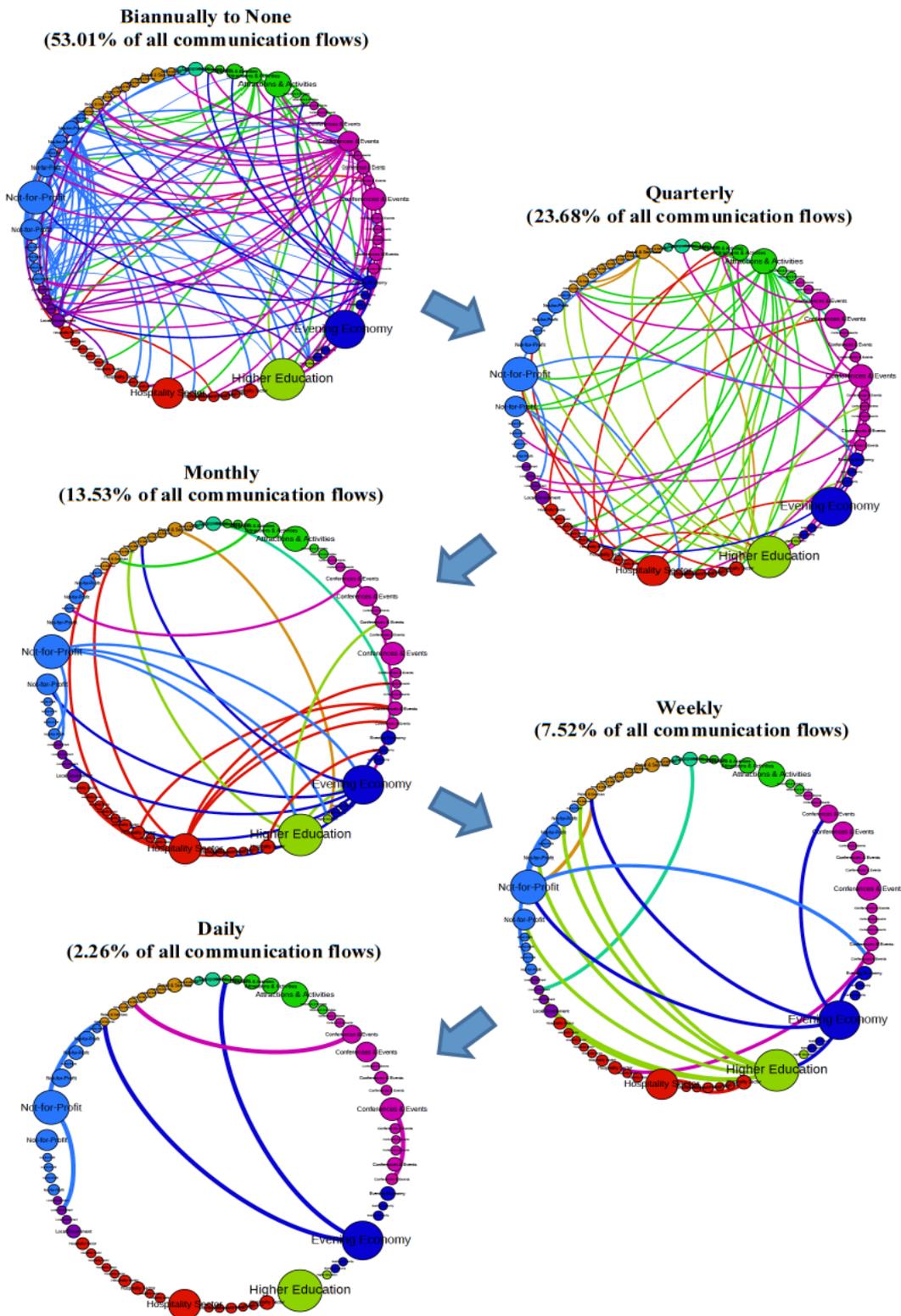


Figure 4.B.13. Deconstructing DMK's Communication Network from Figure 4.B.12

In line with communication, resources are also central to the enactment and practice of DL at an organisational level (Tian et al. 2015). Equally, DL calls for

recognising the interdependency of organisations when shaping leadership practice (Spillane 2006), as in the case of reshaped and largely resource-constrained DMOs in England. Facilitating wider access to resources means empowering individuals and organisations (Zimmermann 1995). Processes and practices related to empowering are indeed necessary prerequisite to the enactment and practice of DL (Hairon and Goh 2014), where this study identifies resource-empowered DMK member organisations. When surfacing processes of sharing developmental resources, individual DMK member organisations were asked to rate the impact on their organisation of processes related to acquiring developmental resources, such as funding, research outputs, and joint projects with each of the other DMK members that they have reported a link with. Unlike knowledge and communication flows, when surfacing patterns of sharing developmental resources, edge (flow) colours correspond to the colour of target nodes. The reason behind is that target nodes are recipients of flows provided by source nodes, who act as developmental resource holders. This approach is helpful in depicting incoming developmental resource flows and also yields the key resource holders and developmental resource recipients across the network by sector. It also indicates empowering, which is another building block of DL (Martin et al. 2015) and as such, it supports the leadership of others (Harris 2013).

Layout algorithm: Circular (Groeninger 2012)

On Spotlight: Developmental Resource Flows (by Sector) – Indegree Logics Used; Surfacing evidence of empowerment, providing a voice in strategic destination decision-making and recognition of individual DMK member organisations

Network Data: Undirected, Valued

Impact Scale: 5-point Impact Likert (Transformative, Highly Supportive, Moderate Support, Some Support, Marginal to none), where ‘Transformative’ mirrors the highest and ‘Marginal to none’ the lowest impact of acquiring developmental resources.

Data Key: Edge (resource flows) corresponds to the colour of target, i.e. identifying key resource holders and recipients. The thicker the link, the more impactful the process of acquiring developmental resources for the target node,

i.e. a DMK member organisation. The bigger the node, the higher the impact of acquiring developmental resources for that node.

Figure 4.B.14 provides a helicopter view of all transaction flows related to developmental resources across the network and surfaces key recipients of resources across sectors on board DMK. Identifying key resource holders, i.e. champions of developmental resource distribution with numerous links with other DMK member organisations, is particularly helpful in facilitating access of vital resources across the complete membership network in times when Milton Keynes Council is no longer the primary source of destination funding (as confirmed by DMK’s founding CEO in Phase I).

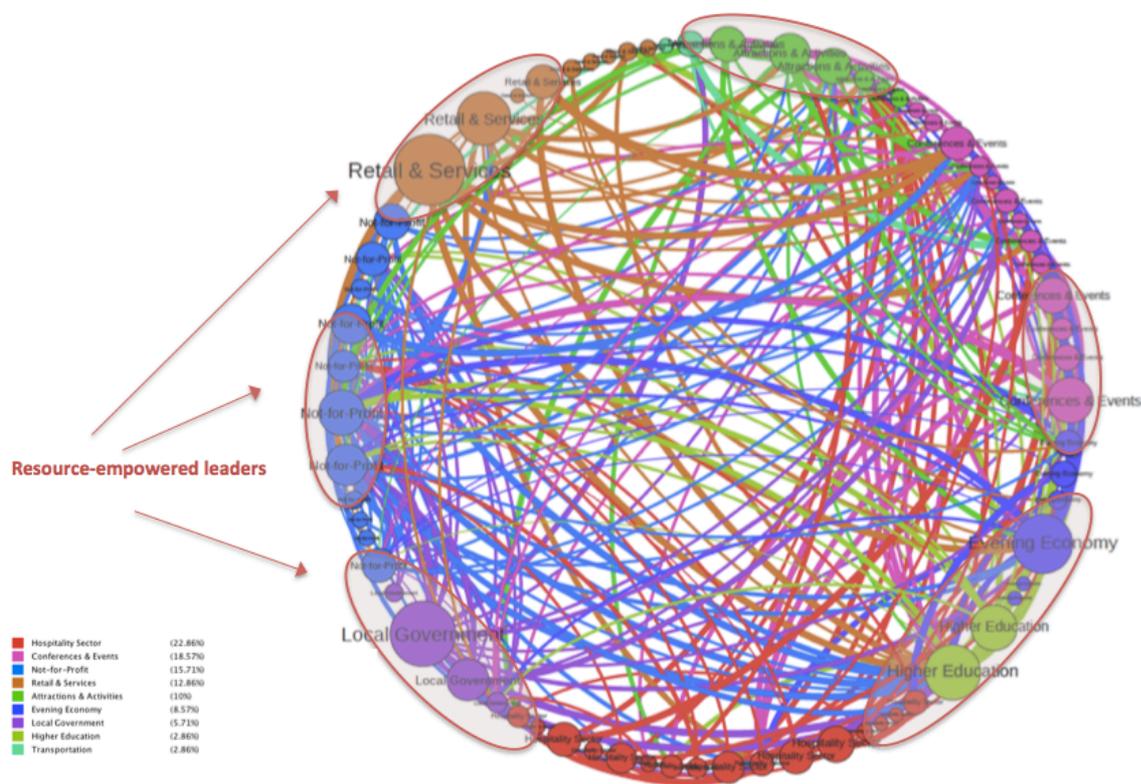


Figure 4.B.14. Developmental Resource Flows and Impact over Individual Members across Sectors on board DMK

Developmental resource flows along with frequent communication and knowledge exchange are also building blocks of DL practice (Harris 2005) and as such, they deserve further attention. Hence, deconstructing DMK’s developmental resource network can provide important insights into the impact

of flows of vital resources across the 70 member organisations and thus surface evidence of distributing leadership across the complete network. When deconstructed in light of the 5-point scale mirroring impact of acquiring developmental resources, DMK's resource network (Figure 4.B.14) appears to be relatively more balanced than the communication one, where:

- 12.78% of all resource transactions within the complete network have transformative impact over individual member organisations;
- 13.53% of all resource transactions within the complete network prove to have had a highly supportive role to individual member organisations;
- 13.53% of all resource transactions within the complete network proved to have provided a moderate support to individual member organisations;
- 53.01% of all resource transactions within the complete network proved to have provided some support to individual member organisations;
- 7.14% of all resource transactions within the complete network proved to have provided marginal to none support to individual member organisations.

These figures indicate that just over 7% of all network transactions mirroring patterns of developmental resource sharing have demonstrated a marginal or less impact over DMK member organisations, whereas 53.01% of the complete network's resource transactions provided some support, i.e. empowerment for members on board DMK (see Figure 4.B.15). The latter figures demonstrate that processes of acquiring developmental resources in the case of over half of the network's links prove to have provided some support to individual DMK member organisations. Over 40% of the developmental resource flows in the complete network prove to have provided moderate through to high support or even transformative impact over individual DMK member organisations (see Figure 4.B.15), where there is evidence of processes and practices related to empowering through the provision of developmental resources.

Further, indegree centrality logic has been employed to uncover key recipients of developmental resources across sectors within DMK's membership network. Despite the lack of champions of acquiring developmental resources across all nine sectors on board DMK as it was the case with communication,

the impact of acquiring developmental resources tends to be more distributed across individual member organisations in the network as Figure 4.B.15 and the highlighted statistics from deconstructing DMK's resource network demonstrated. Indeed, it is evident from Figure 4.B.14 that a large proportion of DMK member organisations across sectors have indicated at least some impact over them as a result of acquiring developmental resources (based on the low proportion of small-scale nodes. This builds upon IC insights where it became evident that 84% of all member organisations have been resource-empowered and followed by at least one other member of DMK. The above figures provide evidence of empowerment, facilitating a voice in strategic destination decision-making and recognition of individual DMK member organisations going beyond the traditional leadership network community linked to corporate members. Muijs and Harris (2003) identify empowerment as an important dimension of DL.

Resources are instrumental to the enactment and practice of DL at an organisational level (Chreim 2015; Tian et al. 2015) and Figure 4.B.14 depicting the distribution of developmental resources across the complete network and empowering individual member organisations serves as evidence of the practice of DL.

4.2.3.B Discussion of current evidence into the practice of DL: DMK perspective

So far, discussions in this chapter related to structural and relational network properties in light of Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, provided evidence that DL in resource-constrained DMO depends to a large extent upon finding the balance between inherited power relations and emergent leadership practice, the effective and efficient communication among the diversity of member organisations and the extent to which resources are distributed across the network.

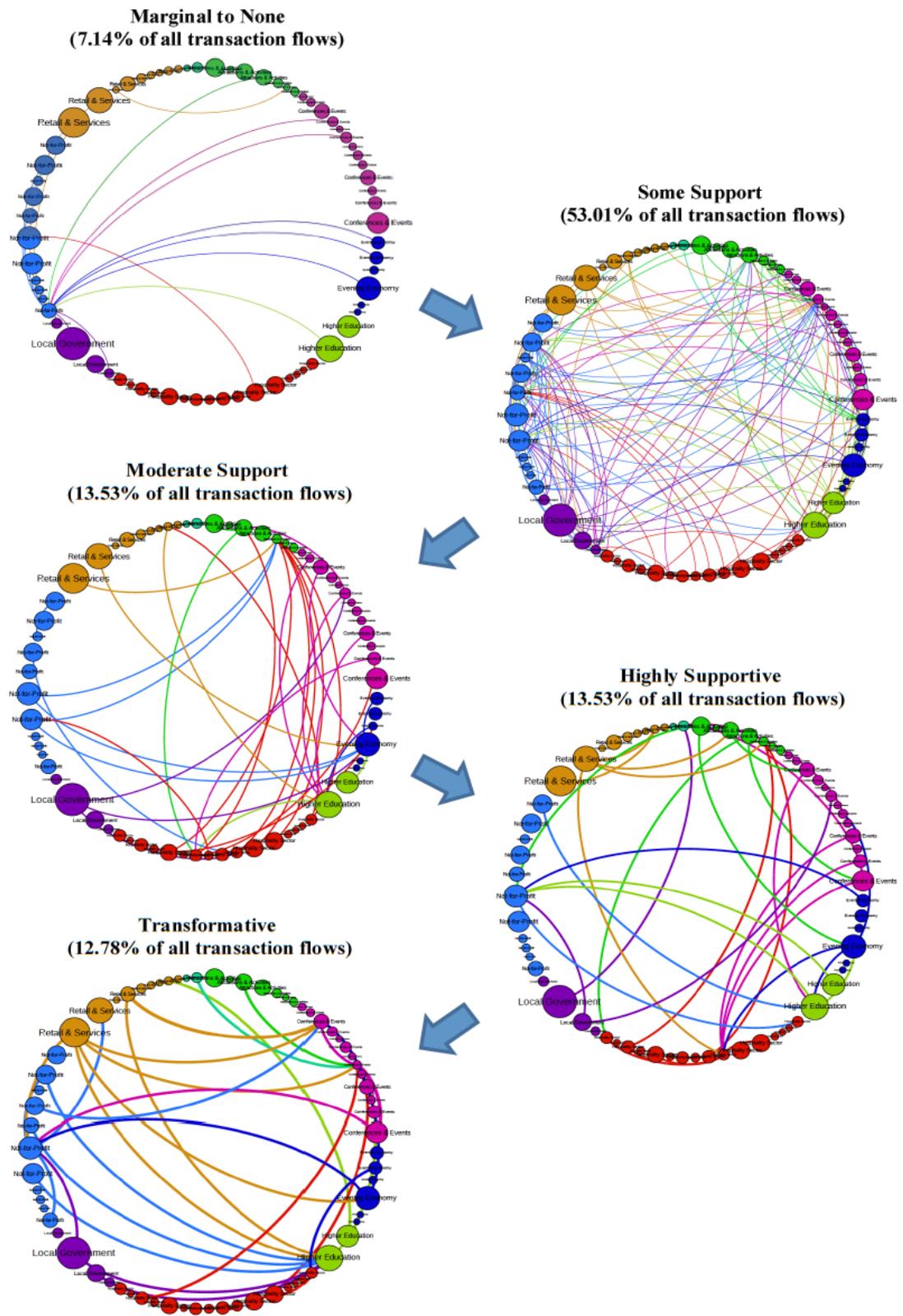


Figure 4.B.15. Deconstructing DMK's Developmental Resources Network from Figure 4.B.14

This study acknowledges that some of the questions (generic and specific) proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) overlap to an extent. The proposed questions and adopted measures nevertheless tackle different aspects of connectivity and network flows (structural and relational properties) of studied networks to provide an all-round investigation of DL practice, which is developing on a DMO level.

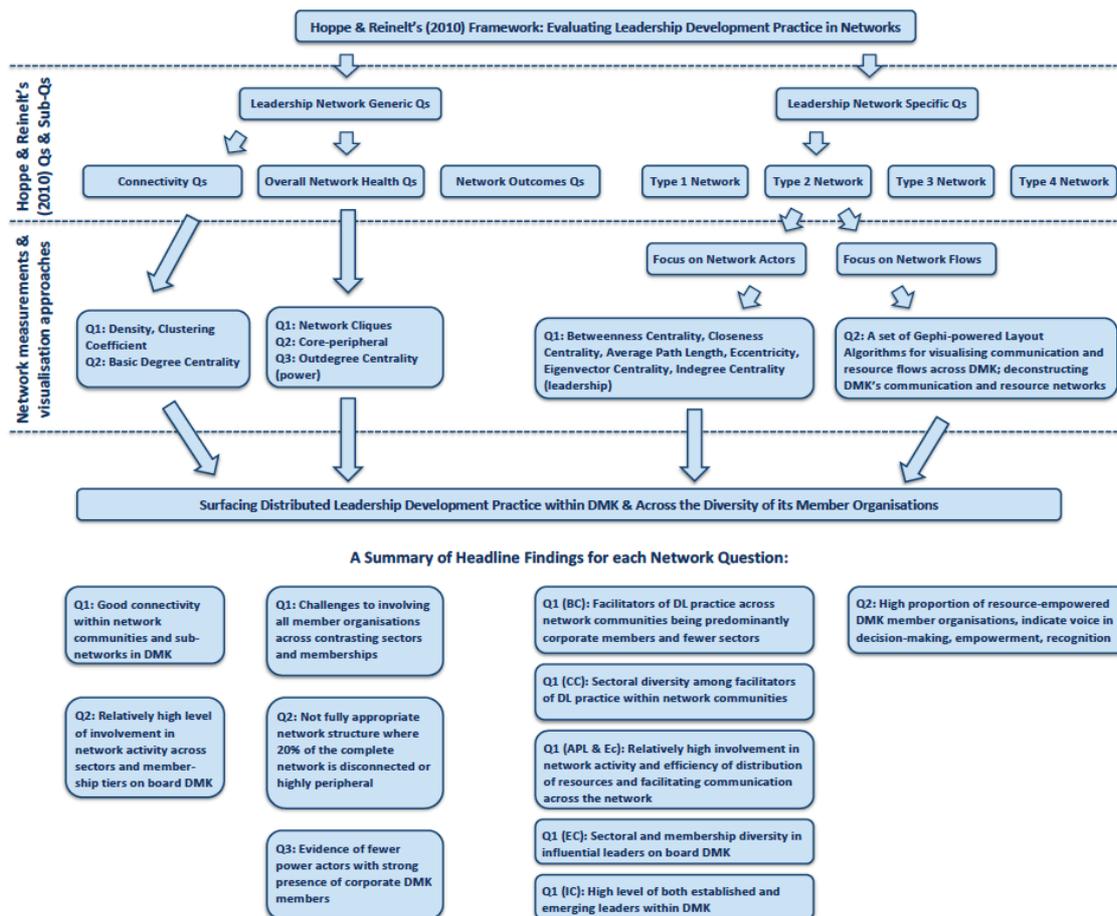


Figure 4.B.16. Adapting and Adopting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) Framework: Headline Findings

Figure 4.B.16 builds on Figure 4.B.1 introduced at the outset of this chapter and provides a summary of headline findings for each of the measures used as part of the generic and specific questions, which are part of Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework.

The series of key network analysis measures adopted in Phase II and in line with Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for evaluating leadership

practice in networks embedded in organisations provide some important lessons for emergent DL on a DMO level:

The first of two connectivity questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) was interested in whether the network structure enables efficient sharing of information, ideas and resources. The SNA measures selected on the basis of their relevance to the first connectivity question included network density and clustering coefficient. Despite demonstrating a relatively low overall network density ($d=0,1$), the average clustering coefficient of the complete DMK network ($CCoef=0,412$) provided evidence that individual member organisations are well connected within their network communities and sub-networks. On a local CCoef level, non-corporate DMK members appeared to be well-connected within their network communities in contrast to corporates, who demonstrated a relatively low connectedness. Hence non-corporate members are thought to have more opportunities for championing linking across communities and sub-networks on board DMK. The latter figures indicate the availability of wider opportunities for embedding DL practice beyond corporate membership and across the complete network due to the relatively good connectivity within and across network communities, regardless of the relatively low overall network density.

The second of two connectivity questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) was interested in whether the investigated network can effectively bridge clusters, e.g. diverse sectors, different membership tiers. The SNA measure, which was selected on the basis of its relevance to this second connectivity question, was basic degree centrality. In light of the above, DC was also employed to surface DMK member organisations across contrasting sectors and memberships with high level of involvement and activity within the network. Despite the relatively low degree centrality of 50% of the complete membership network ($DC=7$ or lower) indicating important level of involvement and activity of individual members, the top 10 DC champions mirrored seven out of the nine sectors on board DMK with a healthy balance between corporate and non-corporate members (Figure 4.B.4) who are essential to extending bridging opportunities beyond corporate members. This sectoral diversity of DC champions suggests that sector champions can collectively play a key role in bridging clusters across sectors and thus empowering and involving DMK

members with DC=7 or lower in strategic destination decision-making. Bridging network clusters effectively is vital to widening participation and thus planting the seeds of DL practice and the above figures demonstrate a relatively high level of involvement of individual DMK member organisations across sectors and memberships.

The first of three overall network health questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) was interested in how diverse the network under investigation is and whether diversity spreads across the complete network. In the case of DMK, this was captured in terms of both sectoral and membership diversity. The SNA measure, which was selected on the basis of its relevance to this question involved detecting cliques, i.e. DMK member organisations, which have formed powerful alliances with other members within the complete network. If DC surfaced opportunities to involvement, cliques were able to point to challenges to involvement across contrasting sectors and memberships. Cliques, which tend to be influential and often powerful groups of DMO member organisations, which can limit the spread of diversity across the network have been surfaced within DMK. The clique detector returned eight cliques of size $k=3$. However, only 11 out of possible 24, predominantly public sector-led or supported DMK member organisations have been involved in the eight cliques surfaced through Gephi. These figures suggest that the current state of cliques (size and content) on board DMK may pose certain challenges to involving others in strategic destination leadership initiatives and empowering the diversity of sectors within the DMO and private sector-led organisations in particular.

The second of three overall network health questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) was interested in whether the full network's structure is appropriate for the mission of the network. This question built upon the first of two connectivity questions as it went down to network member level. The SNA measure selected on the basis of its relevance to this question involved a core-periphery visual analysis of the complete network using the Erdos Number approach. The Erdos Number demonstrated that 19% of the complete network mirrors predominantly business sector-led DMK member organisations with high Erdos Number, who were either disconnected or highly peripheral (Figure 4.B.6). The current core-peripheral network structure of DMK have therefore

been identified as one, which is not fully appropriate for the current mission of the network shifting from traditional (heroic/individualistic) public sector leadership model towards one, which adopts a more open approach to involving the diversity of DMK member organisations in shaping leadership decisions and providing wider access to vital destination resources, in addition to nurturing a more open dialogue and communication across sectors.

The third overall network health question proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) had its focus explicitly on the power and influence relationships within the network and their implications for processes involving leadership development. The SNA measure, which was selected on the basis of its relevance to this question involved surfacing the outdegree centrality of individual DMK member organisations. Outcomes of this investigation demonstrated that processes of exercising power and influence, in addition to providing opportunities for empowering diverse (in both sectoral and membership terms) member organisations are not evenly distributed across the complete network (Figure 4.B.5). This was due to the low proportion of network actors with high OC ranging OC=16-56 and capturing only 13% of the complete network. These figures therefore provide evidence of fewer power actors with strong presence of corporate DMK members. This power imbalance leads to fewer opportunities for the other 87% of the network with OC ranging OC=0-12 for empowering and thus participating in strategic destination leadership initiatives. The surfaced power relationships can act as barriers to penetrating DL, which is practised by the diversity of member organisations on board DMK.

The first of two specific organisational leadership network questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) had its focus on network actors and was interested in whether there are appropriate bridgers in the network, who connect disparate network communities and sub-networks. Network bridgers can be agents of DL practice (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). The SNA measures considered on the basis of their relevance to this question included betweenness centrality, closeness centrality, average path length, eccentricity, eigenvector centrality and indegree centrality. The applied network measures (as part of this and the following network specific questions) also surfaced six types of leaders on board DMK. They have demonstrated initial evidence of DL

practice, i.e. the capacity to collectively enact and nurture DL practice across the complete network, namely:

- Network in-community leaders (CC-surfaced);
- Network cross-community leaders (BC-surfaced);
- Highly influential leaders (EC-surfaced);
- Established leaders (IC-surfaced);
- Emergent leaders (IC-surfaced);
- Resource-empowered leaders (developmental resources-surfaced).

Evidence of multiple levels of involvement in strategic destination decision-making, as argued by Harris (2008) is among the core facets or principles of DL. These six types of leaders are discussed in relation to the network insights provided under the findings section. It is important to note that individual DMK member organisations may be assuming more than one of the above identified leader roles.

Betweenness centrality surfaced agents of DL practice providing distant network communities, e.g. across different sectors and membership tiers, with opportunities to shape leadership decisions and as such, they facilitate access to vital network resources. Hence BC champions have been called network cross-community leaders. This was the first SNA measure adopted in responding to the first organisational leadership network-specific question proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010). BC champions traditionally act as bridges across network communities on board DMK. They are facilitators of DL practice across network communities. The results demonstrated that the very few BC champions were not evenly distributed across sectors on board DMK and largely representing corporate (Higher Education and Not-for-Profit) member organisations. This leads to leaving major private sector DMK member organisations, namely the Hospitality Sector (22.86%) and Conferences and Events (18.57%) without BC champions, who are well placed to promote and nurture DL practice across and within sectors on board DMK.

On the other side of the spectrum, closeness centrality surfaced a number of prominent DMK members, who were well placed within their own

communities and sub-networks, and the ones closer to all other member organisations within the network. Hence, CC champions in contrast to BC ones act as bridgers within their own network communities in DMK. CC champions have been called network in-community leaders. The results provided evidence that unlike BC, DMK members championing CC are present across all sectors on board. Importantly, a cross-comparison of DMK's BC and CC network suggested that the network depends on different sectors to roll out DL practice both within and across communities. Some sectors were best placed as BC champions, whilst others demonstrated high CC thus suggesting that sectoral diversity breaks down barriers to wider distribution of leadership practice including the exchange vital resources across the network. This balance among BC and CC champions within DMK is an important facilitator of embedding DL practice within and across network communities on board DMK and as such, they complement each other.

The Average Path Length and its refined version, namely Eccentricity confirmed once again the existing core-periphery network structure of DMK. Despite the relatively low APL for the complete network ($APL=2,64$) suggesting a relatively high involvement in network activity and efficiency in distribution of resources and facilitating interaction (Table 4.B.4), eccentricity for individual member organisations varied considerably ($E=0-7$) thus questioning the level of accessibility of some member organisations to the rest of the network (40% of the complete network), as some DMK members had to go through six degrees in order to reach everyone else in the network (Table 4.B.5). However, it was found that this gap can be filled by the existing synergy between BC and CC champions within and across communities on board DMK. This was demonstrated by BC and CC computation outcomes.

The eigenvector centrality measure was adopted to surface individual DMK member organisations seen as network leaders, who are followed by or connected to other leaders in the network. Hence EC champions have been called highly influential network leaders. The results revealed that the top nine champions in EC represent only five out of the nine sectors on board DMK where Local Government and Not-for-Profit bodies dominated as in the case of betweenness centrality. However, the network computation provided evidence that there is a balance between corporate and non-corporate EC champions

with some emergent private sector-led member organisations, which are among these champions (Figure 4.B.10). The latter points to an emergent DL practice, which at present is championed by organisations with contrasting membership tiers beyond the public sector. Evidence of leadership, which encompasses both formal and informal leaders, as argued by Harris (2008), is also among the core facets or principles of DL.

Indegree centrality was employed to surface emergent and already established leaders within DMK, and identify the proportion of member organisations, which are followed by and also being able to acquire resources from others in the network. The latter also provides evidence of emergent DL practice through wider recognition of individual DMK member organisations, empowering and providing a voice in destination decision-making. The results demonstrated that the proportion of DMK members with $IC > 0$, i.e. organisations followed by at least one other DMK member, was 84% of the complete network. The IC analysis in addition uncovered that 48% of the complete network mirrors already established or emergent leaders, i.e. 13% established leaders, 35% emergent leaders, which is an important indicator of involvement in DL practice of nearly half of the network and further promoting empowerment and facilitating DL across the complete network. As argued by Nairon and Goh (2014), when empowerment takes place, influence is no longer demonstrated solely by 'the superior', e.g. DMK corporate members, but also from 'the subordinates', e.g. non-corporate DMK members. Hence IC champions have been called both established and emergent leaders and span across both membership tiers in DMK, namely corporate and non-corporate. The balance between corporate and non-corporate members (evident in the above surfaced already established and emergent leaders on Figure 4.B.11) provide evidence that DMK member organisations assuming leadership functions now go beyond traditional public sector and corporate affiliation.

The second of two specific organisational leadership network questions proposed by Hoppe and Reinelt (2010), unlike the first one, had its focus on network flows (Figure 4.B.1). This question was therefore interested in whether information, developmental resources and knowledge flow seamlessly through the network, so that they are accessible by network members when they need it

(Hoppe and Reinelt 2010). In doing so, this question built upon the first of two connectivity questions introduced earlier. DL calls for recognising the interdependency of organisations when shaping leadership practice (Spillane, 2006) and as such, it is well-placed to facilitate an investigation into reshaped and largely resource-constrained DMOs. Hence processes related to the facilitation of communication and knowledge exchange across the network, along with the provision of wider developmental resource exchange among DMO member organisations can be considered to be among the key pillars of DL both on a DMO level (see Hristov and Zehrer 2015), and beyond the DMO and destination domain (see Tian et al. 2015). Destination resources are often located within the diversity of DMO member organisations (see Figure 4.B.14) and as such, they shape DL practice collectively and thus provide opportunities for growth.

When DMK's communication and resource network was explored in light of this second specific organisational leadership network question, network flows related to distribution of developmental resources were stronger than the ones involving information exchange and communication across the complete network. From a network flows perspective, the impact of acquiring developmental resources has been rated as transformative in the case of 13% of all developmental resource flows and this captured representatives of all sectors on board DMK (Figure 4.B.14). From an actor perspective, the IC logics used to surface recipients of developmental resources demonstrated that 84% of all member organisations have been resource-empowered and followed by at least one other member of DMK. This high proportion of recognised, followed and resource-empowered DMK member organisations has been called resource-empowered leaders. However, frequent interaction among member organisations and communicating the membership organisation's shared vision, i.e. the DMP Plan, which captures a process carried out on a regular basis covered only 2.26% of all communication and information exchange interactions within DMK and involved six out of the nine sectors on board DMK with only three playing an active role in nurturing such interactions across sectors (see Figure 4.B.13). Despite the relatively low involvement of DMK member organisations in frequent interaction and communicating a shared vision, i.e. just over 20% of the complete network, the insights provided by this final

question provide evidence of DL practice in place, which is embedded within the strong impact of resource transactions mirroring 40% of all transactions with further 53% of the network reporting some at least some impact and covering 84% of the complete network as stated above. The latter indicates empowerment, providing a voice in strategic destination decision-making and recognition of individual DMK member organisations.

In light of contrasting membership statuses, the above depictions suggest that building DL capacity on a DMO level that is enacted from within the core of the network, i.e. corporate or founding members (main resource holders) is important on two levels. Firstly, between corporates themselves, where weak links have been identified at present. Some corporates have access to other corporates only through non-corporate members. Secondly, between corporates and non-corporate members, where strong links between both membership tiers have been identified. However, the proportion of non-corporate members linked to corporates is relatively low. Increasing this proportion is essential for facilitating DL practice across the network, regardless of the membership status. Indeed, Beritelli et al. (2015b) provide evidence that network champions play an important linking function within DMOs. When sectoral diversity is under the spotlight the picture is identical – DMK member organisations, where there is a need for more evidence on building DL capacity within and across sectors present on board the membership organisation. DL aims to engage and empower others (Martin et al. 2015). DL therefore implies brokering, facilitating and supporting the leadership of others (Harris 2013) and this is a role that can be assumed by network champions across diverse sectors and contrasting membership statuses, as the above chapter discussion demonstrated already and is subject to investigation in the last discussion chapter.

4.3.B The wider policy network (Ego)

In addition to investigating processes and practices related to the practice of distributed leadership by adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) SNA framework

on a DMO network level, Objective C of this study is also aimed at exploring such practices on a wider, policy-network level. Phase I insights provided initial evidence into the enactment of DL facilitated by SEMLEP's VEG, which extends beyond DMK's membership network to capture DMO allies from DMK's policy network post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. Phase II and the following discussion build upon this evidence by applying a network approach to explore recent shifts in DMK's policy network. In so doing, it yields further insights into network practices related to the practice of DL by providing a helicopter view of DMK's policy network, in this case communication and resource exchange which are considered as evidence of practising DL on a policy network level.

As the literature review pointed out, ego networks and egocentric network data has its focus on the network surrounding one node and as such, the ego network approach differs considerably from the 'whole of network' approach taken in the above discussion, where the focus has been on the complete DMO network with boundaries shaped by DMO membership, i.e. the diversity of DMK member organisations. When translated into this research, the ego network approach brings into the spotlight DMK as a central node nested its policy network, where organisations marking the new localism agenda in England, such as LEPs and Visit England are nested (Hristov 2014). These organisations are not members of DMK. However, as Phase I insights suggested, they have an important role in nurturing DL practice, which extends beyond DMO boundaries and across England's destinations. The following section explores this policy network through the perspective of DMK and does not therefore involve network data from other policy network members, e.g. SEMLEP, VisitEngland. Hence why the network is seen through the ego network approach where DMK is brought into the spotlight as a focal point (node) of investigation. Besussi (2006) argued that policy networks correspond to a set of relationships, which are largely non-hierarchical and interdependent in nature linking organisations sharing a common vision and developmental goals. Organisations nested in policy networks share resources as a means to achieving their common vision and meeting developmental goals (Börzel, 1997). Collaboration and network initiatives aimed at assuming collective leadership responsibilities are therefore deeply rooted in their work.

In light of the 2010 coalition government's neo-liberal agenda and in post-2011 *Government Tourism Policy* context, organisations such as LEPs and VisitEngland can be seen as policy network actors, who support the aspirations and destination development goals of reshaped DMOs and vice versa. In times when the public purse is less-available to DMOs, they look into their wider policy network, i.e. beyond DMK member organisations that can support them in achieving their strategic objectives through access to important developmental resources and providing best practice and expertise (Hristov 2014). In other words, if the complete network discussion covered processes of developing DL practice within the DMO network by adopting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, this one, in contrast, is interested in similar processes occurring outside the DMO and involving other policy network actors both – pre and post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. The ego network approach provides only limited opportunities for surfacing structural and relational properties in a network due to the fact that this approach is particularly focused on the ego, i.e. DMK located at the centre of the wider policy network. However, DMK's ego network, when seen through the adopted longitudinal approach, may provide further evidence (following Phase I insights) that organisations beyond DMK's membership network have an important role in nurturing DL practice in post-2011 *Government Tourism Policy* context.

In the section to follow and in line with the adopted Phase III methodology, the former and present CEOs of the membership organisation were asked to select from a list their partner organisations from the wider (policy) network – both pre and post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* respectively.

4.3.1.B Structure of the pre-2011 Government Tourism Policy network of DMK

This section enquires into two basic relational properties of DMK's policy network prior to the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* produced by the 2010 coalition government – frequency of communication

between DMK and its policy network allies and the impact of acquiring strategic developmental resources over DMK. The then DMK's policy network is seen through the eyes of its former CEO, who has been leading the organisation since 2006 when DMK was founded. When surfacing communication patterns, DMK's former CEO was asked to rate the frequency of communication and knowledge exchange, e.g. everyday communication, networking on industry events, for each of the other policy network organisations that they have reported a link with. Network depictions taking into account such data were computed in Gephi via the Fruchterman Reingold layout algorithm.

Layout algorithm: Fruchterman Reingold (Fruchterman and Reingold 1991).

On Spotlight: Knowledge and Communication Flows Pre-2011 Government Tourism Policy

Network Data: Undirected, Valued

Frequency Scale: 5-point Frequency Likert (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, Biannually to none), where 'Daily' mirrors the highest and 'Biannually to none' the lowest impact.

Data Key: The thicker a link, the higher the frequency of communication and knowledge exchange between DMK and the target node, i.e. the organisation within the wider policy network.

Within the context of exploring DMK's policy network prior to the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* and as evident in Figure 4.B.17, DMK's communication flows with organisations beyond their membership network were largely established with predominantly local public sector-led organisations and partnerships, e.g. Milton Keynes Council, Milton Keynes City Centre Management, and local partnerships to support the bid for mega sporting events to be hosted in Milton Keynes. As the network depiction in Figure 4.B.17 indicates, the thicker the link between two nodes, the more frequent the communication is between these two nodes. The top three predominantly public sector-led organisations and partnerships had the most frequent communication with DMK occurring on a weekly basis.

In contrast, some recently established tourism and local development bodies, which have less public sector influence, namely VisitEngland and SEMLEP demonstrated less frequent communication with DMK, which occurred

monthly to quarterly (Table 4.B.8). The dominance of public sector allies, which were largely funded by Milton Keynes Council provide less opportunities and conditions for the enactment and practice of DL. The latter may have not been considered as necessary intervention and this was due to Milton Keynes Council assuming leadership function and providing funding for DMK's operations and as such, resulting in less interdependency, particularly from organisations beyond the public sector.

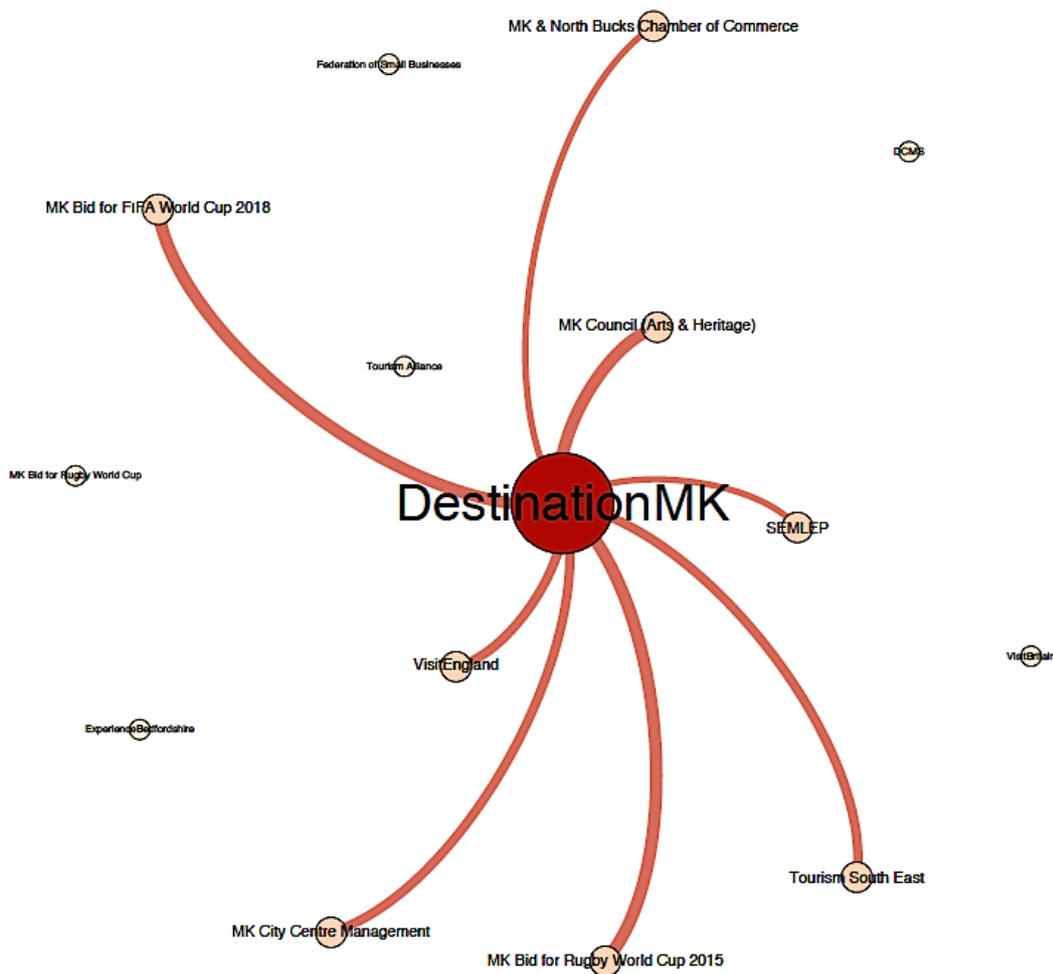


Figure 4.B.17 DMK's Policy Network (Pre-2011 Government Tourism Policy) Exchange of Information

Table 4.B.8: DMK’s Policy Network: Top Communication Allies (Pre-2011 Government Tourism Policy)

DMK’s Policy Network (Pre-2011 Government Tourism Policy)		
Communication Flows		
Rank	Policy Network Partner	Exchange of Information (frequency)
1	MK Council (Arts and Heritage)	Weekly
2	MK Bid for FIFA World Cup 2018	Weekly
3	MK Bid for Rugby World Cup 2015	Weekly
4	MK City Centre Management	Monthly
5	Tourism South East	Monthly
6	VisitEngland	Monthly
7	SEMLEP	Quarterly
8	MK and North Bucks Chamber of Commerce	Quarterly

When surfacing patterns of sharing and acquiring developmental resources, DMK’s former CEO was asked to rate the role and impact of sharing developmental resources over the membership organisation in focus such as funding, research outputs, and joint projects with each of the other policy network organisations that they have reported a link with.

Layout algorithm: Fruchterman Reingold (Fruchterman and Reingold 1991)

On Spotlight: Sharing Developmental Resources Pre-2011 Government Tourism Policy

Network Data: Undirected, Valued

Impact Scale: 5-point Impact Likert (Transformative, Highly Supportive, Moderate Support, Some Support, Marginal to none), where ‘Transformative’ mirrors the highest and ‘Marginal to none’ the lowest impact.

Data Key: The thicker a link, the more impactful the process of acquiring developmental resources for the source node, i.e. DMK.

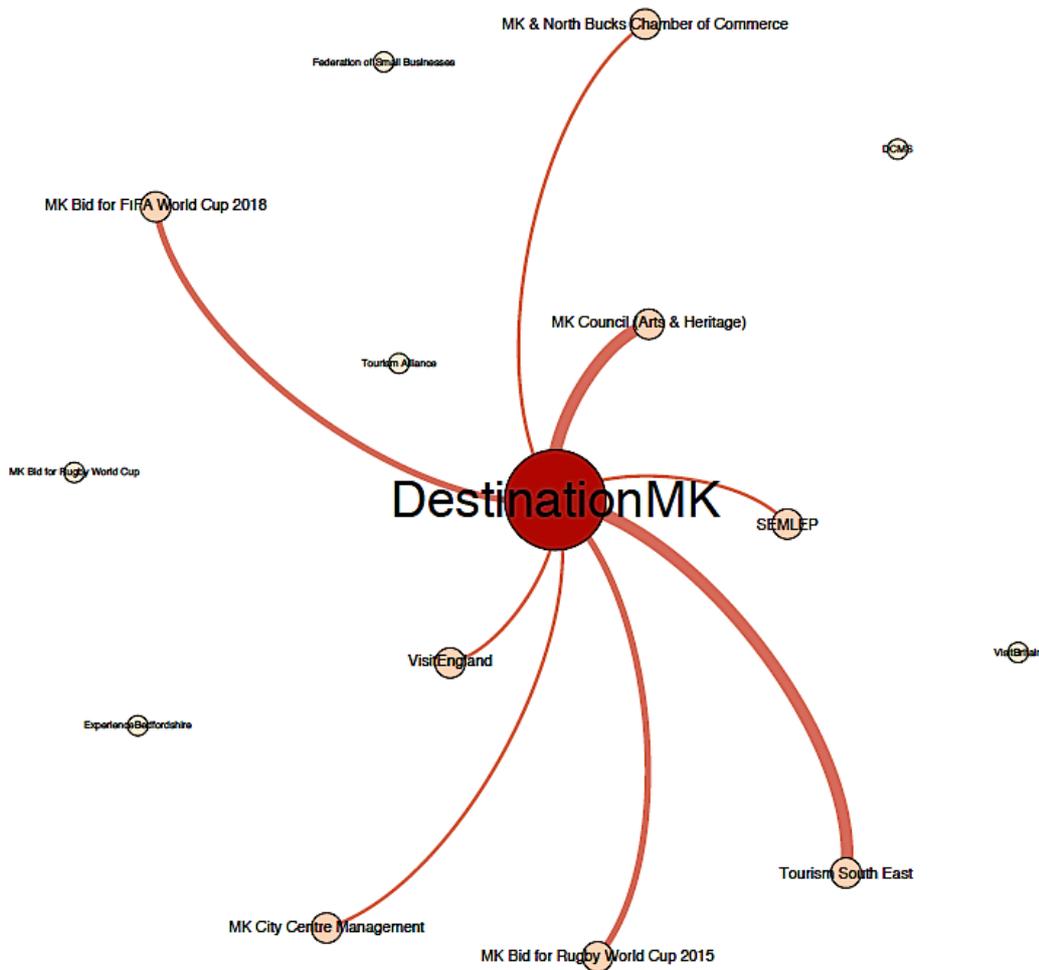


Figure 4.B.18 DMK’s Policy Network (Pre-2011 *Government Tourism Policy*)
Sharing Developmental Resources

As evident in Figure 4.B.18, DMK’s developmental resource flows with organisations nested outside their membership network involved again, predominantly public sector-led organisations, such as Milton Keynes Council and Tourism South East. The founding CEO of DMK thus rated the role of these two organisations as highly supportive (Table 4.B.9). As the network depiction indicates, the thicker the link between two nodes, the higher the impact of the process of sharing developmental resources for DMK. As discussed under Chapter 4 A, DMK was largely dependent on public sector support prior to the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*, which was largely provided by Milton Keynes Council and other Council bodies. The latter was confirmed by DMK’s founding CEO when surfacing Phase I under Chapter 4 A.

Table 4.B.9 DMK's Policy Network: Top Resource Allies (Pre-2011 Government Tourism Policy)

DMK's Policy Network (Pre-2011 Government Tourism Policy) Resource Flows		
Ran k	Policy Network Partner	Sharing Developmental Resources
1	MK Council (Arts and Heritage)	Highly Supportive
2	Tourism South East	Highly Supportive
3	MK Bid for FIFA World Cup 2018	Some Support
4	MK Bid for Rugby World Cup 2015	Some Support
5	SEMLEP	Marginal to None
6	VisitEngland	Marginal to None
7	MK and North Bucks Chamber of Commerce	Marginal to None
8	MK City Centre Management	Marginal to None

Again, as in the case of communication, DMK's developmental resource providers captured predominantly public sector bodies, which have either been established or largely supported by Milton Keynes Council. The latter organisation was responsible for assuming leadership functions and providing funding for DMK's operations and as such, resulting in less interdependency, particularly from organisations beyond the public sector. This again suggests limited opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL as influence over strategic destination decision-making and resource distribution have been dominated by public sector bodies, prior to the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. The latter may have not been considered as necessary intervention and this was due to Milton Keynes Council assuming leadership function and providing funding for DMK's operations and as such, resulting in less interdependency, particularly from organisations beyond the public sector.

4.3.2.B Structure of the post-2011 Government Tourism Policy network of DMK

This section enquires into the same basic relational properties of DMK's policy network, however, this time post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. DMK's policy network is explored through the perspective of its current CEO, who took over the leadership of the organisation in 2013. When surfacing communication patterns, DMK's current CEO was also asked to rate the frequency of information exchange, e.g. everyday communication and networking on industry events for each of the other policy network organisations that they have reported a link with. Network depictions taking into account such data were again computed in Gephi via the Fruchterman Reingold layout algorithm.

Layout algorithm: Fruchterman Reingold (Fruchterman and Reingold 1991).

On Spotlight: Knowledge and Communication Flows Post-2011 Government Tourism Policy

Network Data: Undirected, Valued

Frequency Scale: 5-point Frequency Likert (Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, Biannually to none), where 'Daily' mirrors the highest and 'Biannually to none' the lowest impact.

Data Key: The thicker a link, the higher the frequency of communication and knowledge exchange between DMK and the target node, i.e. the organisation within the wider policy network.

As evident in Figure 4.B.19, DMK's policy network has changed considerably post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*, when communication patterns across the network are brought into the spotlight. Again, as the network depiction indicates, the thicker the link between two nodes, the more frequent the communication between these two nodes. Despite Milton Keynes Council keeping its position as a frequent communication partner of DMK, new private sector-led entrants appeared to hold a prominent place in DMK's policy network, e.g. Experience Bedfordshire, which is another DMO operating within the SEMLEP area, in addition to other pre-2011 *Government Tourism Policy* organisations, who have strengthened

their positions post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*, e.g. SEMLEP.

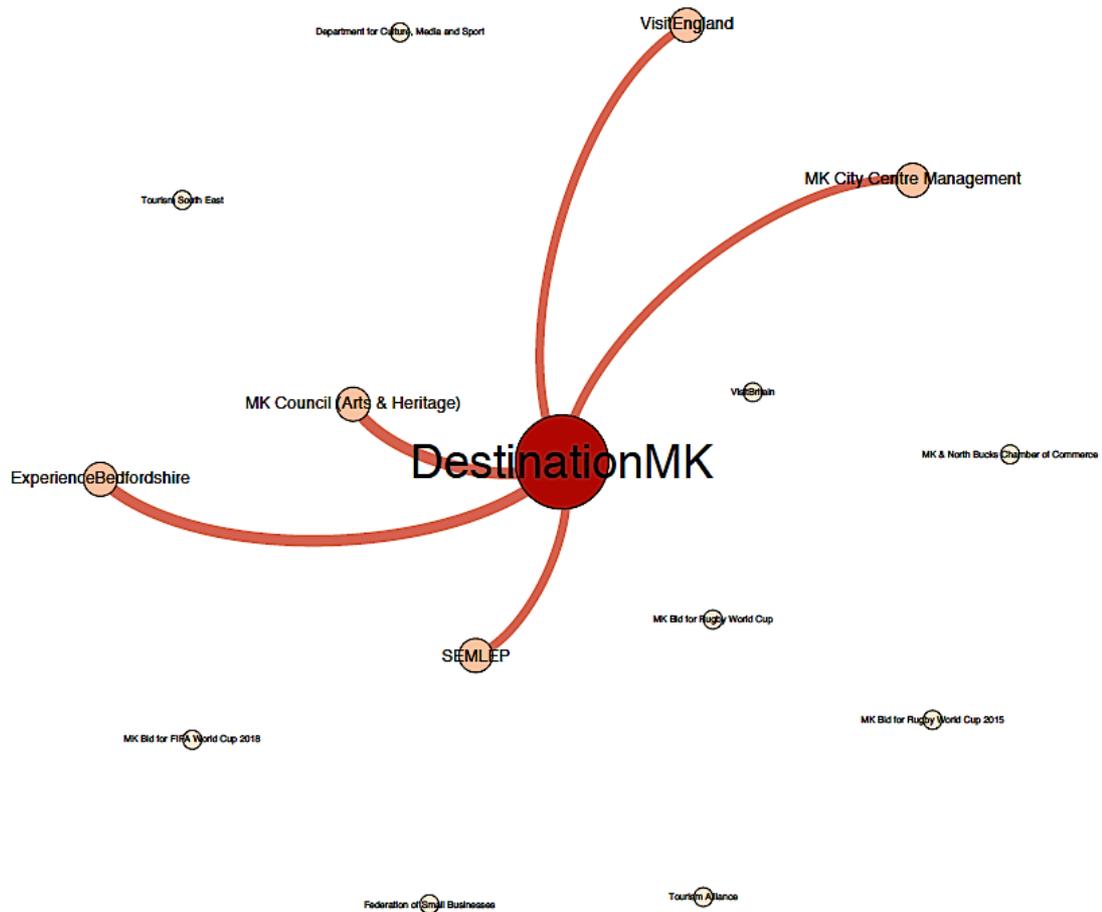


Figure 4.B.19. DMK’s Policy Network (Post-2011 *Government Tourism Policy*) Exchange of Information

Table 4.B.10 DMK’s Policy Network Top Communication Allies (Post-2011 *Government Tourism Policy*)

DMK’s Policy Network (Post-2011 <i>Government Tourism Policy</i>) Communication Flows		
Rank	Policy Network Partner	Exchange of Information (frequency)
1	Experience Bedfordshire	Weekly
2	MK Council (Arts and Heritage)	Weekly
3	SEMLEP	Monthly
4	VisitEngland	Monthly
5	MK City Centre Management	Monthly

Importantly, links with other DMOs operating within the SEMLEP area have not been considered as important up until now where Experience Bedfordshire appeared as one such strategic partner of choice for DMK, along with other organisations, such as SEMLEP and VisitEngland (note the thick links in Figure 4.B.19). This provides evidence of how existing links with predominantly public sector and Milton Keynes Council bodies (e.g. Milton Keynes Council Arts and Heritage, Milton Keynes and North Bucks Chamber of Commerce) prior to the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* have shifted towards more private sector-led organisations (e.g. SEMLEP, Experience Bedfordshire) in post-*2011 Government Tourism Policy* context. Within this context, the collective of public and private leaders within the wider policy network provide opportunities for practising DL through the inclusion of emergent leaders beyond traditional public sector leadership.

A dialogue beyond traditional public sector leadership, as demonstrated in Figure 4.B.19 provides insights that members of the wider policy network have recognised their interdependency post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. Interdependence is among the underlying principles of DL and as such, it provides evidence of the practice of DL (Gronn 2000). This supports Phase I insights discussed under Chapter 4 A.

When surfacing patterns of sharing developmental resources, DMK's current CEO was asked to rate the impact of sharing developmental resources such as funding, research outputs, and joint projects over DMK with each of the other policy network organisations that they have reported a link with.

Layout algorithm: Fruchterman Reingold (Fruchterman and Reingold 1991)

On Spotlight: Sharing Developmental Resources Post-*2011 Government Tourism Policy*

Network Data: Undirected, Valued

Impact Scale: 5-point Impact Likert (Transformative, Highly Supportive, Moderate Support, Some Support, Marginal to none), where 'Transformative' mirrors the highest and 'Marginal to none' the lowest impact.

Data Key: The thicker a link, the more impactful the process of acquiring developmental resources for the source node, i.e. DMK.

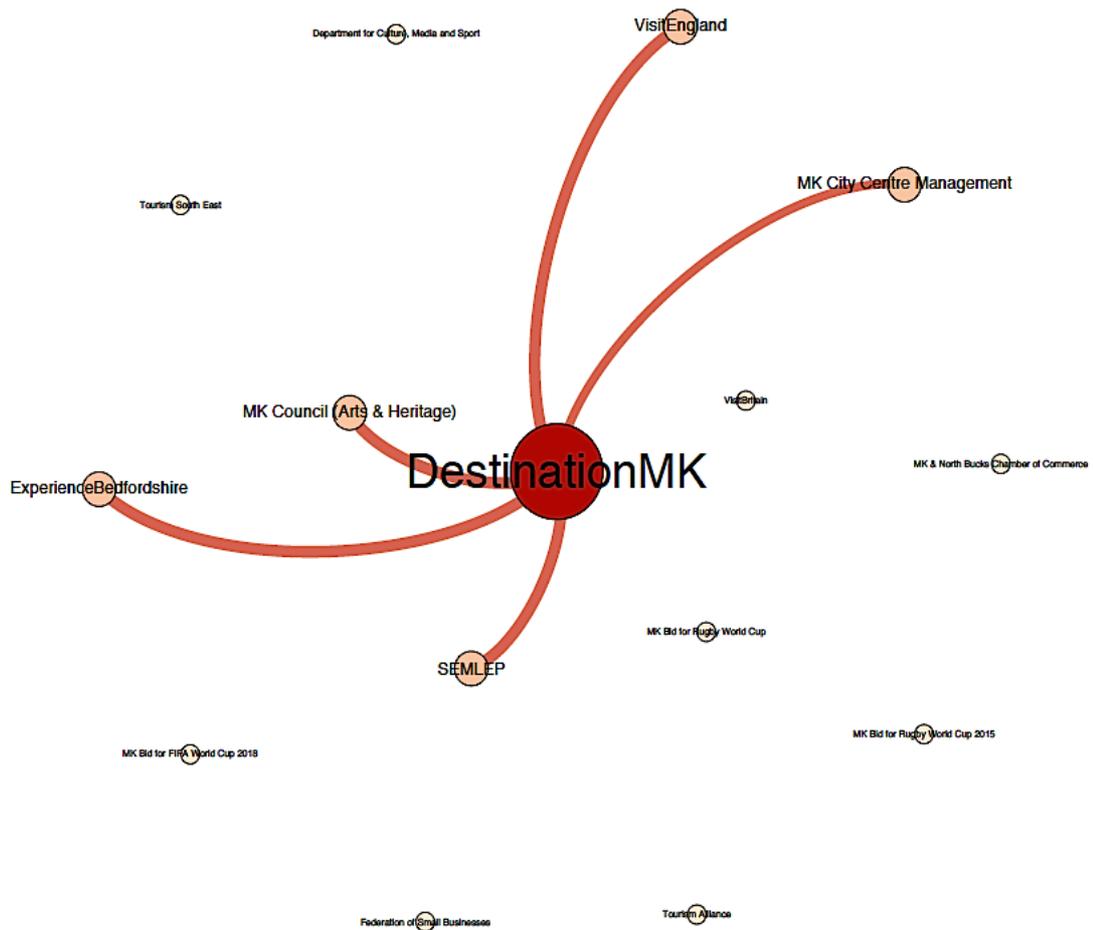


Figure 4.B.20 DMK’s Policy Network (Post-2011 Government Tourism Policy) Sharing Developmental Resources

Table 4.B.11. DMK’s Policy Network: Top Resource Allies (Post-2011 Government Tourism Policy)

DMK’s Policy Network (Post-2011 Government Tourism Policy) Resource Flows		
Rank	Policy Network Partner	Sharing Developmental Resources
1	VisitEngland	Highly Supportive
2	SEMLEP	Highly Supportive
3	MK Council (Arts and Heritage)	Highly Supportive
4	Experience Bedfordshire	Highly Supportive
5	MK City Centre Management	Moderate Support

As evident in the network depiction in Figure 4.B.19, DMK's policy network aimed at patterns of sharing developmental resources in post-2011 *Government Tourism Policy* context has also changed considerably. As the network depiction indicates, the thicker the link between two nodes, the more impactful the process of sharing developmental resources is for DMK. In line with communications exchange patterns, the Milton Keynes Council's role in providing developmental resources was again rated as highly supportive in post 2011 *Government Tourism Policy* context. However, new predominantly business-led organisations have now demonstrated a commitment to support the mission of DMK and this is evident on both Table 4.B.11 and Figure 4.B.18, where the role of VisitEngland and SEMLEP in providing developmental resources to DMK (in pre-2011 *Government Tourism Policy* context ranked as marginal to none) has now been considered as highly supportive by DMK's current CEO. Further, Experience Bedfordshire was also ranked high and thus mirrored another key DMK partner in sharing developmental resources. This relationship between DMK and other DMOs operating within the SEMLEP area did not exist prior to the introduction of the 2011 *Government Tourism Policy*, as such links have not been highlighted by DMK's former CEO. As in the case of communication and knowledge flows, the above insights provide evidence of the enactment and practice of DL, as DMK's policy network now captures a collective of predominantly private sector-led allies and influencers (Table 4.B.11). This has not been the case with the DMK's policy network prior to the introduction of the 2011 *Government Tourism Policy* (Table 4.B.9), where Milton Keynes Council assumed leadership functions and provided funding for DMK.

DMK has rated its network links related to acquiring developmental resources from its network of private allies as highly supportive. This was not however the case with DMK's policy network prior to the introduction of the 2011 *Government Tourism Policy*, where funding for destination and organisational (DMO) development was mainly provided by Milton Keynes Council and related bodies on board DMK (Figure 4.B.18). This interdependency and the sharing of developmental resources have been considered as evidence of practising DL (see Spillane 2006; Harris 2013).

4.3.3.B Discussion of current evidence into the practice of DL: Policy network perspective

Drawing on Phase I data, Chapter 4 A provided initial evidence of the enactment of DL beyond DMK's boundaries and thus involving organisations on both regional and national level, such as Visit England and SEMLEP. Outcomes of the carried network study under Phase II point to a significant shift in DMK's policy network of strategic allies, who used to be predominantly public sector – now either representing the private sector or being Public Private Partnerships (PPPs).

The basic longitudinal study provided above demonstrate that new to the shifting landscape predominantly private sector-led organisations, namely SEMLEP, Experience Bedfordshire and VisitEngland can be considered as key strategic DMK allies and as such, they now appear to be firmly embedded in DMK's policy network post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. This evidence of DL practice is depicted in Table 4.B.11, where the majority of developmental resource allies for DMK are now private-led organisations or PPPs. This provides a fertile ground for the practice of DL in DMK's policy network and an opportunity to involve organisations beyond DMK and SEMLEP. A recognition of the opportunities presented by the DMK's policy network post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* has the potential to facilitate access to a wider pool of developmental resources and allow DMK to participate in strategic decision-making processes beyond its usual geography and membership network, i.e. within the wider SEMLEP area and beyond (Hristov 2014).

The above discussion suggests that DMK's policy network post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* involves predominantly private sector-led organisations, where influence over strategic destination decision-making and resource distribution are no longer exercised by public sector bodies as it was the case prior to the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. What is therefore evident in DMK's policy network post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* is that the majority of strategic allies related to acquiring developmental resources and allies which

role has been identified as highly supportive, are now predominantly private sector-led organisations.

DL calls for recognising the interdependency of organisations, when shaping leadership practice (Spillane, 2006), as in the case of reshaped and largely resource-constrained DMOs. Resources are therefore considered to be central to the enactment and practice of DL at an organisational level (Tian et al. 2015). Thus, the evidence in Figure 4.B.19 depicts a scenario, where DMK acquired strategic developmental resources from a number of its policy network allies and as such, it has been considered as evidence of the enactment and practice of DL on a policy network level.

This in turn provides evidence of and further opportunities for capitalising on DL as the policy network prior to the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* has been largely dominated by public sector bodies, where opportunities for the enactment of DL may have not been recognised as necessary intervention and therefore not fully embraced due to the dominant role of Milton Keynes Council and related organisations in providing destination funding, in addition to exercising strategic decision-making and leadership functions.

Within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, calling for a recognition of the interdependency of destination management and leadership-interested organisations, wider private sector inclusion unlocks more opportunities for embracing DL and further developing DL capacity, which goes well beyond traditional public sector involvement (e.g. council bodies) to capture a wider set of destination development and visitor economy-interested organisations (e.g. LEPs, VisitEngland). These opportunities, along with evidence of the enactment of DL were discussed under Chapter 4 A and are expanded further with an input from SEMLEP's CEO under Chapter 4 C discussing Phase III insights. These explore the opportunities for and challenges to capitalising on DL further, where the current evidence of the enactment and practice of DL links up with building DL capacity.

Phase II insights from the wider policy network (DMK ego) are also subject of investigation under Phase III, where the CEO of SEMLEP expands

on existing evidence of DL practice developing on a policy network level, i.e. beyond DMK membership boundaries.

4.4.B Chapter conclusion

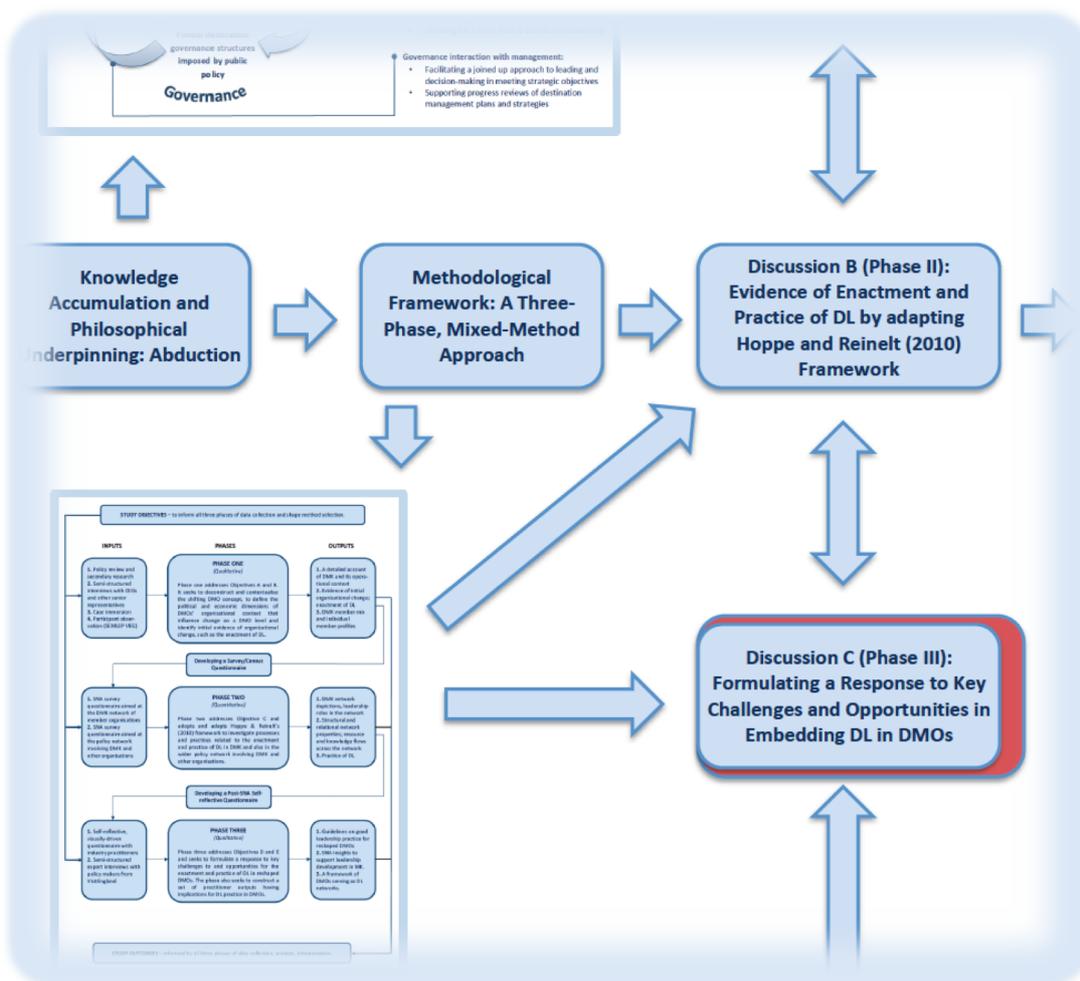
Having identified evidence of the enactment of DL under Phase I, this second discussion chapter provided a detailed discussion of key empirical insights into the evidence of practice of DL within DMK's network of member organisations. Evidence of practice of DL between organisations across DMK's wider policy network was also discussed. Both in-depth discussions into the practice of DL were grounded in a series of visual SNA network insights and network metrics, namely a number of structural and relational properties derived from the application of Phase II. The discussion was guided by Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework, which is a set of both generic and specific organisational network questions for evaluating leadership development initiatives in networks embedded in formal organisations.

The emergent six contrasting leader types within DMK provided the most notable evidence of the practice of DL on a DMO level. The contrasting leader types pointed to evidence of the transition from the notion of 'power' in DMOs (i.e. leadership assumed by corporate DMO member organisations) and highlighted current evidence of and further opportunities to 'empower' in DMOs (i.e. leadership assumed by non-corporate DMO member organisations) instead.

The chapter also provided initial evidence of the practice of DL beyond DMK's membership network through the longitudinal study with a focus on DMK's policy network. Findings highlighted evidence of and a number of opportunities for the distribution of leadership amongst interested stakeholders from DMK's policy network. The DMK-SEMLEP strategic leadership partnership was one such example of distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities within DMK's wider policy network.

Chapter 4 C

Discussion of the Post-SNA Phase



CHAPTER 4 C: DISCUSSION OF THE POST-SNA PHASE

4.1.C Chapter introduction

This last discussion chapter begins by providing a discussion on key insights and related questions arising from the adoption of Phase II. The purpose of Phase II was to undertake an in-depth investigation into the enactment and practice of DL in both the DMO network (complete network) and the external policy network (ego network). The focal point of Phase III, however, is an investigation into the transition from providing evidence of the enactment of DL in Phase II, towards exploring the challenges to, and opportunities for building DL capacity and as such, enable the practice of DL. This is in line with Phase III of the adopted methodological framework. The achieved sample during Phase III is covered in Appendix 3a.

This chapter provides a discussion, where empirical insights provided throughout Phase I and Phase II are seen through the perspective of both industry practitioners from DMK and policy makers from VisitEngland. Industry practitioners provide a critical reflection upon Phase II-derived structural and relational properties of the network in focus and visual data in light of the enactment and practice of DL and from the perspective of their sector. They also serve to surface the current challenges to and opportunities for building DL capacity in relation to the case by interpreting visual network data they co-produced during Phase II.

This is complemented by perspectives provided by policy makers from VisitEngland, aimed at collectively building upon and exploring the relevance of the conceptual contribution derived by Phase I data, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle and its building blocks, to contemporary DMOs in England. Policymakers are also asked to reflect upon the key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level and beyond (DMK's policy network) in general terms and by building upon the foundations of the DMO Leadership Cycle and as such, address Objective D of this study.

Within this context and drawing on thick Phase III evidence, the chapter then continues by further investigating the extent to which contrasting organisational literature domains, namely management, governance and

leadership, which interact in a DMO context are interconnected in nature when DMOs serve as leadership networks, i.e. in a DMO context. The latter condition is seen as an opportunity to enact DL and build DL capacity on a DMO level. Hence the proposed in Chapter 2 A 'DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations' definition and DMO Leadership Cycle are revisited with a view to build on the cycle and its leadership dimension by taking into account Phase II insights, which identified six leader types on board DMK.

As such, Phase III insights contribute to the existing knowledge of enacting and practising DL in DMOs with the view to provide a revisited version of the DMO Leadership Cycle. Finally, the empirical knowledge surfaced throughout the three phases of data collection culminates in constructing a set of practical outputs having implications for management and leadership practice on a DMO level, i.e. Guidelines on Good Leadership Practice for DMOs alongside the tree building blocks of the DMO Leadership Cycle, which can equally be seen as three enablers of the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level. The latter contribution of this study therefore addresses the final Objective E of this study.

4.2.C Key questions arising from Phase II insights

4.2.1.C Key questions in relation to DMK's complete network

DMK Member Organisations (Industry Practitioners) Questions

Key broad questions arising from Phase II insights in relation to the network of DMO member organisations, which also largely shaped the interview agenda for Phase III (see Appendix 2g), were aimed at further investigating the current evidence of, in addition to both challenges to and opportunities for the enactment of DL within DMK and beyond.

- (i) What DMO member organisations perceive to be the role of DL in reshaped DMOs in England and DMK in particular;

- (ii) What DMO member organisations perceive to be the opportunities for and challenges to the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level;
- (iii) What DMO member organisations perceive to be their role as DL champions and the role of their sector in further promoting and embedding DL across the complete network;
- (iv) What DMO member organisations feel could be done to strengthen the existing level of interaction and distribution of developmental resources across the membership network;
- (v) What DMO member organisations perceive to be the issues of power, i.e. barriers to participating in DL, inherited from the previous public sector-led DMO model;

VisitEngland Leads (Policy Makers) Questions

Key broad questions arising from Phase II insights in relation to the network of DMO member organisations, which also largely shaped the interview agenda for Phase III, were aimed at further investigating the current evidence of, in addition to both challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL within DMK and beyond in light of the building blocks of the DMO Leadership Cycle.

- (i) What policy makers perceive to be the role of DL in reshaped DMOs in England;
- (ii) What policy makers perceive to be the challenges to the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level;
- (ii) What policy makers perceive to be the opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level;
- (iv) What policy-makers perceive to be the role of DL through the perspective of the DMO Leadership Cycle and its building blocks;

These broad questions and Phase II insights shaped the interview agenda, which has been adopted in Phase III and aimed at DMK member organisations, which were identified as DL champions, i.e. organisations representing each of the six types of leaders, by the SNA study carried out in Phase II. These six

leader types fall within the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle and as such, they may well have an important role to play in the practice of DL further across DMK and thus be seen as a key enabler along with the management and governance dimensions of the DMO Leadership Cycle. This results in an investigation into the opportunities and challenges for further capitalising on DL in a DMO context. This involves a scenario, where DMK embarks on a journey from the enactment of DL towards building DL capacity and practising DL.

Within this context, Phase II insights inform the interview agenda, where representatives from DMK member organisations championing DL were asked to reflect on current Phase II evidence of enacting DL in DMK and expand on the challenges to and opportunities for further capitalising on DL from the perspective of the sectors of the economy they represent. Refer to Appendix 5a for a sample self-reflective practitioner questionnaire. Policy-makers supplement this data by providing an outsider prospective into such opportunities and challenges. Refer to Appendix 5b for a sample interview with a policy maker.

4.2.2.C Key questions in relation to DMK's policy network (Ego)

Key broad questions arising from Phase II insights in relation to DMK's policy network were aimed at further investigating the current evidence of and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL beyond DMK and thus involving organisations from the wider policy network:

- (i) What are the prospects for the enactment and practice of DL in the wider network?
- (ii) What is the current state of DL in the wider network as seen through the perspective of SEMLEP, which is on board DMK's policy network?

These questions and Phase II insights shaped the interview agenda, which has been adopted in Phase III and with a particular focus on SEMLEP as a key strategic leadership partner of DMK.

4.3.C Towards building DL capacity in DMK: Industry practitioners perspective

4.3.1.C The case for DL in DMK

Phase II insights provided evidence into the practice of DL on a DMO level. The purpose of Phase III, however, was to build on that by uncovering the opportunities and challenges for building or developing DL capacity and as such, to further support the practice of DL.

Hoppe and Reinelt (2010) suggested that social network maps may be used to stimulate people to tell the story behind. Hence in Phase III and in light of the adopted methodological framework, selected DMO member organisations' representatives (usually CEOs, Directors and Partnership Managers who have responded to the Phase II network survey and were identified as DL champions) have the task to interpret Phase II-derived network descriptive statistics and visual network data in light of the opportunities for and challenges to enacting and practising DL on a DMO level. In other words, recruited DMK member organisation participants contribute to the investigation of DL within the specific case in focus, namely DMK and Milton Keynes (by providing insiders' perspective).

In order to build upon SNA-driven Phase II insights and get a nuanced and deeper understanding of current processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL across the membership network of DMK, the approach involved diversity sample (see Chapter 3) of Phase II-identified champions, i.e. the six leader types as per the proposed classification of leaders in a DL network. This forms a snapshot of member organisations, which have demonstrated a strong leadership practice within the complete network. Champions across all sectors and the two membership tiers were approached (minimum one per sector on board DMK), as such organisations are arguably well-placed to further embed DL practice within their network communities and hence across the complete network (based on Phase II findings – Network in-community leaders). Within this context, the six types of leaders can be seen as both evidence of, and as a potential enabler of the enactment and practice of DL on a DMO level. Indeed, Buchanan et al. (2007) suggested that network

champions and the interplay between them could be seen as an important vehicle to the enactment and practice of DL across networks and organisations.

In the context of DMOs, Beritelli et al. (2015b) also contended that network champions play an important linking function within DMOs. Phase III therefore aimed at achieving a diversity sample of insiders in order to capture the views of all leader types in relation to developing DL practice on a DMO level surface the current challenges to and opportunities for developing DL practice within DMK (as per Objective D).

The achieved response rate during this Phase III: Industry Practitioners was however relatively low – thus covered only three sectors (namely Conferences and Events, Hospitality and Transportation) and three types of leaders identified during Phase II (Resource-empowered leaders, Emergent leaders and Network In-community leaders) on board DMK. However, the achieved sample of DMO member organisations representing the six types of leaders on board DMK (3 out of 15 or 20% of the intended sample) led to the provision of limited perspectives into the challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL. A detailed discussion into this matter is provided in Chapter 5.

4.3.2.C The enactment of DL and building DL capacity

The role of DL in DMK: Opportunities and challenges to its enactment

The indicative definition of DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations (see Chapter 4 A) was adopted for the purpose of introducing DMK member organisations to the concept of DL in the context of DMOs. When asked whether they see the future of DMOs and particularly DMK in adopting such DL model, participating DMK member organisations felt that there are a number of opportunities with regard to utilising DL, particularly its opportunity to bring together the majority (if not all) member organisations and involve them in strategic destination decision-making:

“Yes, [DMK can adopt a DL model]. The more inclusivity and

commitment from partners to drive forward the destination, the better.”
(Marketing and PR Manager, Conferences and Events)

A General Manager within the hospitality sector expressed support in favour of DL and its collective dimension, *“as it makes sense all parties working together to make DMK and Milton Keynes successful as an organisation”* (General Manager, Hospitality). A General Manager from the Transportation sector also felt that DL can be seen as a viable model for DMK.

Having understood the concept of DL in DMO context, representatives from participating DMK member organisations were then asked to state what they considered to be the challenges to and opportunities for the enactment of DL across the complete membership network. Both adopting a more inclusive approach to destination leadership and assuming responsibilities were seen as opportunities linked to embedding DL in DMK:

“You are asking organisations to take more responsibility of the running of Destination Milton Keynes - like in the hospitality sector this [taking more responsibility] has many opportunities...”
(General Manager, Hospitality)

However, taking more responsibility of the running of DMK from a hospitality sector perspective, where there is a *“...need to run a 24/7 business so to take time out is becoming more difficult”* (General Manager, Hospitality). This suggested that building leadership capacity, in addition to shared understanding of the benefits and drive, also requires commitment from DMO member organisations to devolve the time needed for this action. As further challenges to embedding DL in DMK were listed the perceived *“fragmentation and lack of ownership by the DMO to 'make things happen' and lack of focus.”* (Marketing and PR Manager, Conferences and Events). And this is where the DMP provides opportunity to focus on collective destination decision-making and defines ownership and lead responsibilities of individual DMO member organisations (see Hristov and Petrova 2015), but these opportunities may not have been operationalised due to the relatively recent implementation of the DMP for Milton Keynes. Policy makers cover both opportunities as part of this chapter further below.

The role of DL champions in further promoting and practising DL in DMK

As previously discussed, network champions could be seen as an important vehicle to the enactment, promotion and practice of DL across networks and organisations (Buchanan et al. 2007). In line with the key broad questions arising from Phase II insights, DMK member organisations were also asked to state what would be their role as DL champions and the role of their sectors in facilitating the process of further embedding and practising DL across the complete network:

“As ever, we would contribute, especially with our link to Milton Keynes Hoteliers Association, where as a collective we have DMK on the agenda...There is a challenge trying to gain buy in from all sectors especially tourism and attractions. We need to build one aim at the moment - it's what is in it for me.”

(General Manager, Hospitality)

As such, the General Manager (Hospitality) emphasised on the importance of engaging all sectors on board DMK, in addition to DMK member organisations within Milton Keynes Hoteliers Association. The Marketing and PR Manager (Conferences and Events) felt that their sector also has an important role to play in promoting DL across the complete network, particularly in *“engagement and collaboration on initiatives to drive actions, but also to “take a commercial opportunities approach for economic benefit of the destination...”* (Marketing and PR Manager, Conferences and Events). The General Manager (Transportation) also felt that a more business-focused approach would benefit the network of DMK member organisations.

The Marketing and PR Manager (Conferences and Events) also felt that network champions have an important role to play in further embedding DL as catalysts of developing DL across sectors on-board DMK. This was then also seen as an opportunity to break down barriers to participating in DL between corporate (founding) and non-corporate DMK member organisations and as such, recognise the role of the latter cohort. In view of this, the General Manager (Hospitality) also expressed an opinion that *“non-corporate members are an important factor”* in supporting progress in the organisation.

Towards strengthening the existing levels of communication and distribution of developmental resources within DMK

Chapter 4 B provided evidence that DL is founded on interactions, in addition to knowledge and resource exchange. As such, they are fundamental ingredients of the enactment and practice of DL as pointed out by a number of prominent scholars in the leadership domain (see Bolden 2011; Harris 2008). Within this context and in line with Phase III methodology, DMK member organisations were provided with network depictions of their position within the complete network and were subsequently asked to reflect upon what other DL champions can do to enable, empower and involve more member organisations in DL practice within MK – both within their respective sectors and in relation to other sectors on board DMK.

The Marketing and PR Manager (Conferences and Events) saw referral promotion as an opportunity to involve more member organisations from this sector in DL practice. Again, according to the Marketing and PR Manager (Conferences and Events), “*workshops and mutual initiatives, with commercial benefits, as well as destination approach, and improved member communications...*” were all seen as a means of strengthening the existing level of interaction between Conferences and Events and other sectors on board DMK. Within the context of strengthening the existing level of interaction between various sectors on board, the General Manager (Hospitality) felt that:

The organisation [DMK] needs to update via email, Facebook or Twitter or update via meetings, which are well attended. Like any business today, you read and deal with the 'here and now' as what's on your desk unless you have reminders.

(General Manager, Hospitality)

As such, the General Manager (Hospitality) pointed to the importance of strengthening the existing levels of interaction between member organisations and also across sectors on board DMK. The latter is an important consideration since DL is founded on interactions, rather than actions (Harris 2005; Harris and

Spillane 2008). In adding to this, the General Manager (Transportation) felt that DL champions have a key role to play in cross-sector interaction. Further, Chapter 4 B provided insights into the frequency of interaction among member organisations and communication of the membership organisation's shared vision (captured in the DMP). These processes, which have been carried out on a daily basis covered only 2.26% of all communication flows within DMK (see Figure 4.B.13). Most interaction across DMK member organisations occurred quarterly or even less-frequently.

These figures suggested that processes related to communication, i.e. the visionary role of DMK projected in its DMP (in this case vision, mission, aspirations, actions), could be strengthened further. This is important consideration, particularly at the early stages of embedding DMPs, which is the case with the DMO for Milton Keynes, which was launched in July 2014. When asked how processes related to communicating the destination's vision (captured in the DMP) and network interaction could be improved, DMK member organisations named the importance of effective and efficient communication and nurturing a dialogue across member organisations as an important consideration. The Marketing and PR Manager (Conferences and Events) felt that whilst an "ad hoc communication to members can be a challenge", nurturing a dialogue amongst member organisations could improve the communication in the network. The General Manager (Hospitality) once again emphasised the importance of non-corporate updates and the opportunities for leveraging a range of communication channels and live meetings.

Finally, Chapter 4 B provided evidence that over 40% of all developmental resource flows in DMK provided moderate through to high support or even transformative impact over individual member organisations. However, over 7% of all developmental resource flows within DMK have demonstrated a marginal or less impact over individual member organisations with further 53.01% indicating just some support (see the Figure 4.B.15). Within this context, DMK member organisations were asked to provide suggestions on how processes related to distribution of developmental resources could be improved so that the majority (if not all) DMK member organisations have access to developmental resources. The Marketing and PR Manager

(Conferences and Events) felt that the introduction of online resources could potentially provide opportunities to reach out to more member organisations, whilst reducing operational costs:

“Online resources would make members more accessible and this is a more cost effective approach.”

(Marketing and PR Manager, Conferences and Events)

The General Manager (Hospitality) felt that both networking capabilities and devolving the time to engage with others are important considerations in improving processes related to the distribution of developmental resources:

“We had a presentation from the CEO of Milton Keynes Council of Milton Keynes Business Leaders two weeks ago. She asked the same question on many subjects. In business, unless you are a professional networker or a semi-retired your resources become limited.”

(General Manager, Hospitality)

The role of inherited power relations in DMK

Public sector and not-for-profit organisations have traditionally been involved in destination leadership practice, providing funding streams in Milton Keynes (see Hristov and Petrova 2015) and across England as Chapter 4 A suggested. This trend however shifted to the private sector in 2010, when the 2010 coalition government introduced the localism agenda coupled with major funding cuts and the public-to-private transition in tourism governance (Coles et al. 2014). Within this context, DMK member organisations were asked to provide more insights into existing issues of power, which may have been inherited from DMK’s organisational and funding structure prior to the introduction of the new more business-led DMO model. Inherited power relations are often seen as barriers to the enactment and practice of DL (Harris, 2003). The Marketing and PR Manager (Conferences and Events) expanded on how a more embedded, commercial and perhaps a business-led DMK may tackle these issues:

“Yes, there are still challenges and barriers - a more private sector approach and leadership, with commercial focus and emphasis on ROI on initiatives, would lead to a more 'just make it happen' leadership and direction. Clarity of roles would also support DMK, as there are many blurred lines of accountability, involvement, leadership and delivery.”
(Marketing and PR Manager, Conferences and Events)

The General Manager (Hospitality) did not perceive inherited power as an obstacle to participating in DL as *“the hospitality industry is usually run by big corporates who would have to support destinations...”* This may not however be the case across other sectors. In the case of DMK, the Hospitality Sector contributed to 22.86% of the complete network within DMK. He did however emphasised that *“DMK needs to earn more monies on commissions from hotel bookings, conference bookings and event attractions”* in order to align itself more closely with the new, predominantly business-led DMO model introduced across England.

4.4.C Towards building DL capacity in DMK’s policy network: SEMLEP perspective

This section builds on both Phase I and Phase II insights related to investigations aimed at opportunities for and initial evidence of the enactment and practice of DL within DMK’s policy network, i.e. beyond DMK’s network of member organisations, where both DMK and SEMLEP operate. Phase I insights derived from empirical data (an interview with SEMLEP’s CEO and VEG participant observation) suggested that SEMLEP’s VEG (now the Cultural and Creative Group) provides a platform for shaping strategic destination leadership decisions, which involves both DMK and SEMLEP (see Hristov 2014). As such, the Group observation insights, coupled with SEMLEP’s CEO reflection on this strategic partnership both served as an initial evidence of the enactment of DL on a policy network level.

Further to thick Phase I insights, Phase II visual insights also provided evidence of both the enactment and practice of DL, where identified opportunities to acquire developmental resources across the policy network and the strategic importance of providing highly supportive role for DMK are now

predominantly tied to the private sector and go beyond a single public sector organisation, e.g. Milton Keynes Council. What therefore became evident in DMK's policy network post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* is that the then network of fewer strategic partners related to acquiring developmental resources now appeared to be capturing both wider and more diverse pool of organisations beyond traditional public sector boundaries, which demonstrate strong links through the exchange of developmental resources and frequent communication. This provided further evidence into the enactment and practice of DL, which builds upon Phase I insights and prompts further opportunities for capitalising on developing DL capacity and practising DL within DMK's policy network. Phase II insights then served as a prompt for the need to explore the enactment and practice of DL within DMK's policy network.

Within this context, Phase III focuses on current empirical evidence into the enactment and practice of DL and the opportunities for building DL capacity between DMK and SEMLEP by drawing on insights from an in-depth discussion with SEMLEP's CEO. LEPs and DMOs have been considered as the two key strategic organisations within the policy network post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* (see Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2010; Penrose 2011) and the exploration of such practice has therefore been limited to these two organisations as it was the case throughout Phase I and Phase II.

4.5.C The case for DL in DMK's policy network

This section is grounded in further evidence of enacting DL and unfolds the prospects for practising DL in DMK's wider policy network, which draws on Phase III insights provided by SEMLEP's CEO. Building on Phase I and Phase II, the discussion covered a range of strategic topics, which served to build upon the existing evidence of the enactment and practice of DL and outline the prospects for further capitalising on this agenda towards building DL capacity. Strategic themes included:

- (i) The current state of and prospects for the DMK-SEMLEP alliance;

- (ii) Co-shaping strategic plans for Milton Keynes and the SEMLEP area;
- (iii) SEMLEP's VEG as a platform for practising DL and building DL capacity.

The first strategic theme, namely current state and prospects for DMK and SEMLEP alliance covered the state of the relationship between DMK and SEMLEP and the extent to which DMK was considered as a strategic partner of choice in co-leading on strategic agendas in the SEMLEP area from the perspective of SEMLEP's CEO. During an earlier interview carried out with SEMLEP's CEO as part of Phase I, the CEO brought the attention to the collective dimension of leading on destination development across the SEMLEP area:

"The most important fact that we should bear in mind is that partnership is at the core of SEMLEP; our strength is the collective strength, not the individuals' strength."

(CEO, SEMLEP)

Within this context, and taking into account Phase II visual evidence of the current state of DMK-SEMLEP's flourishing alliance (see Figures 4.B.18 and 4.B.19), SEMLEP's CEO was asked to expand on the extent to which SEMLEP and DMK can be seen as both allies and co-leaders and as such, provide leadership functions on strategic development and growth agendas for destinations in the SEMLEP area:

"We are strategic leadership partners. Their [DMK's] annual conference that we supported is evidence of this, we spoke at the conference, we are facilitating some of the key fractions securing some funding to ensure that they [DMK] can modernise and grow and expand to keep pace with the growth of the city [MK] more widely."

(CEO, SEMLEP)

Further, despite having diverging strategic objectives, SEMLEP's CEO believed that both DMK and SEMLEP have aspirations for and are committed to bring about the benefits of economic development in the SEMLEP area. These mutual aspirations can be seen as one of the building blocks of collectively leading on the economic development agenda in the SEMLEP area:

“So, we [SEMLEP] differ quite a lot in what we are trying to do. However, there is no doubt that DMOs such as DMK do fit into our ramp [foster economic development in the SEMLEP area] and that is why we have that strategic alliance with them.”

(CEO, SEMLEP)

SEMLEP’s CEO also emphasised the strategic importance of destination Milton Keynes as an important destination within the SEMLEP area, which further cements the alliance between SEMLEP and DMK and considering DMK as a key strategic leadership partner:

“Inevitably, the more that is offered in any one particular locality, the greater the prospects that are going to be able to attract people ... certainly Milton Keynes has been a good performer and going forward, I think it has the merit of attracting more, particularly with the Rugby World Cup in 2015. So I certainly think that Milton Keynes has some of the key ingredients to help maintain their attractiveness.”

(CEO, SEMLEP)

The second strategic theme, namely co-shaping strategic plans for Milton Keynes and the SEMLEP area provided insights into strategic policy and planning initiatives, which involved visioning and defining key decision-making priorities shaped by both organisations.

Within the context of Phase I, insights related to DMK’s policy network demonstrated evidence of SEMLEP’s intention to strengthen its partnership network, provide research outputs and economic support for destinations in the area and Milton Keynes in particular. Milton Keynes was considered as a primary destination within the SEMLEP area. This intention was further cemented in SEMLEP’s Strategic Plan for Arts, Heritage, Sports, Visitor Economy, Cultural and Creative (AHSVEC&C) Industries launched in July 2014, which supplemented the existing evidence in Phase I. The importance of Milton Keynes in the SEMLEP area, which was reflected in SEMLEP’s Strategic Plan provided further direction in the discussion with SEMLEP’s CEO and thus focused on the extent to which DMK have been involved in shaping SEMLEP’s Strategic Plan for AHSVEC&C Industries. Further to that, the extent to which SEMLEP have been involved in shaping DMK’s DMP was also in focus, where

SEMLEP's CEO was asked to comment on both scenarios of co-shaping strategic plans:

"In both directions the answer is yes, I mean, not me personally. I have a colleague from SEMLEP who is responsible for that sector [tourism and the visitor economy] so yes, we have played a role in both directions [SEMLEP being involved in the development of the DMP for Milton Keynes and DMK being involved in SEMLEP's Strategic Plan for Arts, Heritage, Sports, Visitor Economy, Cultural and Creative Industries] and I know that [SEMLEP and DMK's involvement in co-shaping plans] obviously through our partnership, open support and active engagement from our key stakeholders and anything that we develop."

(CEO, SEMLEP)

From a SEMLEP perspective, the above suggested that DMK was seen as a key strategic delivery partner and even a partner in shaping strategic priorities for the SEMLEP area and providing a collective vision, which is of interest to both organisations. When asked to comment on the recently launched DMP for Milton Keynes, SEMLEP's CEO felt that the plan is aligned with what DMK and SEMLEP's aspirations for Milton Keynes are:

"So, I do have inspirations that DMK can deliver. Do I think DMK is heading in the right direction? Yes, I think their recent strategy [DMK's DMP] is very straightforward, very concise that it actually brings a degree of clarity as to what they are anticipating and desiring for the locality."

(CEO, SEMLEP)

This current evidence of the enactment and practice of DL through co-shaping strategic plans may also be seen as an opportunity for both organisations to further fuse their strategic vision for both the SEMLEP area and Milton Keynes and as such, to develop DL capacity.

The third strategic theme, namely the role of SEMLEP's VEG (now Cultural and Creative Industries group) as a platform for practising DL provided a discussion into the role of this group in recognising the interdependency and the sharing of developmental resources as a means of co-delivering strategic objectives for both destination Milton Keynes and the wider SEMLEP area. Both interdependency and the sharing of developmental resources have been considered as evidence of practising DL, e.g. see Spillane 2006; Harris 2013. Phase I insights suggested that SEMLEP's VEG (now Cultural and Creative

Industries group) serve as a platform for shaping strategic destination leadership decisions, which brings together both DMK and SEMLEP. As such, the Group serves as evidence of the enactment of DL beyond DMK's network of member organisations. Within this context, further opportunities for the now Cultural and Creative Industries Group to serve as a DL platform and whether priorities have changed since the restructuring of the Group were explored through the perspective of SEMLEP's CEO:

"It is a good question and so the significance here is that there are many strands to the ball that attracts visitors and clearly you are right – we did have a Visitor Economy Group and we have a cultural one and we brought the two together ... We do not have to be too distracted by the title - the board needs to ensure that all our working groups are business-led and business-focused in terms of what can be used to stimulate the right types of activity..."

(CEO, SEMLEP)

This suggests that the Group's aspirations to attract strategic funding and collectively grow key important sectors within the SEMLEP area have not changed as a result of its restructuring. What is more, SEMLEP's CEO believed that the new Group would provide further opportunities for strategic partnership activities between SEMLEP and DMK, where priority is given to sharing developmental resources, which is considered as evidence of existing DL. The latter, as the literature in Chapter 2 A suggested, is both a key prerequisite to and defining feature of building DL capacity in times of interdependency (see the definition of DL that underpins this study's direction provided by Harris (2008). Within this context, SEMLEP's CEO provided an example with Milton Keynes Gallery which is part of SEMLEP's investment plans, where Milton Keynes Gallery is within DMK's network of member organisations:

"The additional asset is that we are now featuring major investments in the cultural and creative sector in some of our investment plans so that we try to secure funding for it. For instance we have a major plan to invest in Milton Keynes Gallery as an example."

(CEO, SEMLEP)

From the perspective of SEMLEP's CEO, processes and practices related to attracting funds and acquiring developmental resources were indeed likely to

shape the future of the group and strengthen the existing SEMLEP-DMK alliance and this has been found to be of interest to both DMOs and LEPs:

“A lot of the EU funds will unlock opportunities for tourism and these opportunities need to be grasped. LEPs are positioned to make the case that projects are not just about tourism but they have wider economic implications – economic, business, innovation, rather than focusing on holidays, hotels etc.”

(CEO, SEMLEP)

In light of this, a number of scholars contended that the wider distribution of strategic network resources across the network and open communication, which covers the majority (if not all) network members points to evidence of existing DL practice (see Harris 2005; Hoppe and Reinelt 2010; Hristov and Zehrer 2015). Resources have therefore been considered to be central to the enactment of DL (Chreim 2015; Tian et al. 2015).

The current state of sharing and distribution of strategic developmental resources, e.g. EU funding streams, between SEMLEP and DMK member organisations coupled with demonstrated mutual interests into the role of tourism and the visitor economy in bringing wider economic benefits to the SEMLEP area, build upon the current evidence of the enactment and practice of DL (Phase I). As such, it suggests that both SEMLEP and DMK have already recognised and to an extent, also capitalised on the opportunities presented by DL by building DL capacity through this. The distribution of developmental resources between strategic partners is an underlying principle of DL (Woods et al. 2004).

4.6.C The enactment and practice of DL in reshaped DMOs: Policy-makers perspective

External to DMK’s network of member organisations, policy-makers from Visit England, who mirror diversity of expertise, build upon and explore the relevance of the conceptual contribution derived by Phase I data, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle and its building blocks to contemporary DMOs in England.

Policy makers do so by identifying the key challenges to and opportunities for building DL capacity on a DMO level and in light of the building blocks of the DMO Leadership Cycle, i.e. the concepts of management, governance and leadership in the context of DMOs and the interplay between them, and as such attempt to address Objective D of this study.

Within the context of building upon the DMO Leadership Cycle, the interview agenda with industry practitioners and policy makers and the resultant insights covered a number of strategic themes, in this case:

- (i) Opportunities for DMOs to assume leadership functions and embrace DL as the basis for their organisational model;
- (ii) Opportunities for building DL capacity on a DMO level by drawing on the DMO Leadership Cycle and its building blocks, i.e. the integrative nature of management, governance and leadership in the context of DMOs;
- (iii) Challenges to building DL capacity in DMOs through the perspective of industry practitioners and policy makers.

4.6.1.C Key opportunities for building DL capacity in DMOs

DMOs assuming leadership functions and the place of DL

When asked whether reshaped DMOs can and should go beyond traditional destination management and marketing and assume leadership functions as a response to recent political and economic shifts, e.g. decreasing state support, increased competition in a highly saturated market, a wider set of responsibilities under the remit of reshaped DMOs, the transition from public to private sector leadership, policy-makers felt that the concept of leadership and its relevance can be considered further in the context of DMOs:

“I think yes, they [DMOs] do and yes, they [DMOs] can and probably yes, they should! They should because the visitor economy is such a broad term, it touches a variety of industries, it touches a variety of stakeholder groups and if it is done well, then DMOs do need to have that

relationship [exercising leadership functions] more broadly than the traditional tourism sector.”

(Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland)

Exploring the opportunities for DMOs to go beyond destination management and assume leadership functions were also supported by both the Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement and the Head of Policy and Analysis at VisitEngland. They both felt that the concept of leadership can and should be more broadly embraced in two directions, in this case in principle:

“As a principle [leadership], I think it is fine as tourism is all-encompassing, it covers a number of areas – especially economic activity. So, in principle yes- I think it is [leadership] is important.”

(Head of Policy and Analysis, VisitEngland)

As well as in practice:

“I think there are examples of some DMOs – some of the stronger ones, where they are taking bigger, wider and kind of more strategic leadership roles. Example is Cheshire where they redesign themselves and are about what is more than tourism in a destination. Liverpool where the local LEP there have a local tourism delivery body and that connects to the wider agenda of inward investment.”

(Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement, VisitEngland)

Further, in addition to the more generic leadership concept, policy makers were also asked about what they believed to be the place of DL in light of the largely resource-constrained DMOs and the resultant interdependency of DMO member organisations in England:

“So the whole concept of shared or distributed leadership is something that has not been articulated in those terms [an understanding of what a destination and its constituents are and an understanding of how a destination grows in economic terms] before, but is something that has been thought about and is encouraged for a while. So, there are examples where we get destinations to think more broadly...”

(Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland)

The latter suggests that whilst leadership and its distributed dimension has been considered in the context of DMOs, a more-holistic and broadly-based

understanding of the DL concept may be needed. However, the Head of Destination Management at VisitEngland did not elaborate in detail the place of DL in reshaped DMOs in England, nor he provided any examples of destinations and DMOs, which put the DL concept into practice. Exploring the concept of DL through the DMO Leadership Cycle and its building blocks, however, provided further insights into the role of and prospects for capitalising on DL. These are discussed below.

4.6.2.C DMO Leadership Cycle-specific industry insights

Within the context of the DMO Leadership Cycle, which is a product of the interplay between existing theoretical contributions and Phase I empirical data, the following lines explore the building blocks of the cycle (DMPs, DMOs and the network of DMO member organisations) founded on the theories of management, governance and leadership respectively examined in the context of DMOs (see Chapter 2 A) through the perspective of policy makers.

The DMO Leadership Cycle served to explain the integrative nature of the concepts of three core domains in the mainstream organisational literature, namely management, governance and leadership within the context of DMOs (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). This integration of core organisational concepts then furthered current understanding into how DMOs may be serving as leadership networks and as such, the DMO Leadership Cycle may be seen as a simple and straightforward framework for the enactment and practice of DL on board DMOs.

DL through the perspective of management

The cycle provided evidence that DMPs, which facilitate strategic vision and direction for DL and support the lead network in meeting its objectives and goals through distribution of leadership roles and functions (see Hristov and

Petrova, 2015) largely define the concept of management when applied to a DMO context (Figure 2.A.2). The role of DMPs in promoting DL on a DMO level and also realising the opportunities for building DL capacity on a DMO level were then further explored through the perspective of policy makers. Policy makers believed that DMPs should be seen as an important tool for articulating the roles and responsibilities of destination leads and as such, DMPs provide opportunities for framing and practising DL:

“Absolutely! A DMP can articulate roles and responsibilities of destination leads. This is at the core of our guide to developing DMPs ... So yes, I do think that articulating the roles and responsibilities of destination leads is key to DMPs.”

(Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland)

Further, both the Head of Destination Management and the Head of Policy and Analysis felt that DMPs could provide a framework for leveraging strategic destination resources in resource-constrained DMOs, where the latter actions facilitate the enactment of DL and provide opportunities for building DL capacity:

“Now, in principle that is a good idea – all DMPs should be grounded in solid evidence, they should not just be based on the back up of DMO CEOs or the board ... So if DMPs are done properly, absolutely they can be used [for leveraging strategic destination resources] and they should be used and is useful for DMOs to understand how they can be used.”

(Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland)

DMPs, in addition, were seen as key to providing a scope for collective action and facilitating the setting up of common goals, which are of interest to diverse stakeholder groups on board DMOs.

“I think, absolutely is the answer to that [DMPs are able to provide a scope for collective action and facilitate the setting up of common goals]. I think DMPs is one of the biggest successes – it [a DMP] is not necessarily the end document, but is actually the process, which the stakeholders and the DMO go through to reach that document.”

(Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland)

Within this context, DMPs can, arguably, facilitate collective visioning and define strategic destination leadership actions, which are of interest to the majority if not all DMO member organisations. As the broad leadership literature pointed out already, collective visioning is at the heart of DL (see Siraj and Hallet 2013).

DMPs, as policy makers felt, “*allow DMOs to be able to provide leadership*” (Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland). They believed that DMP also allow for having an understanding of what the challenges and opportunities are for all these different groups, which in turn can enable DMO member organisations to capitalise on developing shared goals and objectives, which are again among the key defining features of DL (Neuman et al. 2000).

DL through the perspective of governance

Further, the cycle provided evidence that formal destination governance structures, such as DMOs, which are often imposed by public policy largely define the concept of governance when applied to a DMO context (see Figure 2.A.2). The role of formal governance structures in promoting DL on a DMO level and their role in realising the opportunities for building DL capacity on a DMO level were then further explored through the perspective of policy makers. Both the Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement and the Head of Destination Management at VisitEngland felt that formal governance structures in the face of DMOs may well provide a platform to facilitate leadership decisions, which can be of interest to the often diverse in terms of sector and size DMO member organisations, including the often under-represented smaller destination businesses, e.g. SMEs:

“Yes, DMOs [formal governance structures] can facilitate leadership decisions being of interest to diverse DMO member organisations. There are a number of examples where small businesses both within the tourism sector and beyond have been engaged because the DMO is doing a good job of explaining the role that SMEs play within the wider visitor economy.”

(Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland)

Similarly, the Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement at VisitEngland considered formal governance structures in the face of DMOs to be crucial to providing opportunities for wider representation of DMO member organisations and collective destination decision-making, in the case of both smaller businesses and not-for-profit organisations:

“Yes, absolutely, and that [DMOs allowing for a wider representation of stakeholder interests and providing a voice in shaping leadership decisions] is exactly the role that a DMO should play... Of course, DMOs will never be in a position to control all of it, but DMPs are the place where priorities are being identified and DMOs have the facilitation, leadership and coordination role. So, I think this is definitely beneficial and that is a role they [DMOs] can play locally.”

(Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement, VisitEngland)

Empowering, providing voice and recognising diverse organisations and their capabilities/collective role have also been identified as some of the key defining features of DL (Martin et al. 2015). DL stands for supporting the leadership of others (Harris 2013) and formal governance structures, as suggested by VisitEngland leads, can act as a facilitating platform to achieve this objective.

DL through the perspective of leadership

Finally, the cycle provided evidence that organisations on board DMOs orchestrating a destination in a collective fashion largely define the concept of leadership when applied to a DMO context (Figure 2.A.2). The role of DMO member organisations and individuals behind these organisations in promoting DL on a DMO level and also realising the opportunities for building DL capacity on a DMO level were then further explored through the perspective of policy makers.

Policy makers felt that in line with DMOs (defining the concept of governance in a DMO context) and DMPs (defining the concept of management in a DMO context), *“you need someone to provide leadership”* (Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland). Within this context, the collective

dimension of 'someone', who is willing to assume leadership functions and provide leadership decisions on a DMO level was also seen as a pertinent discussion theme deserving further attention. In this case, despite suggesting that DMOs tend to be more biased towards bigger members because bigger members have more resources, the Head of Policy and Analysis at VisitEngland has seen an opportunity in embracing the collective nature of leadership on board DMOs:

"I think it very much depends on a DMO having an inclusive policy – a one that attempts to ensure that it represents all the interests of DMO members but it needs a few champions as well, or individuals who are willing to push that agenda."

(Head of Policy and Analysis, VisitEngland)

This is in line with the DMO Leadership Cycle's definition of leadership in the context of DMOs, which called for embracing the collective dimension of strategic destination decision-making. This scenario was also uncovered in situ, when Phase II insights provided evidence of the existence of at least six contrasting, but interconnected leader types on board DMK, which collectively champion leadership within and across network communities and represent public, private and not-for-profit organisations.

4.6.3.C Key challenges to building DL capacity in DMOs

Within the context of perceived challenges to capitalising on the DL agenda and building DL capacity, industry practitioners and policy makers emphasised a number of key important considerations with regard to DL and the associated challenges, which should be taken into account if and when DL is enacted and practiced on a DMO level:

- (i)* Organisational structure of DMOs;
- (ii)* Destination aspirations and organisational priorities of DMOs;
- (iii)* Inclusion of SMEs and Not-for-Profits in strategic destination decision making;

- (iv) Monitoring leadership roles and responsibilities; measuring leadership activity;
- (v) The role of funding in boosting DMO capacity to provide tangible outputs.

Organisational structure of DMOs

Policy makers felt that the organisational structure of DMOs across England differ significantly and this may well have consequences for both embarking on shared forms of leadership and building DL capacity on a DMO level by involving a range of public, private and not-for-profit DMO member organisations:

“So, reshaped DMOs can demonstrate leadership if they have good structure [representing the public, private and not-for-profit sectors in a destination]. However, I do not think that this is something that can be recommended in all cases.”

(Head of Policy and Analysis, VisitEngland)

A particular attention was also given to the composition of DMO networks or the sectoral diversity of organisations on board DMO, which was seen as a prerequisite to capitalise on the opportunities presented by the leadership concept:

“So yes, I think that they [DMOs] can assume leadership functions, but obviously we know that there are some DMOs that are quite fragile. In terms of the stronger ones and the ones that are managing to survive, they perhaps have strong PPPs [Public-Private Partnerships] as the basis for their model.”

(Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement, VisitEngland)

Destination development aspirations and organisational priorities of DMOs

Further, industry practitioners and policy makers believed that destination development aspirations and organisational priorities of DMOs might also pose challenges to DMOs should they decide to concentrate their efforts on building leadership capabilities. Within this context, a comparison was made between outward-facing, i.e. marketing and management-focused DMOs and inward-facing, i.e. leadership-focused DMOs:

“...the majority of them [DMOs] are focused on the promotional side of things, i.e. they are outward-facing and that brings challenges in it self in terms of being able to deliver leadership functions.”

(Head of Destination Management, VisitEngland)

The Head of Destination Management at VisitEngland, in addition, felt that defining a DMO in itself is a challenging task, as various DMOs have different functions under their remit. Within this context, the extant destination and DMO literature suggested that some DMOs were seen as being more marketing-centric (see Pike and Page 2014), whereas others as more management-centric (see Pearce 2014; Ritchie and Crouch 2003) or even leadership-centric (see Hristov and Zehrer 2015).

Inclusion of SMEs and NFPs in strategic destination decision-making

Further, the perceived barriers to the inclusion of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Not-for-Profits in strategic destination decision making were seen as another challenge that can limit DMOs in their efforts to enact DL and also build DL capacity across the complete network of public, private and not-for-profit organisations on board DMOs:

“I think that the biggest weakness [of DMOs] is the fact that DMOs can be dominated by better organised members and these better organised DMO members tend to be larger because they have the resource to be able to employ full time staff for people to assume such responsibilities [DMO tasks and agendas] under their remit.”

(Head of Policy and Analysis, VisitEngland)

The Head of Policy and Analysis also felt that for micro businesses and SMEs it is much harder to find the time to be involved in the above activities. He proposed that specific resources for SMEs and NFPs could enable the inclusion of such organisations in strategic destination decision-making:

“You could argue that a lot of the DMOs are influenced by organisations that do not necessarily include the smaller stakeholders. And that is a problem – I do not know how we can overcome that unless you can provide a specific resource for such businesses...”

(Head of Policy and Analysis, VisitEngland)

This statement is in line with Phase II outputs, which identified resource-empowered leaders to be among the six leader types on board DMK. Resource-empowered leaders were identified as member organisations, which have acquired developmental resources.

Monitoring leadership roles and responsibilities; measuring leadership activity

Further, the perceived complexities in monitoring leadership roles and responsibilities and measuring leadership activity on board DMOs were seen by policy makers as yet another obstacle to the distribution of leadership and building of DL capacity across DMO member organisations championing leadership:

“There is something that we found – it is quite difficult to measure who does what. On a DMO level you have responsibilities assigned to different parties. Under the old system of local authorities this process was very straightforward because of the various departments who had to fine manage and had various performance monitoring. As soon as you start developing hybrid organisations, it becomes much more difficult to do that.”

(Head of Policy and Analysis, VisitEngland)

This obstacle, as the Head of Policy and Analysis at VisitEngland suggests, may be seen as a property of business-led DMOs in particular. However, as Chapter 4 A uncovered, DMPs are well placed to provide a response to this

perceived challenge as DMPs provide the opportunity to assign lead responsibilities to individual DMO member organisations.

The role of funding in boosting DMO capacity to provide tangible outputs

The challenges facing reshaped DMOs in England and their capacity to provide strategic destination leadership is a topic, which was also highlighted by SEMLEP's CEO, who felt that in addition to embracing DL, DMOs should also be able to deliver tangible outputs and the role of resources in this process, as he felt, was key:

“Nobody has got an interest in an organisation that has the means but not the capability to deliver something tangible. We all want to make a difference and so that difference is only going to come about if there is sufficient capacity and competence and funding to enable that to happen.”

(CEO, SEMLEP)

Recognition of the interdependency of DMO member organisations in light of the current funding regime for DMOs and embracing their sectoral diversity, resources, expertise may provide an enabling environment to shape DMOs, which are capable of responding to the perceived complexity within the operational environment for DMOs. The concept of DL provides one such opportunity to bring all these strategic considerations together.

4.7.C The DMO Leadership Cycle in practice: Mixed perspective

The final objective of this study was to put forward a set of practical outputs (tools) having implications for DL practice in reshaped DMOs. Within this context, the study introduces a set of guidelines for good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs or DMOs undergoing an organisational change.

4.7.1.C The DMO Leadership Cycle and definition revisited

Insights from industry practitioners and policy makers into the opportunities for and challenges to building DL capacity in light of DMO Leadership Cycle's building blocks, suggested that reshaped DMOs may be well-placed to explore the opportunities linked to DL and that DL itself provides a scope for further considerations.

The DMO Leadership Cycle revisited

The purpose of this section however is to build on the cycle and its leadership dimension in particular by taking into account Phase II network insights, which identified six contrasting, but interconnected leader types on board DMK. The leadership dimension or the building block of the cycle (see Figure 2.A.2) is a reflection of a "lead network of diverse destination actors (a nexus between businesses, local government and community) not solely having an interest in, but also committed to shaping the strategic direction of the destination" (Hristov and Zehrer 2015, p.125) as uncovered in Phase I providing a definition on how DMOs might serve as leadership networks in destinations. This nexus of businesses, local government and community organisations seen through the lens of the six leader types and the leadership behaviours demonstrated by this nexus and uncovered as part of Phase II, set the scene for revisiting the DMO Leadership Cycle. Multiple levels of involvement in decision-making are among the key principles of DL (Harris 2008) and the case of surfacing a number of leader types and leadership behaviours within DMK provides empirical evidence into this statement made by Harris (2008).

Figure 4.C.1 demonstrates how the DMO Leadership Cycle, which is the product of the interplay between theory and Phase I empirical data (see Figure 2.A.2 in Chapter 2 A), has evolved in light of Phase II insights with focus on the network in situ. It builds on the leadership dimension of the cycle, where the latter demonstrated how DMOs serve as leadership networks in destinations. By building on the leadership dimension of the cycle, the DMO Leadership Cycle now explain how DMOs serve as DL networks in destinations (see Figure

4.C.1) through the involvement of at least six leader types. These six leader types demonstrate six leadership behaviours and are supported by three enablers, which serve as a vehicle to create the conditions and structures necessary for DL to flourish in contemporary DMOs. The three enablers, which serve as a vehicle to create the conditions and structures to allow for DMOs to serve as DL networks are:

- DMO member organisations seen as a lead network of stakeholders (DMO L-ship Cycle’s Leadership dimension);
- DMOs as formal governance structures defining boundaries of the lead network (DMO L-ship Cycle’s Governance dimension); and
- DMPs providing strategic vision and direction for DL (DMO L-ship Cycle’s Management dimension).

As evident from the above description, these three enablers correspond to the three building blocks of the DMO Leadership Cycle, namely Leadership, Governance and Management explored in the context of DMOs (Figure 4.C.1).

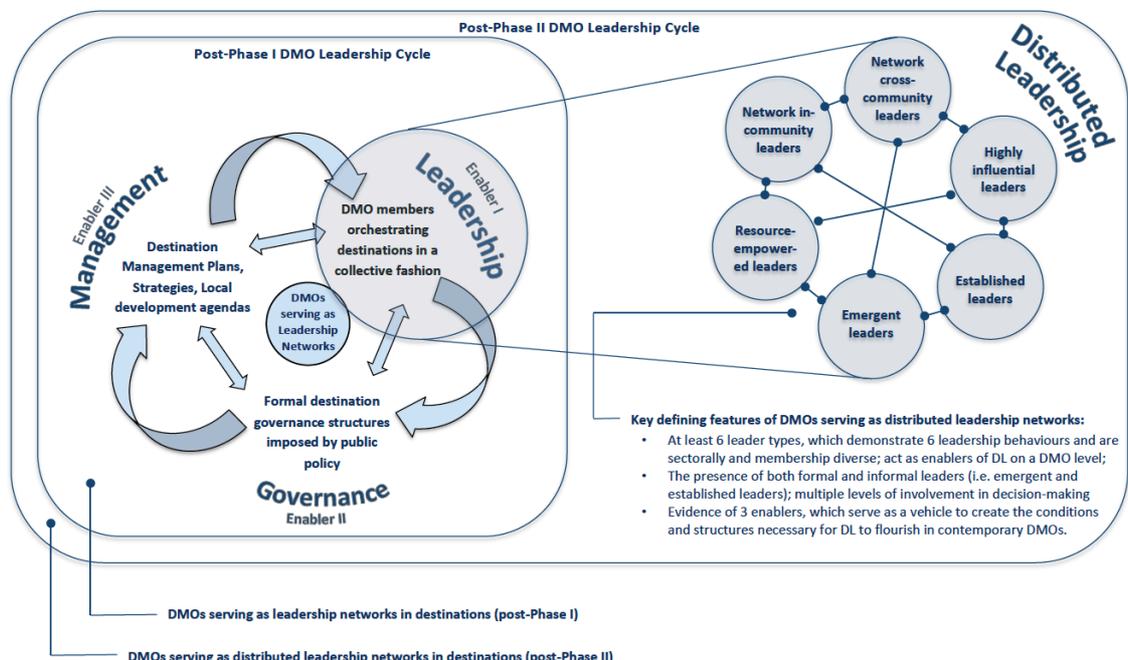


Figure 4.C.1. The DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited

The identification of multiple leader types and leadership functions within DMK, which sheds light into the transition from heroic leadership towards more shared

and collective forms of leadership, is also in line with recent recommendations by the 2nd Biennial Destination Management Forum held in St Gallen, Switzerland, which concluded that:

“It is questionable whether and to what extent a sole individual is able to pave the way to a consensus in decision-making when resources, expertise, leadership influence, and skills reside in diverse destination actors who contribute in different ways to various parts of the experience system.”

(Reinhold et al. 2015, p. 4)

Reinhold et al. (2015, p.4) went on to argue that contemporary DMOs “will require less of a lone leader that personifies and tries to direct the entire destination like a corporate CEO” and the advancement of the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle by building on Phase II insights demonstrates how leadership can multiply within and across a network of DMO member organisations.

Within the context of the leadership dimension of the cycle, the six leader types, which demonstrate contrasting, but potentially interconnected leadership behaviours can hold a strategic role in serving as a vehicle for the enactment and practice of DL. As such, the cycle is seen as a framework for practising DL on a DMO level and it informs the development of guidelines for good leadership practice for DMOs undergoing change. The six leader types contributing to the leadership dimension of the cycle are an integral part of the three enablers (Figure 4.C.1), which serve as a vehicle to create the conditions and structures providing opportunities for DL to flourish in contemporary DMOs.

DL may not necessarily be seen as a panacea for organisations undergoing change (Harris et al. (2007) and there is often a call for some hierarchical leadership in contemporary organisations (Leavitt 2005). Within this context, Friedrich et al. (2016, p.313) felt that “there is evidence, in fact, that both forms of leadership, hierarchical and collectivistic, are necessary in some form and contribute together.” Nevertheless, identifying and mobilising contrasting leader types and behaviours as per the identified six leadership types is an opportunity for DMOs to promote DL further across their networks of member organisations.

The Definition

Building on the above discussion into the tree enablers and six leader types, the proposed indicative definition of DMOs serving as DL networks in destinations, which builds on a previous definition of DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations (see Hristov and Zehrer 2015, p. 125) is as follows:

- DMOs serving as distributed leadership networks consist of a lead network of at least six leader types demonstrating contrasting, yet potentially interconnected leadership behaviours. This lead network does not solely have an interest in, but is committed to shaping the strategic direction of the destination and does so by using a formal governance structure, which serves as a platform for collective strategic destination decision-making. The work of the lead network is underpinned/facilitated by a strategic visionary plan to provide direction of DL and in so doing, to support the lead network in meeting its objectives and goals through the distribution of leadership roles and functions.

4.7.2.C Guidelines on good leadership practice for DMOs

Within an increasingly networked environment, pooling knowledge and resources has become a fundamental prerequisite to ensuring the long-term sustainability of reshaped and resource-constrained DMOs in England facing severe challenges to deliver value to their destinations and member organisations (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). DL is a recent paradigm, which gradually gains momentum in the DMO and destination research domains, and as this study suggests, the paradigm can be seen as a possible response to these challenges.

Within this context and building on the rich empirical evidence in situ throughout the three phases of data collection, this study puts forward a set of guidelines on good leadership practice for DMOs and their strategic network of member organisations. The intention of this study to provide practitioner

perspectives into the opportunities to harness DL in DMOs is in line with Objective E of this study, namely to put forward a set of practitioner outputs, which have implications for DL practice in DMOs.

The primary purpose of the Guidelines on Good Leadership Practice for DMOs is to inform future leadership practice on a DMO level in the UK; and potentially also further afield, where there is evidence of organisational change in a DMO context. The latter implies a shift from a traditional public sector leadership in DMOs towards private sector leadership in DMOs. Guidelines on Good Leadership Practice for DMOs are informed by Phase II insights from investigations corresponding to each of the network questions following the adaptation of Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for surfacing DL practice in networks embedded in formal organisations. The guidelines are also grounded in insights from the network investigation in Phase II and the subsequent industry practitioners and policy makers' interpretation of depictions of DL practice in Phase III. The guidelines are also informed by evidence grounded in the interplay between theory and new knowledge (*abduction*), which was a starting point for Phase I, which introduced the concept of the DMO Leadership Cycle.

As Figure 4.C.1 suggested, the ability for DMOs to serve as DL networks depends on three key enablers – a lead network of DMO member organisations, DMOs as formal governance structures and DMPs providing strategic vision and direction for DL. These three enablers correspond to the three building blocks of the DMO Leadership Cycle, namely Leadership, Governance and Management explored in the context of DMOs. These key enablers and their underpinning definitions and conceptualisations serve to provide structure to the guidelines.

Enabler 1: Leadership (a lead network of DMO member organisations): this section of the guidelines is informed by the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle and as such, it emphasises the opportunity for other DMOs to recognise the role and functions of the DMO leadership nexus of organisations, which involves at least six contrasting, but interconnected leader types. The section argues for the need for other DMOs to recognise the functions of the six leaders types and their role in enabling and promoting DL practice across the

complete DMO network of member organisations for DL to flourish in DMOs undergoing transformation:

- *Network in-community leaders* are member organisations, which are well-placed within their own communities and sub-networks on board DMOs. When located, network in-community leaders can act as bridgers within their immediate network communities by connecting members of their community with other communities on board DMOs. As such, they enable the distribution of developmental resources, the provision of a voice and the communication of the vision within their immediate network communities on-board DMOs.
- *Network cross-community leaders* are member organisations, which are well-placed across often distant network communities and sub-networks on board DMOs. When located, network cross-community leaders can act as bridgers across network communities by connecting members of one community on board DMOs with members of another, which may not be connected otherwise. As such, they enable the distribution of developmental resources, the provision of a voice and the communication of the vision across often distant network communities on-board DMOs.
- *Highly influential leaders* are member organisations, which are often seen as network leaders due to the fact that they are well-connected to other, also well-connected leaders in the complete network on board DMOs. When located, highly influential leaders can act as bridgers across leaders of network communities by connecting leaders of one community on board DMOs with leaders from another, which may not be connected otherwise. As such, they have strong influence over the communication of the vision and distribution of developmental resources due to their high reach and connectivity to other leaders across the network. Highly influential leaders can serve as agents of DL on board DMOs as long as they represent a healthy mix of organisations with corporate and non-corporate membership and represent different sectors of the economy within the network of DMO member organisations.

- *Established leaders* are member organisations with high influence, which are regarded as important gatekeepers, who have the potential to empower and enable others to participate in leadership and as such, they support the enactment and practice of DL further across the network of DMO member organisations. They are often dominated by corporate (founding) DMO members. When located, established leaders can promote the distribution of leadership across other corporate members with less influence on board DMOs. As such, they enable more opportunities for penetration of DL across less-influential corporate members on board DMOs.
- *Emergent leaders* are member organisations with moderate influence, which are regarded as important gatekeepers, who have the potential to empower and enable other, often non-corporate member organisations to participate in leadership and as such, they support the enactment and practice of DL further across the network of DMO member organisations. When located, emergent leaders can promote empowerment and facilitate DL across the complete network and beyond the network of established leaders. As such, they support the enactment and practice of DL further across the network as the presence of emergent leaders is an indication of a more broad-based leadership, which involves both formal and informal leaders.
- *Resource-empowered leaders* are member organisations, which are often seen as recipients of strategic developmental resources from other member organisations on board DMOs, which provides evidence of empowerment. When located, resource-empowered leaders can facilitate access of other member organisations to vital developmental resources, which may not otherwise have access to these resources. As such, they are both a sign of and can also further support the empowerment, providing a voice in strategic destination decision-making and recognition of peripheral member organisations, particularly in resource-constrained DMOs.

Enabler II: Governance (DMOs as formal governance structures): this section of the guidelines is informed by the governance dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle and as such, it emphasises the opportunity for other DMOs to recognise the role and functions of formal governance structures (DMOs) in defining the boundaries of destination organisations committed to strategic destination decision-making and facilitating DL across the complete network.

- Formal governance structures, such as DMOs should allow for facilitating a joined-up approach to leadership in destinations and serve as a means of finding common ground to exercising leadership functions in destinations.
- Formal governance structures in the face of DMOs should be able to facilitate leadership decisions, which are of interest to the often diverse in terms of sector and size DMO member organisations, including the often under-represented smaller destination businesses – peripheral network actors.
- Formal governance structures in the face of DMOs should be operated in a way, which provides opportunities for wider representation of DMO member organisations, in the case of both smaller businesses and not-for-profit organisations
- Formal governance structures, such as DMOs, should allow for establishing clear boundaries of the network of member organisations that execute leadership decisions and as such, contribute to the DMPs which provide strategic vision and direction for DL on a DMO level.

Enabler III: Management (DMPs providing strategic vision and direction for DL): this section of the guidelines is informed by the management dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle and as such, it emphasises the opportunity for other DMOs to recognise the role and functions of DMPs in assigning roles and lead responsibilities through providing direction of DL, i.e. support the lead network in meeting its objectives and goals:

- DMPs should be seen as an important tool for articulating the roles and responsibilities of destination leads and as such, DMPs provide opportunities for framing and practising DL;
- DMPs should be seen as a framework for leveraging strategic destination resources in resource-constrained DMOs. A framework, which facilitates the enactment of DL and provides opportunities for building DL capacity;
- DMPs should be seen as strategic documents, which provide a scope for collective action and facilitate the setting up of common goals, which are of interest to diverse stakeholder groups on board DMOs;
- DMPs should be seen as consensus frameworks, which facilitate collective visioning and define strategic destination leadership actions, which are of interest to the majority if not all DMO member organisations;
- DMP should allow for having an understanding what the challenges and opportunities are for all these different groups, which in turn enables DMO member organisations to capitalise on developing shared goals and objectives.

4.8.C Chapter conclusion

This last discussion chapter provided an in-depth discussion on key insights and related questions arising from the adoption of Phase II by drawing on the perspective of both industry practitioners from DMK and policy makers from VisitEngland. Where the purpose of Chapter 4 B was to provide a discussion of evidence into the enactment of DL in DMK's complete and policy networks, the focal point of this chapter, was an investigation into the challenges to, and opportunities for practising DL and building DL capacity. Both industry practitioners and policy makers unveiled a range of opportunities with regard to the practice of DL in DMK, but also highlighted a number of current challenges to capitalising on the DL agenda. The chapter continued with a discussion of the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited, which builds on the DMO Leadership Cycle introduced in Chapter 2 A. The DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited builds on Phase II and Phase III data, which contributed to extending the leadership

dimension of the cycle. The chapter concluded with a proposed set of practical outputs having implications for management and leadership practice on a DMO level, namely guidelines on good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs.

Section IV consisted of three interconnected discussion chapters devoted to findings derived from the application of Phase I, II and III of the methodological framework, which was introduced in Section III. Chapter 4 A provided a discussion of findings resulting from Phase I of the adopted methodological framework, in this case the shifting DMO concept, key characteristics of the new funding and governance landscape and their influence on DMOs. The chapter also provided initial evidence of organisational change, i.e. the enactment of DL on a DMO level. As such, Chapter 4 A addressed Objective A and Objective B of this study. Chapter 4 B provided a discussion of findings derived from Phase II of the adopted methodological framework. Building on Chapter 4 A, this chapter provided an in-depth discussion of network findings related to the enactment and practice of DL in DMK through the perspective of senior leaders in DMK member organisations. As such, Chapter 4 B addressed Objective C of this study. The final chapter in Section IV, namely Chapter 4 C provided a discussion of findings derived from Phase III of the adopted methodological framework. Building on evidence of the enactment and practice of DL covered in Chapter 4 B, this chapter discussed the challenges to and opportunities for embedding DL practice in both DMOs in general and in DMK from the perspective of industry practitioners from DMK and policy makers from VisitEngland respectively. As such, Chapter 4 C addressed Objective D and Objective E of this study.

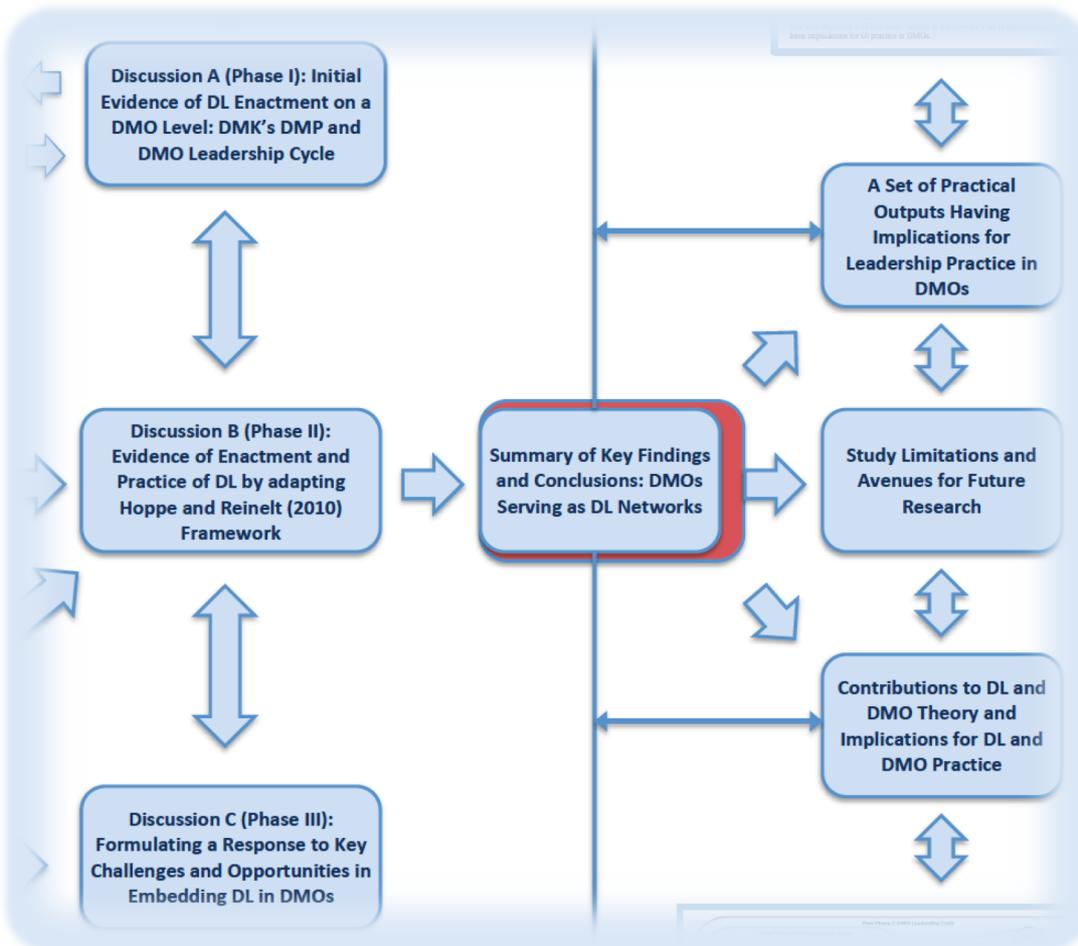
Section V

Conclusion, Contributions and Limitations

Section V consists of Chapter 5: Conclusion, Contributions and Limitations. Chapter 5 provides a concluding discussion to this study and as such it highlights key findings, stemming from the five objectives. Building on this discussion, the chapter revisits the overarching study aim and discusses the extent to which the aim has been addressed in the context of findings from Phase I, II and III. Building on this first section, Chapter 5 provides a short discussion into contributions to DMO and DL theory and implications for DMO and DL practice, which result from the application of the mixed-method, three-phase methodological framework and data collected throughout Phases I, II and III. The last section in Chapter 5 provides a discussion of key limitations related to the applied methodology and limitations with regard to research findings before introducing key research themes, which require further attention by academia and practice.

Chapter 5

Conclusion, Contributions and Limitations



CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter provides a focused discussion of key findings resulting from the adopted methodological framework and during Phases I, II and III, which purpose was to provide a response to the overarching aim and five objectives outlined at the beginning of this study. By providing a focused discussion of key findings, which cover the A, B, C, D, E journey, this chapter covers key study findings in light of the overarching study aim and related objectives. The overall study aim is then revised and the extent, to which it has been addressed within the context of the study findings, is discussed. This focused discussion sets the scene for the following section, namely limitations and avenues for future research. The chapter continues with an in-depth discussion into contributions to DL and DMO theory and implications for DL and DMO practice which stem from this study. Chapter 5 concludes with a discussion into the limitations stemming from this study before providing key avenues for further research.

5.2 Conclusions

5.2.1 Revisiting the study aim and objectives

The overarching aim of this study was to investigate how DMOs enact and practise distributed leadership and as such, serve as leadership networks in destinations within a new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. Within the context of the overarching aim, the underpinning study addressed five specific objectives, which sought to:

- A. Explore the shifting DMO concept and conceptualise it through the political and economic dimensions of the new funding landscape that influence change on a DMO level;

- B. Identify initial evidence of organisational change within the DMO in focus influenced by the new funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England;
- C. Investigate collective processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of distributed leadership within the DMO in focus by adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) SNA framework for evaluating leadership development in networks embedded in organisations:
 - On a DMO network level (*internal*)
 - On a wider, policy network level (*external*);
- D. Formulate a collective response to key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL in reshaped DMOs and surface approaches to respectively mitigate or capitalise on these; and
- E. Co-construct a set of practitioner outputs having implications for DL practice in reshaped DMOs, i.e. guidelines for good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs.

5.2.2 The A, B, C, D, E journey and overarching study framework

The overarching study framework, which provides a detailed, process-driven visualisation of all study chapters, the abduction-driven interplay between existing theory and empirical findings, and key study milestones and outputs, is located in Appendix 6. This section provides a focused discussion of key findings related to each of the five objectives of this study.

Objective A

The first objective of this study sought to explore the shifting DMO concept and conceptualise it through the political and economic dimensions of the new funding landscape that influence change on a DMO level. This objective was underpinned by Phase I of the adopted methodology and involved semi-structured interviews, participant observation as part of VEG, active involvement

in DMP development meetings and an extensive review of secondary data related to the case in focus. The data collection began with an exploratory study, which was captured in Phase I. This exploratory phase was initially aimed at identifying generic trends and shifts in the landscape for DMOs and destinations in England prior to carrying out a case-specific exploration, which involved DMK. The shifting DMO concept, which was influenced by shifts in the governance and funding landscape for DMOs, was first uncovered. Major political and economic developments on a global-to-local level influenced this transition. They were introduced through both adapting and building on the Global-Local Nexus concept introduced by Milne and Ateljevic (2001).

Building on these global developments, the shift in the DMO concept in England involved restructuring of traditionally public sector-led DMOs, which were called for establishing strong collaborative practices and assuming leadership functions within a new policy community of local government, businesses and not-for-profit organisations (see Hristov and Petrova, 2015). DMOs had to assume more responsibilities and lead on strategic agendas in their geographies. Hence this indicated a transition from marketing to management and now leadership and involved a transition from tourism towards the visitor economy. This new policy community (policy network) was then studied in detail in order to define the political and economic dimensions of the new funding and governance landscape influencing change in DMOs. A summary of this was discussed in Chapter 4 A. A detailed historical analysis, which covers the shifting funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, both pre and post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*, is included in Appendix 3b. These dimensions reflected the new *2011 Government Tourism Policy* landscape, the neo-liberal agenda followed by the 2010 coalition government, in addition to the influence of a wider set of global-to-local forces in DMO and destination policy and practice (see Hristov and Naumov 2015).

This was followed by an exploratory study into the case in focus, namely DMK and its destination, Milton Keynes. The exploratory study included a detailed analysis of the organisation in focus, its membership structure, in addition to the number of member organisations, their status, sector of the economy, and proportion of members within each sector represented on board

DMK. Key senior individuals representing all DMK member organisations were then identified and subsequently approached for the purpose of data collection in Phase II. Semi-structured interviews with the founding and Current CEOs provided introduction to the organisation and also important insights into the implications of the shifting landscape for destination management over DMK and its funding model in particular. These preliminary Phase I insights with relation to DMK and its network of member organisations contributed to shaping the SNA survey instrument used in Phase II.

Following the examination of the new policy landscape in England that brings together DMOs, LEPs, VisitEngland and other interested stakeholders, an initial research into DMK's wider policy network was undertaken by involving the local LEP, namely SEMLEP and its CEO. DMK's policy network was arguably part of the organisation's operational environment and thus suggesting that DMK does not operate in isolation from its policy network. This is where the external policy network was found to also matter and particularly DMK's strategic partnership with SEMLEP (see Hristov 2014). The latter was further explored throughout Phases II and III as part of DMK's wider policy network, which was seen as a defining feature of the new landscape of destination management in England.

Objective B

The second objective of this study sought to identify initial evidence of organisational change within the DMO in focus influenced by the new funding landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. This objective was also underpinned by Phase I of the adopted methodology and thus involved semi-structured interviews, participant observation as part of VEG, active involvement in DMP development meetings and an extensive review of secondary data related to the case in focus.

The discussion of the first study objective suggested that within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, DMOs across England are expected to facilitate a more holistic and inclusive approach to destination management and provide core leadership functions,

rather than assuming sole responsibility for the marketing and management of destinations. Following from this 2010 coalition government's approach advocating a shift in the way DMOs operate and call for a 'shared responsibility' in strategic destination decision-making, processes and practices related to the distribution of leadership on a DMO level emerged from the concept of DMPs. Introduced by the 2010 coalition government, DMPs served to guide the work of DMOs in transition. Within this context, in addition to adopting a strategic collaborative approach to shaping the Plan, what then also became evident, was the initial evidence of enactment of DL in DMK. This evidence was grounded in the intended distribution of lead roles in strategic destination decision-making advocated in DMK's DMP. Findings related to Objective B were an outcome of both a detailed content analysis of the plan and the researcher's continuous involvement in the process of developing DMK's DMP. This was seen as an initial evidence of the enactment of DL on a DMO level. Benson and Blackman (2011) referred to the potential of DL to enable and facilitate organisational change through collective strategic decision-making and the launch of DMK's DMP, which advocated the distribution of lead responsibilities as discussed in Chapter 4 A, should be seen as an example of such response to change in DMOs.

DMPs were seen as an opportunity to collectively embrace a multitude of skills, expertise and resources on board DMK and across the network of member organisation, particularly in times of economic uncertainty and decreasing state support for DMOs. As such, DMPs were seen as a key enabler of DL on a DMO level and the identified distribution of lead roles and responsibilities between a collective of members, which mark the enactment of DL in DMK, provide evidence into this. DMPs alone may not however be enough on their own. The VEG observation and the researcher's immersion in developing the plan suggested that building a network of committed organisations to enact this practice is also important, in addition to a formal governance structure, which purpose is to draw the boundaries of this network.

Phase I empirical insights underpinned by the adopted Abductive approach (Peirce 1934) to accumulation of new knowledge, also supported the development of the DMO Leadership Cycle. The DMO Leadership Cycle was a reflection of the initial conceptualisation of leadership and its distributed

dimension in a destination and DMO context. The cycle reflected an initial theory building process grounded in and also the product of the interplay between initial empirical evidence in Phase I and the latest theoretical contributions in the literature of DMO and destination leadership (see Kozak et al. 2014; Pechlaner et al. 2014). DMP as an initial evidence of DL on a DMO level and initial processes of theory-building reflected in the DMO Leadership Cycle provided the basis for further investigation into processes and practices related to the distribution of leadership *in situ*. This was facilitated by Phase II of the adopted methodology aimed at conducting a network study of DMK's network of member organisations.

Objective C

The third objective of this study sought to investigate collective processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL within DMK by adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) SNA framework for evaluating leadership development in networks embedded in organisations. This study was carried out on a DMO network level and involved a detailed investigation into DMK's network of member organisations by using an SNA survey questionnaire. A basic ego network analysis was also then carried out on a wider, policy network level with the intention to build upon Phase I insights with regard to the importance of DMK's wider policy network. Insights from the network investigation *in situ* carried out in Phase II built upon the existing conceptual contribution which is the product of Phase I, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle and its leadership dimension in particular. The cycle demonstrated how reshaped DMOs in England assume leadership functions in destinations and serve as leadership networks.

Phase II data provided evidence of the transition from traditional top-down governance model of DMOs towards a flatter and more fluid, perhaps, a network-shaped organisation. That is a transition from demonstrating power in decision-making and 'heroic' leadership towards a more collective, DL practised on a DMO level by a collective of member organisations across sectors and membership tiers. Where the former model was predominantly founded on

power relations and underpinned by public sector-led leadership (Coles et al. 2014), the latter one valued the wider opportunities for individual DMO member organisations to participate in leadership decisions, distribution of knowledge, expertise and exchange of essential developmental resources across the network in light of the increasingly resource-constrained DMOs (Hristov and Zehrer 2015, Reinhold et al. 2015). Indeed, the emergent six contrasting leader types within DMK suggested a transition from the notion of *power*, in DMOs and destination management (either a board of corporate members or simply the elite) and pointed to the current evidence of and further opportunities to *empower* in DMOs, i.e. no-corporate DMO member organisations instead. This major finding called for exploring the potential benefits that distributed forms of leadership, in terms of facilitating the pooling of vital developmental resources, enabling an enhanced communication, supporting the sharing of skills and expertise can bring to DMOs and destinations.

Building on Phase I data, Chapter 4 A also provided initial evidence of the enactment of DL beyond DMK's membership network by involving organisations on both regional and national level, which are part of DMK's wider policy network, such as Visit England and SEMLEP. Insights were derived through a small longitudinal study, which mapped communication patterns and exchange of developmental resources within DMK's policy network pre and post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. The longitudinal study found that DMK's policy network (post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*) provided more opportunities for the distribution of leadership amongst interested stakeholders, who were predominantly beyond the public sector. The DMK-SEMLEP strategic leadership partnership was one such example of distribution of leadership beyond DMK's network of member organisations. Building on Phase I and II data with regard to DMK's policy network, opportunities for both organisations to lead on strategic agendas in the SEMLEP area were further examined through the perspective of SEMLEP's CEO in Phase III. SEMLEP's CEO touched upon a range of strategic topics, which served to build upon the existing evidence of the enactment of DL and outline the prospects for further capitalising on this agenda towards building DL capacity.

Objective D

The fourth objective of this study sought to formulate a collective response to key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL in reshaped DMOs and surface approaches to respectively mitigate or capitalise on these. Within this context, the empirical insights provided throughout Phase I and Phase II, were seen through the perspective of both senior representatives of DMO member organisations (industry practitioners) and external to the DMO network VisitEngland leads (policy-makers).

A number of perspectives were provided by both industry practitioners (DL champions on board DMK) and policy makers from VisitEngland in favour of the opportunities for DMOs to embrace DL and build DL capacity across their networks of member organisations but also suggested a number of perceived challenges to capitalising on these opportunities. Industry practitioners provided a critical reflection upon Phase II-derived structural and relational properties of the network in focus and visual data in light of the enactment and practice of DL and from the perspective of their sector. This cohort of also served to surface the current challenges to and opportunities for building DL capacity in relation to the case by interpreting visual network data they co-produced during Phase II.

DMK member organisations felt that there are a number of opportunities with regard to utilising DL, particularly the opportunity to bring together the majority (if not all) member organisations and involve them in strategic destination decision-making. As DL is founded on interactions, in addition to knowledge and resource exchange were seen as fundamental ingredients of the enactment and practice of DL. Within this context, industry practitioners proposed a number of considerations for other DL champions and particularly what they can do to enable, empower and involve more member organisations in DL practice. Amongst these were the importance of strengthening existing levels of interaction between member organisations and also across sectors on board DMK, referral promotion and introduction of online resources with the view to reach out to more member organisations, whilst reducing operational costs.

Among the challenges stated by industry practitioners were the fact that assuming leadership responsibilities implies a commitment, which often

involves considerable time and resources. They also discussed the existence of inherited power relations and the relatively strong influence of public sector member organisations. Industry practitioners agreed that network champions have an important role to play in further embedding DL as catalysts of developing DL across sectors on-board DMK and breaking down boundaries between corporate and non-corporate members. However, the study provided only limited insights from a practitioner point of view due to the relatively low involvement of industry practitioners in the post-SNA phase, i.e. Phase III.

The perspectives provided by policy makers from VisitEngland, on the other hand, build upon and explore the relevance of the conceptual contribution derived by Phase I data to reshaped DMOs, namely the DMO Leadership Cycle and its building blocks to contemporary DMOs in England in light of the landscape they operate in. This cohort of policy-makers were also asked to reflect upon the key challenges to and opportunities for enacting and practising DL on a DMO level and beyond (DMK's policy network) in general terms and by building upon the foundations of the DMO Leadership Cycle.

Policy makers felt that the concept of leadership can and should be more broadly embraced – both in principle and also in practice, particularly after the expectations of reshaped DMOs to lead on a wider agenda by fulfilling a wider set of economic and community objectives and the transition from purely tourism activity in favour of the wider visitor economy (see Hristov, 2015b). Policy makers however emphasised that whilst shared forms of leadership have been considered in the context of DMOs before, a more-holistic and broadly-based understanding of the DL concept may be needed. Within the context of the DMO Leadership Cycle, policy makers agreed that the building blocks of the cycle have an important role in facilitating and promoting a collaborative strategic destination decision-making in reshaped DMOs. As such, the tree building blocks of the cycle could serve as enablers to the practice of DL on a DMO level. Although policy makers highlighted a number of opportunities to embrace DL in DMOs, they also pointed to a number of challenges to building DL capacity. They discussed a number of prominent themes and considerations contributing to the challenges to the enactment and practice of DL in DMOs (covered in Chapter 4 C). Amongst these were obstacles to empowering individual DMO member organisations, considerations related to the structure of

DMOs, the provision of vision and substantial funding for the DMO and its destination.

Despite the fewer industry practitioner insights into the challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL in DMK, Phase III discussions provided important insights, which were taken into account when developing the guidelines on good leadership practice for DMOs in transition. The guidelines aim to provide a response to key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL in reshaped DMOs and contribute to the set of practitioner outputs falling under the last objective of this study. These are discussed below.

Objective E

The fifth objective of this study sought to co-construct a set of practitioner outputs having implications for DL practice in reshaped DMOs, i.e. develop a set of guidelines for good leadership practice for reshaped DMOs. These new empirical insights derived from Phase II of the adopted methodological framework supported further theory-building processes. The identification of six leader types on board DMK contributed to building on the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle and producing a revised version of it with a focus on its three enablers. The three enablers could be seen as a vehicle to create the conditions and structures to allow for DMOs to serve as DL networks:

- DMO member organisations seen as a lead network of stakeholders (DMO Leadership Cycle's Leadership dimension);
- DMOs as formal governance structures defining boundaries of the lead network (DMO Leadership Cycle's Governance dimension); and
- DMPs providing strategic vision and direction for DL (DMO Leadership Cycle's Management dimension).

The three enablers correspond to the three building blocks of the DMO Leadership Cycle, namely Leadership, Governance and Management explored in the context of DMOs.

Another important practitioner output was the Guidelines on Good Leadership Practice for DMOs in transition. Guidelines on Good Leadership Practice for DMOs were informed by Phase II insights from investigations mirroring each of the network questions following the adaptation of Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework for surfacing DL practice in networks embedded in formal organisations. The guidelines were also grounded in insights from the network investigation in Phase II and the subsequent industry practitioners and policy makers' interpretation of depictions of DL practice in Phase III. Guidelines were also informed by evidence grounded in the interplay between theory and new knowledge (abduction), which was a starting point for Phase I, which introduced the concept of the DMO Leadership Cycle. The key purpose of the guidelines was to inform future leadership practice on a DMO level in the UK; and potentially also further afield, where there is evidence of organisational change on a DMO level within shifting governance and funding landscape. Guidelines were underpinned by the three enablers of DL on a DMO level and indeed building blocks of the revised DMO Leadership Cycle. Finally, building on the leadership dimension of the cycle, revised definition of DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations was proposed to now capture more fully the distributed dimension of leadership in a DMO context.

5.2.3 The overarching aim and the extent to which this study responded to it

The overarching aim of this study was to investigate how DMOs enact and practice DL and as such, serve as leadership networks in destinations following the organisational transformation of these DMOs within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England. The five objectives discussed collectively contribute to shaping a response to the overarching aim of this study. As such, this study made a number of important contributions with the view to shape a response to the overarching aim and particularly provide evidence of how DMOs and their membership networks enact and practice DL. These are briefly discussed below. A detailed discussion

into the extent to which this study responded to the overarching aim and indeed contributed to DMO and DL theory and practice are discussed in Chapter 5.

The study provided important insights into how DMO member organisations enact DL through the strategic collaborative approach towards shaping DMK's DMP – a core DL enabler. This was followed by constructing the revisited DMO Leadership Cycle, which is underpinned by its three enablers, namely DMO member organisations seen as a lead network of stakeholders; DMOs as formal governance structures defining boundaries of the lead network; and DMPs providing strategic vision and direction for DL.

The study also provided important insights into how DMO member organisations practice DL through demonstrating the presence of at least six types of leaders on board DMK, who can be characterised with six leadership behaviours. These six leader types also have contrasting but interconnected functions, who collectively practise DL within and across different network communities which are part of the complete network of DMO member organisations. This finding made an important contribution to the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle. This shift from predominantly orthodox or 'heroic' towards shared or even distributed forms of leadership then challenges existing perceptions that strategic destination decision-making carried out by DMOs should only be a property of the privileged (often public sector bodies and prominent destination businesses), particularly in times when resources and expertise reside within the diversity of DMO member organisations, which also capture large to small scale businesses, in addition to not-for-profit and community organisations.

These contributions pointed to new dimensions of DL practice through the depth of the cross-disciplinary approach applied to the network in focus. The case captured a unique organisational context for investigation into the enactment and practice of DL, which may be translated beyond the destination and destination organisation literature as it captures diverse sectors of the economy, along with public and not-for-profit organisations in a single network, where DL is enacted and practised.

Amidst on-going debates on whether the public sector or the private sector leadership is appropriate in shaping the trajectories of destinations (Valente et al. 2015), the underpinning study provides important insights in

favour of a leadership practice, which is not simply distributed, but it is distributed across the public, private and not-for-profit sector organisations, which all, through their contrasting, but interconnected functions, play their part in shaping destination trajectories though collectively exercising strategic destination decision-making.

Evidence was also provided that leadership practice can come in all sizes and shapes and can also be embedded in sectoral and membership diversity of DMO member organisations. This diversity in leaders and surfaced leader types on board DMK demonstrates again the existence of DL practice, which spreads across sector and membership-diverse DMK member organisations, but also importantly – calls for further actions supporting the embedding of DL practice and recognition of the role of different leader types in resource-constrained DMOs, which go beyond public sector and corporate membership-associated member organisations. Despite the important contributions that this study made in shaping a response to the overarching aim, two important notes, which are discussed in detail in the section to follow, should be made:

- DL in the context of the underpinning study was not equally distributed across all DMO member organisations from all sectors and membership tiers on board DMK; and
- Although DL provides an alternative perspective to the way DMOs operate across their geographies, DL should not necessarily be perceived as a panacea to resource-constrained DMOs operating within a new funding and governance landscape.

This study provided evidence that DL practice is embedded within DMK in Phase II. However, this practice was not evenly distributed across all DMO member organisations in terms of both - the diversity of sectors on board DMK and organisations with corporate and non-corporate membership status. This is not surprising since DL, as contended by Harris et al. (2007), implies leadership practice, which is distributed over leaders, followers and their contexts. Further, as Chreim (2015) argued, the fundamental premises of DL, namely widening participation, cooperation, pooling knowledge and resources amongst others,

do not often materialise to their fullest extent. Drawing on this, one may then conclude that there is always a scope for further improvement of DL practice in networks. Similarly, a recent contribution by Volgger and Pechlaner (2015) suggested that contemporary DMOs indeed struggle with enabling a wider participation of DMO member organisations. Phase III delved deeper into these insights as it explored the challenges and opportunities to further developing DL practice across the DMO network in focus through the perspective of DMK member organisations who have demonstrated evidence of exercising DL – they are organisations within one of the six types of leaders (as per Objective D of this study).

Second, it is important to note that despite the provided evidence of the enactment and practice of DL as a response to change within DMOs, this study does not advocate that DL is the way forward nor does it contend that DL should be seen as panacea for DMOs in transition. The studied case, instead, provides an alternative perspective on how DMOs operate in a context, where resources, knowledge and power are distributed among the many and not the few or a single stakeholder, e.g. a corporate or a DMO CEO. Harris et al. (2007) emphasised that DL should not be seen as a panacea for organisations undergoing change and that DL involves a number of considerations, which should be taken into account when DL is enacted and practised within and across organisations:

“Distributed leadership is not necessarily a good or bad thing. It depends. Distributing leadership does not automatically result in organizational improvement. Much depends on the way in which leadership is distributed, how it is distributed and for what purpose.”

(Harris et al. 2007, p.345)

Within the context of Harris et al. (2007) words that DL depends on the way, in which it is distributed. Ultimately, who benefits from distributing leadership is an important question to be raised. For instance, resources may not necessary be equally distributed across the network and opportunities to have a voice in strategic leadership initiatives may not be given to all organisations within a network of DMO member organisations. This indicates that there remain a lot of

challenges in how DMOs can operationalise DL in a way that allows them to provide benefits to the majority (if not all) member organisations on board.

Nevertheless, during the 6th International Conference on Tourism by the International Association for Tourism Policy held in June 2016 in Naples, Italy, Pike (2016, p.4), who is a prominent scholar in the domain of DMO research, argued that: “DMOs are entering an era of unprecedented uncertainty about their future existence and role.” Pike highlighted that:

“There is going to be increasing pressure in the future of DMOs to achieve more with less resources, and so more research is needed on innovative best practice...there has been a lack of published research into alternative models of funding, to counter the reduction or withdrawal of government support.”

(Pike 2016, p.1-4)

This suggests that new thinking is needed, which has the potential to pave the way for alternative forms of governance in a DMO and destination landscape, where the DMO concept is still very much traditional and has not thus evolved considerably during the past two decades, particularly in light of recent funding and governance disruptions. Amidst challenges in how DMOs can operationalise DL in a way that allows them to respond to funding and governance disruptions, DL may provide opportunities to introduce alternative models of funding through pooling resources and knowledge as discussed in Phase II.

This discussion into the overarching aim and the extent to which this study responded to it, sets the scene for the next chapter. The latter provides a short discussion into contributions to DL and DMO theory and implications for DL and DMO practice, which are grounded in prominent findings discussed in chapters 4 A, B and C.

5.3 Contributions to theory and implications for practice

This section provides an in-depth discussion into contributions to DL and DMO theory and implications for DL and DMO practice which stem from this study.

Theoretical and practitioner contributions are the result of both rich insights derived from the application of the underpinning methodological framework guided by Phases I, II and III and the cross-disciplinary approach underpinning this study. Chapter 5 is grounded in recent literature contributions in the domains of DMOs and DL, which is both key characteristic of abduction interested in the interplay between existing theoretical contributions and new empirical data and also provide the basis of four discussion sections into this study's contributions to theory and implications for practice. The four key sections provide a discussion on how the outcomes of this study build, respectively, on the existing state of a) the mainstream literature on leadership and its distributed dimension; b) the DL literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations; c) the mainstream leadership practice and the application of DL in particular; and d) the DMO and destination leadership practice and the application of DL in the context of DMOs and destinations in particular.

5.3.1 Contributions to DL theory

This section provides a discussion on how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the mainstream literature on leadership and its distributed dimension through the adoption of a cross-disciplinary approach and the identification of DL behaviours and roles within DL networks.

5.3.1.1 The adoption of a cross-disciplinary approach: DL and SNA in investigating the enactment of DL

Two of the pioneers in the field of leadership (see Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino 2016) called for fusing the concepts of DL and SNA, i.e. the adoption of network approaches to investigate the enactment and practice of leadership, which is networked, distributed amongst entities and grounded in interactions. They went on to propose eight topical areas for further enquiry into the leadership concept and its distributed dimension aimed at advancing the current body of literature on DL. Within the context of fusing the

concepts of DL and SNA, this study contributed to three of the eight topical areas as discussed in Chapter 2 B, namely:

- Introducing advances in the measurement of DL;
- Visualising the sharing of leadership roles by members of a collective, network, or system; and
- The development, illustration, and application of new research methodologies for studying leadership and its distributed dimension (Cullen and Yammarino 2014).

The study then contributes to the current body of mainstream DL literature by the adoption of a cross-disciplinary approach. The approach that this study has taken in order to respond to three of the eight topical areas proposed by Cullen and Yammarino's (2014) is discussed below.

Introducing advances in the measurement of DL

The methodological approach adopted in this investigation was in line with Cullen and Yammarino's (2014) call for introducing advances in the measurement of DL. As such, it advances current knowledge in measuring processes and practices in the enactment of DL by adopting a cross-disciplinary methodology and investigation in situ, i.e. in the context of DMOs. In line with bringing cross-disciplinarity to the fore through fusing the concepts of DL and SNA, this study introduced advances in existing research approaches aimed at the measurement of DL. This was achieved through adapting Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework from the general management and leadership literature, whilst also drawing on an investigation which is predominantly grounded in visual network data through the popular visually-driven network tool Gephi (Cherven 2015). The latter approach complemented Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework and facilitated the production of a series of network visualisations grounded in structural and relational properties of the network in focus. Network depictions were aimed at visualising the enactment and practice

of DL in DMK through uncovering different types of leaders and leadership behaviours within the network in focus.

Visualising the sharing of leadership roles by members of a collective, network, or system

Not only did this study bring to light empirical evidence into the sharing of leadership roles within a leadership network, but it also provided insights into how leadership roles have been distributed across members of a network by fusing the concepts of DL and SNA. In so doing, the study provided a classification of leaders within a DMO through the identification of six leader types demonstrating six DL behaviours. Further, the study explored how this distribution of leadership roles is practised within the context of both network communication and developmental resource exchange – both being among the principles and defining features of DL (see Harris 2005; Spillane 2006) by using valued SNA data in these two directions. This approach is seen as advancement into the visualisation of both the distribution of leadership across all members in the networks and DL behaviour of individual DMO member organisations. As such, the network data provided is rich in nature and goes beyond the traditional ‘who connects to whom’ approach of visualising SNA data to capture the depth of established relationships and influence of resource exchange processes over individual member organisations. The identification of a collective of resource-empowered leaders is one such example of the contribution of the adopted visual approach.

Further, the study used a simplified approach to visualising the sharing of leadership roles by members of the network leading to a more practitioner-friendly depiction of network data, and thus moving the focus away from traditional tools with focus on statistical data tables and simple visual representations of network data, e.g. UCINET and NetDraw. Network visualisations are a defining feature of the SNA approach and as such, they play a substantial role in fuelling theory-building processes (Conway 2014). Indeed, new insights into investigated matters can emerge through manipulating and further examining network depictions (Conway and Steward

1998; Moody et al. 2005) as in the case of this study.

The development, illustration, and application of new research methodologies for studying leadership and its distributed dimension

By building on a recent mainstream organisational leadership literature approach (Hoppe and Reinelt 2010), the underpinning study introduced and put into practice a three-phase, mixed-method-driven methodological framework (Hristov and Ramkissoon 2016). The framework was aimed at surfacing DL practice in DMOs by fusing the concepts of DL and SNA, which recognised the prospects for the enactment and practice of DL within DMOs in transition. The development of a comprehensive methodological framework (see Chapter 3), which involved three phases of data collection and a continuous 18 month involvement with empirical evidence sets the scene for a new approach to studying leadership and its distributed dimension. The application of the underpinning methodological framework allowed for taking an interdisciplinary approach by fusing Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) framework from the mainstream leadership literature, DL theory (see Gibb 1954) and network theory (see Freeman 2004; Moreno 1934; Wassermann and Faust 1994) with the domain of destinations and DMOs.

5.3.1.2 *The identification of DL behaviours and roles within DL networks*

The discourse on DL to date has been predominantly on the *whats* of DL, i.e. DL as an alternative to 'heroic' leadership with an emphasis on the fact that leadership roles and tasks, along with knowledge and resources, have been distributed across teams and networked organisations (see Cullen and Yammarino 2014; Cullen-Lester and Yammarino 2016). This study however built on the *whats* to uncover the *whys* and *hows* of the distribution of leadership. As Harris and Spillane (2008) contend, current empirical evidence into how leadership is distributed is a rather uncharted territory. This opportunity was approached by examining roles and behaviours of diverse by sector and

membership leaders within a network resulting in the identification of six interconnected types of DL which demonstrate six leadership behaviours. A detailed discussion into the role and functions of the DMO leadership nexus of organisations, which involved six leader types, was covered in Chapter 4 C. This DMO leadership nexus serves as an enabler of DL on a DMO level as discussed in Chapter 4 C as part of the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited section.

The process of identifying DL roles and behaviours has also been covered in discussions throughout chapters 4 B and C surfacing the presence of both formal and informal leaders, i.e. established and emergent leaders; in addition to multiple levels of involvement in decision-making. As Cullen et al. (2012) contended, approaches that utilize networks as a means of leveraging leadership and its distributed dimension are only beginning to emerge. Current evidence from the DL literature in conceptualising DL leaders and leadership behaviours through networks is scarce (Hope and Reinelt 2010) and this study builds on this evidence.

5.3.2 Contributions to DMO theory

This section provides a discussion on how the outcomes of this study builds on the existing state of the DL literature in the domain of DMOs and destinations through providing new definitions and building upon the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle.

5.3.2.1 DMO Leadership Cycle and its theoretical dimensions: towards embracing leadership on a DMO level

The DMO Leadership Cycle, which builds on three prominent organisational literature domains, namely management, governance and leadership, can be seen as a framework for practising DL on a DMO level. Attempts to conceptualise the three organisational literature domains within the context of DMOs were initially discussed in Chapter 2 B and also in a contribution by

Hristov and Zehrer (2015). Building on this initial contribution discussed in Chapter 2 B and the subsequent Phase II and III empirical data, the study further conceptualised the three prominent organisational literature domains by introducing the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited. As such, the study contributed to the current knowledge into the above organisational literature domains in the context of DMOs through introducing the DMO Leadership Cycle (see Chapter 2 B) and by further conceptualisation, which was reflected in the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited (see Chapter 4 C).

5.3.2.2 New definitions: DMOs serving as leadership and DL networks

No definitions of DMOs serving as leadership networks have been proposed to date (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). This study has proposed indicative definitions of both DMOs serving as leadership networks and DMOs serving as DL networks. The former was a product of the interplay between Phase I empirical data and existing theoretical contributions, the latter one was derived through fusing Phase II network data and interview data from Phase III. The DMO Leadership Cycle was predominantly focused on *what* – i.e. what would one understand by DMOs operating as leadership networks in destinations. The DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited indicated the progress of the DL concept in a DMO context and defined the three building blocks and enablers of DL when applied in a DMO context. The study thus expanded on the leadership dimension of the initially proposed DMO Leadership Cycle.

Hence, in addition to *what* in the DMO Leadership Cycle, by building on the leadership dimension, the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited added a *how* dimension. This is a key contrasting feature of the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited as it demonstrates *how* leadership is distributed across sectorally diverse, both formal and informal leaders in the network of DMK member organisations.

5.3.2.3 Building upon the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle

Boards of directors formed of predominantly founding or corporate members, CEOs (Beritelli 2011b; Beritelli and Laesser 2014) or even 'elite' networks (see Beritelli et al. 2015b) have traditionally been seen as leaders on board DMOs. By building on the leadership dimension of the DMO Leadership Cycle and the identification of six leader types and six leadership behaviours representing both formal and informal leaders, this study expands on and provides an alternative perspective to this traditional conceptualisation of leadership on a DMO level.

Discussing the concept of leadership and its distributed dimension, although rarely researched, is not a completely new concept in the literature of DMOs and destinations. It has been covered on a few occasions albeit insufficiently (see Benson and Blackman 2011; Kozak et al. 2014). However, this study built upon these previous contributions by carrying out an investigation into the conceptualisation and operationalisation of DL in the context of DMOs, which yielded a number of contrasting leadership behaviours. As such, the study advances the existing knowledge on DL in a DMO context.

This contribution to the leadership dimension of the cycle also found that the roles of different DMO leader types in fact complement each other as different leaders on board DMK have different DL roles within the complete network regardless of their attachment to particular sectors and membership tiers. This is an important contribution as the uncovered network of DMO leaders, as discussed in Chapter 4 C, holds an important role in potentially creating conditions and structures necessary for DL to flourish in contemporary DMOs, e.g. empowering non-leaders, providing strategic collective vision.

5.3.3 Implications for DL practice

This section provides a discussion on how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the mainstream leadership practice and the application of DL in particular through the provision of practitioner DL insights beyond traditional fields of application, the use of case that involves membership and

sectorally-diverse organisations, and the provision of evidence of how leadership is distributed in situ.

5.3.3.1 Practitioner insights of an investigation in situ beyond traditional fields of application

This study provides a contrasting perspective into the enactment and practice of DL and indeed sheds light on evidence in situ, which goes beyond traditional fields of application of leadership and its distributed dimension, such as Further and Higher Education (see Bolden et al. 2009; Harris 2008; Tian et al. 2015) and Healthcare and Clinical research (see Fitzgerald et al. 2013). Within this context, evidence of investigations surfacing DL practice in leadership networks beyond traditional fields and involving a diverse set of organisations representing the public, private and not-for-profit sectors is thin (see Hristov and Scott 2016) and this study has unfolded such case. In so doing, the study advances current understanding of the enactment and practice of DL, which extends beyond traditional fields of application, such as the ones discussed above.

5.3.3.2 Investigation in situ involving a collective of membership status and sectorally-diverse organisations

The study involved an investigation into a network of seventy DMO member organisations representing nine sectors and two membership tiers. Current organisational research into the concept of DL has been located predominantly in the public sector (see Harris 2008; Tian et al. 2015; Fitzgerald et al. 2013). The DL concept has also been recognised by the private sector to a lesser extent (see Nonaka and Toyama 2002; Teece 2007). However, no contributions exist to date to explain how DL is enacted and practised within a network of public, private and not-for-profit organisations representing a number of key sectors of the economy and contrasting membership tiers, i.e. sectorally diverse formal and informal leaders.

The novel contribution of this study then lies in its investigation into the enactment and practice of DL in a DMO context by taking a cross-disciplinary

approach and involving simultaneously formal leaders (founding DMK members) and informal (non-corporate DMK members) leaders representing organisations from the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. Hence the study provided practitioner insights into a diverse network, which have not been subject to investigation in the fields of DL and DMOs to date.

5.3.3.3 How leadership is distributed in practice: six types of leaders and three enablers

From practitioners' perspective, the identification of six leader types and six leadership behaviours provided important contribution into how leadership has been distributed in situ. Cullen and Yammarino (2014) called for further enquiry into processes and practices of sharing of leadership roles by members of a network. This study recognised the role and functions of the DMO leadership nexus of organisations, which involved six contrasting, but interconnected leader types. Within this context, the study also builds on Small and Rentsch's (2010) call for further enquiry into the distribution of contrasting leadership behaviours and indeed provides evidence of operationalising and contextualising DL.

As the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited suggested in Chapter 4 C, the wider set of enablers – namely DMO member organisations seen as a lead network of stakeholders, DMOs as formal governance structures defining boundaries of the lead network and DMPs providing strategic vision and direction for DL in DMOs – were also central to facilitating the distribution of leadership. This wider set of enablers also contributed to the current understanding on how DL is distributed across a network (Cullen and Yammarino 2014) by serving as a vehicle to create the conditions and structures providing opportunities for DL to flourish.

5.3.4 Implications for DMO practice

This section provides a discussion on how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the DMO and destination leadership practice and the

application of DL in the context of DMOs and destinations in particular through providing a conceptual model on how DMOs can serve as DL networks, the development of a methodological framework for the identification of DL in DMOs, and the introduction of guidelines on good leadership practice for DMOs.

5.3.4.1 Shifting the focus from marketing and management to leadership and its distributed dimension

Within the new funding and governance landscape for DMOs and destinations in England, reshaped DMOs are expected to deliver well beyond traditional activities related to marketing and promotion of destinations with little or no support from the public sector (Coles et al. 2014). The question arising is then not concerned with whether DMOs should follow a predominantly marketing or management approach to their current vision, mission and strategic operations. Instead, the dominant question is finding an approach, which can fit restructured DMOs that are expected to take the lead in strategic destination decision-making initiatives (Hristov and Zehrer 2015). As the three discussions of findings pointed out, DL provides an alternative perspective into framing how contemporary DMOs' vision, mission and strategic operations are constructed. This is in contrast to conventional theories of heroic leadership and power or destination and DMO-specific theories related to destination marketing and management.

A number of recent academic contributions in the domains of destinations and destination organisations (i.e. DMOs) emphasised the rising importance of considering alternative approaches to existing DMO and destination governance models within a new policy and funding landscape (Laesser and Beritelli 2013; Reinhold et al. 2015) and the opportunities presented by shared forms of leadership, such as DL (Hristov and Zehrer 2015; Kennedy and Augustyn 2014; Kozak et al. 2014; Valente et al. 2015). Taking a DL approach may well provide answers to this question facing resource-constrained DMOs, where a collective (if not all) of member organisations are given the opportunity to play their part in strategic destination decision-making. This has been demonstrated throughout this study by investigating the

enactment and practice of DL in DMK. Phase II insights provided evidence that DL developing on a DMO level is grounded in sectoral diversity and as such, it calls for wider recognition of the destination resources, expertise and knowledge available across all DMO member organisations and acknowledging their collective strength in strategic destination decision-making.

Both academia and practice are also signalling this major shift into the vision, mission and strategic operations of DMOs and evidence of this has been captured in two important recent events. The first one is the first-ever special issue on leadership in destination and DMO research in *Tourism Review* (see Kozak et al. 2014; Pechlaner et al. 2014). The second one is the 2nd Biennial Forum Advances in Destination Management St Gallen (see Reinhold et al. 2015). The response from the mainstream leadership literature has been the one provided by Cullen and Yammarino (2014) in *The Leadership Quarterly*.

5.3.4.2 The DMO Leadership Cycle and its practitioner dimensions – how DMOs can serve as DL networks

Valente et al. (2015) called for the adoption of DL practice in destination governance structures, i.e. across lead destination organisations such as DMOs. However, no studies to date have investigated how such DL models are enacted and DL practice nurtured across DMOs. This study aimed to provide such insights, which can potentially benefit destination and DMO practice. The study involves theorising on DL in DMOs and yielded three enablers and six leader types reflected in the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited. The DMO Leadership Cycle and its practitioner dimensions explain how DMOs in transition could serve as DL networks (see Figure 4.C.1). Chapter 4 C suggested that the cycle is founded on three enablers, which along with the six leader types demonstrating six leadership behaviours serve as a vehicle to create the conditions and structures necessary for DL to flourish in contemporary DMOs:

- DMO member organisations seen as a lead network of stakeholders;
- DMOs as formal governance structures; and
- DMPs providing strategic vision and direction for DL.

They can also be called practitioner dimensions as the three enablers explain how reshaped DMOs can serve as DL networks and potentially influence practice. The challenge of how new theoretical knowledge can be translated into practice, i.e. producing impactful research has well been recognised by both academia and practice (Carr 1980; Scott et al. 2008b). The cycle provides an easy-to-understand framework and unlocks further discussions and debates into its practical implications.

5.3.4.3 The development of a methodological framework for the identification of DL in DMOs

If the DMO Leadership Cycle Revisited is seen as a framework for practising DL on a DMO level, the methodological framework adopted in this study, could potentially serve to identify DL practice, including different types of leaders on board DMOs. The framework may provide practitioner insights related to leaders, who may have not previously been identified as such, but who may, nevertheless, serve a leadership function in the network.

A key defining feature of the methodological framework, one that has the potential to inform future leadership practice, is its three phases. The framework allows for an initial immersion in the organisation and its context throughout Phase I and prior to undertaking a full network study (Hristov and Ramkissoon 2016). A comprehensive network-driven study during Phase II was aimed at unfolding a DMO's network communication and developmental resource exchange in addition to constructing DMO's leadership network. This was then followed by a post-network engagement, where Phase II participants took part in the co-production of knowledge under phase III by interpreting visual network data. Phase II participants therefore had the opportunity to identify key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL, which could in turn inform future leadership practice. The proposed methodological framework is aimed at DMO practitioners, as it provides the opportunity to study complete networks of DMO member organisations with the view to facilitate the distribution of vital destination resources, communication of destination and DMO vision, and the distribution of strategic destination decision-making.

5.3.4.4 Guidelines on good leadership practice for DMOs

Building on the rich empirical evidence in situ throughout the three phases of data collection of the adopted methodological framework, this study proposed a set of guidelines on good leadership practice for DMOs and their strategic network of member organisations (see Section 4.7.2.C in Chapter 4 C). OECD (2013) emphasised the limited availability of tools across the sector to address the significant rise in interconnectedness and complexities of the DMO and destination domain. The proposed guidelines can be beneficial to other DMOs operating under similar conditions. Hence, they provide practitioner perspectives into the opportunities to harness DL in DMOs. Guidelines on good leadership practice are based around the three enablers, namely lead networks of DMO member organisations, DMOs as formal governance structures and DMPs providing strategic vision and direction for DL, which together served to create the conditions and structures necessary for DL to be put into practice.

The primary purpose of the guidelines for DMOs is then to inform future leadership practice on a DMO level in the UK, and potentially also further afield, e.g. in other countries where there is evidence of organisational change in a DMO context. The latter implies organisations and contexts where a shift from a traditional public sector leadership in DMOs towards private sector leadership in DMOs are evident. The identified guidelines may be able to support this transition of DMOs in England and beyond. These trends have also been evident in other countries (Reinhold et al. 2015).

5.3.5 List of publications

A list of published work and work in review related to this study, which has been conducted by the researcher is provided in Appendix 7.

5.4 Limitations and avenues for further research

This final section provides a critical perspective of and is grounded in the quality of outcomes of the applied methodological framework and the richness of the resultant data within the context of the overarching purpose and objectives of this study. The chapter begins by providing a short discussion of methodological limitations, particularly the ones related to the network data sample and quality. This is followed by a discussion of the limitations with regard to the study findings, in two directions, namely limitations with regard to study findings of DMK's complete network of member organisations and limitations with regard to study findings of DMK's wider policy network. The chapter continues with a discussion of key themes warranting further attention by both academia and practice and as such, it includes a number of proposed investigations into the relevance of DL to DMOs, the provision of longitudinal insights on how DL is enacted and practised on a DMO level, undertaking a cross-case comparison of DMOs adopting DL, carrying out a fuller and more detailed post-SNA study with DMO member organisations, investigations into the role of network champions in promoting DL on a DMO level, and research into further advances in visualising the enactment and practice of DL in DMOs.

5.4.1 Study limitations

5.4.1.1 Methodological limitations

Within the context of methodological limitations, key themes discussed in this chapter include those concerning the achieved network data sample and the quality of the network data used in Phase II, in addition to matters concerning the quality of data collected as part of the post-SNA study or Phase III.

Network Data Sample (Phase II)

In a recent paper, Beritelli et al. (2015b) argued that even an achieved sample of 50% can provide trustworthy and representative results as long as the network boundaries are specified as in the case of this study. Beritelli et al.'s (2015b) statement was supported by an earlier in-depth network data validity enquiry undertaken by Costenbader and Valente (2003) – two of the pioneers in network research. A detailed discussion of this matter was provided in Chapter 3. Nevertheless, this study acknowledges the fact that despite Costenbader and Valente (2003) accepting that 50% response rate can provide trustworthy and representative network data, a more accurate picture of how DL is enacted and practised on a network level would have been achieved by conducting a study with a response rate, which is higher than the one achieved in this study, which is 57%. As Conway (2014) suggested, any response rate below 100% represents a risk of omitting important network information.

Network Data Quality

This study collected both binary (by definition) and valued (where possible) data. The former is focused on the presence or absence of a link between two nodes, the latter is aimed at depicting the strength, impact or role of the link over the sending or receiving node. All Phase II participants were given the opportunity to draw the parameters of their relationship with selected nodes, in this case to state the frequency of communication with or the impact of acquiring developmental resources from other DMK member organisations using a five-point Likert scale. However, some network survey respondents preferred not to do so. Providing that some of the respondents have not provided details on the frequency of communication with or the impact of acquiring developmental resources from other DMK member organisations, this study assumed that the value of this relationship has been 1, i.e. impact stated as little to none. The study has therefore given a value of 1 on a 5 point Likert scale to demonstrate that a link between any given pair of DMK member organisations exist as confirmed by network survey respondents during

question one. Appendix 2e provides a detailed discussion of the approach, which has been taken to treat incomplete Phase II network data prior to undertaking any network analysis.

Post-SNA Study (Phase III) Data Quality

In order to build upon SNA-driven Phase II insights and get a nuanced and deeper understanding of current processes and practices, including the challenges and opportunities related to the enactment of DL across the membership network of DMK, the approach involved a diversity sample (see Chapter 3) of Phase II-identified champions. Those were representatives of industry practitioners, i.e. senior individuals behind DMK member organisations. As outlined in the methodology, the intention of Phase III industry practitioners was to cover a total of 15 organisations on board DMK. However, the achieved response rate was only 20% and thus covered only three sectors (namely Conferences and Events, Hospitality and Transportation) and three types of leaders identified during Phase II (Resource-empowered leaders, Emergent leaders and Network In-community leaders) being members of DMK. The two main reasons for the achieved response rate were change of posts and retirement of individuals who participated in Phase III: Industry Practitioners.

5.4.1.2 Limitations in relation to study findings: What remains uncovered

Within the context of study findings limitations, key themes discussed include those concerning the quality of findings related to DMK's network of member organisations adopting a complete-network approach, in addition to findings related to DMK's wider policy network, where the latter adopted an ego-network approach.

Overarching Findings Related to DMK's Network of Member Organisations

Undertaking an SNA study in organisations is a challenging task (Conway 2014) and DMOs are not an exception as demonstrated by outcomes of this study. The achieved response rate (i.e. 57%), despite providing credible outcomes (see Costenbader and Valente, 2003), is based on the survey questionnaire administered during Phase II and covered 40 out of a total of 70 DMK member organisations within the complete membership network. The study has therefore been unable to explore the leadership behaviour of the other 43%, due to the 30 DMK member organisations, who did not provide a response to Phase II SNA study. Thus, the six leader types on board DMK and their contrasting network leadership behaviours is the first step towards theory-building aimed at DL roles in DMOs. There may well be more leader types and leadership behaviours depending on DMOs and their operational contexts. Hence, the resultant outcomes of the applied methodology and discussions may not draw a comprehensive list of leader types and leadership behaviours as the list as it stands applies to the organisation and its operational context studied as part of this research. Lastly, this study was unable to deliver both deeper and also longitudinal investigation into how leadership champions collectively act as an enabler and facilitate the enactment and practice of DL, which would have required additional and considerable time and resources.

Overarching Findings Related to DMK's Wider Policy Network

The policy network investigation provided important longitudinal data into how DMK's policy network evolved post the introduction of the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* to provide opportunities for the enactment of DL through the inclusion of emergent leaders beyond traditional public sector leadership. However, due to the adopted ego network approach, as opposed to a complete network approach, i.e. by means of census, the study was unable to provide a complete picture of how DL is enacted and practised in the wider policy network from the perspective of all identified policy network members. This is despite the fact that evidence of a strategic leadership partnership between DMK and SEMLEP, both being members of DMK's wider policy network, was discussed by SEMLEP's CEO during Phase III. Then, DMK was not explored as a

complete network and by means of census due to time and resource constraints, hence why this study adopted an ego network-approach to study the external DMK network and as such, some actors may have been omitted. Nevertheless, empirical evidence (see VEG discussion in Chapter 4 A) suggests that this network is of equal importance to DMK and therefore deserves further attention.

Formulation of a Response to DL Challenges and Opportunities

The limited input from industry practitioners during Phase III of the adopted methodological framework did not allow for sufficiently responding to Objective D. Objective D was aimed at formulating a response to key challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL in reshaped DMOs and surface approaches to respectively mitigate or capitalise on these.

5.4.2 Avenues for future research

Within the context of avenues for future research, key themes deserving further attention by both academia and practice include proposed investigations into the relevance of DL to DMOs, the provision of longitudinal insights on how DL is enacted and practised on a DMO level, undertaking a cross-case comparison of DMOs adopting DL, carrying out a fuller and more detailed post-SNA study with DMO member organisations, investigations into the role of network champions in promoting DL on a DMO level, and research into further advances in visualising the enactment and practice of DL in DMOs. These are discussed in detail below.

In light of the above limitations, the purpose of this section is to provide some potential avenues for further research into DL in the domain of DMOs and destinations. As such, the following list is not indicative, nor complete, i.e. all-encompassing. The proposed avenues for future research are grounded in key findings from the study. They also draw on current calls from the literature

representing the core subject disciplines fused in this study, namely leadership and its distributed dimension, SNA and network theory, and DMOs and destinations research. Within the context of the study findings' limitations, avenues for further research cover the areas of DL's relevance to contemporary DMOs, the potential for advancing current knowledge through adopting a longitudinal approach, cross-case comparison of DL enactment and practice in DMOs, using network visualisations as a means of understanding LD processes and practices, introducing advances in visualising the enactment and practice of DL. These are discussed in detail below.

5.4.2.1 DL's relevance to contemporary DMOs: Is DL a panacea for reshaped DMOs?

As discussed in the conclusion, although DL provides an alternative perspective to the way DMOs operate across their geographies, DL should not necessarily be perceived as a panacea to resource-constrained DMOs undergoing change. Harris et al. (2007) argued that DL provides an alternative response to orthodox leadership theorising, but may not necessarily serve as a panacea for organisations undergoing change (Harris et al. 2007). Inevitably DL involves a number of considerations, which should be taken on board when DL is enacted and practised. There is a need for a deeper investigation into how leadership champions collectively act as an enabler and facilitate the enactment and practice of DL in organisations and networks undergoing change influenced by their operational contexts and most importantly, assess DL's long-term relevance to and impact on reshaped DMOs to strengthen the credibility and relevance of the theory to real-world organisations.

Within this context, investigation into the outcomes of the enactment and practice of DL in networks would benefit academia. Future research of particular importance should be directed at investigating whether DL leads to an improvement of the work of reshaped DMOs. This investigation has not been covered by this study due to time and resource constraints. Hence, further enquiry into the enactment and practice of DL in DMOs and beyond, which also has both in-depth and longitudinal dimensions, is needed.

5.4.2.2 Longitudinal insights on how DL is enacted, practised and influenced in DMOs

In the general leadership literature, the fluid and interchangeable nature of DL was also pointed out by Harris (2008) as one of the dominant principles of DL. However, the opportunity to provide important longitudinal insights was only partially addressed in this study (when investigating DMK's policy network in Phase II). The fluid and interchangeable nature of DL may then be investigated through the adoption of a fuller longitudinal approach to the complete network in focus involving all DMO member organisations (in the case of DMOs with clear boundaries). The destination and DMO literature also provided contributions of and positioned calls in favour of adopting longitudinal methodologies in studying strategic destination decision-making in DMOs and destinations (see Beritelli 2011a; Pavlovich 2003, 2014). However, these calls have not, explicitly, made a reference to studying DL in a DMO and destination context. These insights can contribute to shaping a response which tracks the progress and impact of the enactment and practice of DL both on a DMO level and for individual DMO member organisations.

5.4.2.3 Cross-case comparison of DMOs adopting a DL approach

Conducting an investigation which involves a cross-case comparison can potentially yield further important insights with regard to how DL is enacted and practised in different DMO contexts and across geographies. As such, this approach can enable the scholarly community to compare and contrast the enactment and practice of DL across DMO structures and their operational contexts. A cross-case comparison of DMOs adopting a DL approach is also likely to identify other potential leader types and network leadership behaviours beyond the six types of leaders identified in this study. Indeed, Small and Rentsch (2010) called for further research into the distribution of contrasting leadership behaviours and operationalising DL, and although this study addressed this call to an extent, there is clearly further scope for research in this direction. Conducting a cross-case comparison can also shed light on different

DMO approaches to restructuring their organisations as a response to government expectations to adopt a more inclusive leadership role, which may or may not necessarily be linked to DL.

5.4.2.4 Post-SNA Network Engagement: Network visualisations as a means of understanding DL processes and practices

This avenue builds upon the limited empirical data derived during Phase III: Industry Practitioners, where the purpose of this phase was to uncover the challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL from the perspective of industry practitioners representing diverse DMK member organisations. One way to approach this opportunity is through the use of network depictions as a means of encouraging further discussions and the production of new knowledge. As contended by Biddex and Park (2008), network depictions are often used as part of the data collection process as a way of interacting with respondents. Network depictions stimulate people to tell the story behind the depiction (Hoppe and Reinelt (2010).

With regards to the post-SNA data quality issue discussed above, further research should look into successfully adopting a complete diversity sample – one which includes the majority (if not all) leadership champion types identified during Phase II. A diversity sample which is successfully put into practice is then likely to yield further important insights into the challenges to and opportunities for the enactment and practice of DL by different sectors of the economy, contrasting membership tiers and leader types on-board DMOs.

5.4.2.5 The role of network champions in promoting DL

Gibb (1954), the initiator of DL, argued that leadership behaviours involving setting direction and aligning resources, rarely reside with only one individual, particularly in times of change as is the case with reshaped DMOs in England. Building on this, Buchanan et al. (2007) suggested that network champions and the interplay between them could be seen as an important vehicle to the enactment and promotion of DL across networks and organisations. This calls

for recognition of the importance of leadership champions as a reflection of the distributed dimension of leadership in order to further promote DL across the complete DMO network. The collective of leadership champions uncovered within each of the six cohorts of leaders provides an opportunity for leadership champions to support the enactment and practice of DL further across the network. Hence further enquiry into the role of network champions in embedding DL practice across the complete network of DMO member organisations is encouraged.

5.4.2.6 Advances in the visualisation of processes and practices related to DL

Cullen and Yammarino (2014) called for the need to introduce novel insights into the illustration of methodologies for studying leadership and its networked or distributed dimension. This study makes progress into visualising processes and practices related to DL in networked organisations on board a DMO by introducing and putting into practice a visually-driven framework, and as such, respond to their call.

However, a much more in-depth response is needed – one which is grounded in visual network analytics. It should strive to incorporate advances in visualising and simplifying DL development processes and practices as per Cullen and Yammarino's (2014) call. An approach which turns complex scientific numbers into simplified depictions, which are understandable and address the world of practice, presents an exciting, but still largely challenging avenue for further research. Importantly, network visualisations play a substantial role in fuelling the process of theory building – new insights into investigated matters can emerge through scrutinising network depictions (Conway and Steward 1998; Moody et al. 2005).

5.5 Chapter conclusion

The first section of this concluding chapter provided a focused discussion of key findings, which are grounded in findings from the adopted methodological

framework. The purpose of the latter was to provide a response to the overarching aim and five objectives outlined at the beginning of this study. By providing a focused discussion of key findings, which cover the A, B, C, D, E journey, the chapter discussed key study findings in light of the overarching study aim and related objectives in a chronological fashion. The overarching study aim was then revised and the extent, to which this overarching aim has been addressed within the context of the study findings, was discussed. This focused discussion sets the scene for the following chapter, namely contributions to theory and implications for practice.

The second section of this concluding chapter provided a discussion of a number of key DL and DMO contributions to theory and implications for DL and DMO practice, which build on rich findings from this study. The first discussion in this section expanded on how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the mainstream literature on leadership and its distributed dimension through the adoption of a cross-disciplinary approach by fusing DL and SNA in investigating the enactment and practice of DL and the identification of DL behaviours and roles within DL networks.

The second discussion explored how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the literature on DL in the domain of DMOs and destinations through the development of the DMO Leadership Cycle and its theoretical dimensions, building on its leadership dimension, and the introduction of two new definitions, namely DMOs serving as leadership networks and DMOs serving as DL networks.

The third discussion examined how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the mainstream leadership practice and the application of the DL paradigm, in particular through providing practitioner insights from an investigation in situ beyond traditional contexts of application – one, which involves a collective of membership status and sectorally diverse organisations. This section also discussed how the study contributed to current understanding of how leadership is distributed in practice.

The final discussion covered how the outcomes of this study build on the existing state of the DMO and destination leadership practice and the application of the DL paradigm in the context of DMOs and destinations in particular through shifting the focus from marketing and management to

leadership and its distributed dimension, depicting how DMOs can serve as DL networks through the DMO Leadership Cycle, and the development of a methodological framework for the identification of DL in DMOs and guidelines on good leadership practice for DMOs in transition.

The third and final section of this chapter began by providing a focused discussion of key methodological limitations and particularly, key ones related to the achieved network data sample and quality. These included limitations related to overall network data quality, network data sample during Phase II and Phase III network data quality. This was then followed by a discussion of key limitations with regard to the study findings, in two directions. Firstly, limitations with regard to the study findings of DMK's network of member organisations and secondly, limitations with regard to the study findings of DMK's policy network.

The section continued with a number of discussions aimed at key themes, which warrant further attention by both academia and practice. As such, it included proposed investigations into the relevance of DL to DMOs, the provision of longitudinal insights on how DL is enacted and practised on a DMO level, and undertaking a cross-case comparison of DMOs adopting DL, amongst other proposed investigations.

Section V consisted of Chapter 5, which provided three interconnected discussions aimed at study conclusions, contributions to theory and implications for practice, and study limitations and avenues for further research. Chapter 5 provided a concluding discussion to this study and as such it highlighted key findings, which stem from the five objectives introduced at the outset of Chapter 1. Building on this initial discussion, Chapter 5 revisited the overarching study aim and discussed the extent to which the aim has been addressed in the context of prominent study findings. Building on this first chapter section, Chapter 5 provided a discussion of study contributions to DMO and DL theory and implications for DMO and DL practice, which result from the application of the mixed-method, three-phase methodological framework. The last chapter section provided a discussion of key limitations related to the applied methodology and limitations with regard to research findings before introducing key research themes, which require further attention by both academia and practice.

Section VI

References

Section VI provides a list of the core cross-disciplinary literature, which contributed to establishing a broad theoretical framework and informed the interplay between existing theoretical contributions and new empirical findings throughout all study chapters.

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Section VI provided a list of the core cross-disciplinary literature, which contributed to establishing a broad theoretical framework and informed the interplay between existing theoretical contributions and new empirical findings throughout all study chapters.

Section VII

Appendices

Section VII consists of seven appendices. Appendix 1 provides a complete list of DMK member organisations and target individuals. Appendix 2 (a-l) provides an overview of all methodological tools used as part of Phase I, Phase II and Phase III including copies of introductory and consent letters. Appendix 3 (a-d) has its focus on Phase I findings discussed in Chapter 4 A and provides a summary of achieved sample, along with policy network analysis and sample interviews. Appendix 4 has its focus on Phase II findings discussed in Chapter 4 B and provides tables with descriptive statistics drawing on results from the applied network measures highlighted on Figure 4.B.1. Appendix 5 has its focus on Phase III findings discussed in Chapter 4 C and includes a sample self-reflective practitioner questionnaire and sample interview with a policy maker from VisitEngland. Appendix 6 provides a visual, process-driven representation of the overarching study framework. Appendix 7 provides a list of publications and papers in review, which stem from this doctoral study and have either been already published or undergoing a review process.

APPENDIX 1. Phase II Complete DMK Membership Network Roster

Sector of the Economy	Organisation	Target Person
Attractions and Activities	360 Play	Managing Director
Retail and Services	4fx Design and Multimedia	Director
Hospitality Sector	Abbey Hill Hotel (Mercure Hotels)	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Billy One Horn Vintage Caravans	Manager
Not-for-Profit	Bletchley Park Trust	CEO
Retail and Services	Briteyellow Ltd	Chief Executive Officer
Evening Economy (Food and Wine)	Calcutta Brasserie	General Manager
Evening Economy (Food and Wine)	Carluccio's	CEO
Hospitality Sector	City Apartments	Director
Retail and Services	CMK MK Cows	Director
Not-for-Profit	Community Action: MK	Director
Transportation	Cranfield Airport	General Manager
Conferences and Events	Cranfield Management Development Centre	Manager
Hospitality Sector	Culture Vultures	CEO
Conferences and Events	DeVere Harben	General Manager
Conferences and Events	Events in Business Ltd	Director
Attractions and Activities	Experience the Country	Operations Manager
Hospitality Sector	Flitwick Manor Hotel (Menzies)	General Manager
Attractions and Activities	Gulliver's Land	Managing Director
Hospitality Sector	Hilton Worldwide MK	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Harwood House (Principal Hayley Hotels)	General Manager
Retail and Services	Heald Solicitors	Senior Partner
Hospitality Sector	Holiday Inn Express	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Holiday Inn MK	General Manager
Attractions and Activities	InterMK Ltd (MK Dons FC and MK Stadium)	CEO
Not-for-Profit	Invest Milton Keynes	Business Engagement Manager
Retail and Services	i-print mk	Director
Hospitality Sector	Jury's Inn	General Manager
Conferences and Events	Kents Hill Park Conference and	Business Development Manager

	Training Centre	
Not-for-Profit	Living Archive	General Manager
Retail and Services	Max Office Supplies	Operations Manager
Retail and Services	Midsummer Place Shopping Centre (intu Milton Keynes)	General Manager
Conferences and Events	Millbrook Events	Business Development Manager
Not-for-Profit	MK and North Bucks Chamber of Commerce	CEO
Not-for-Profit	MK Museum	Director
Higher Education	Milton Keynes College	CEO
Local Government	Milton Keynes Council	Mayor
Evening Economy (Entertainment)	Milton Keynes Theatre (MK Theatre and Gallery Company)	Business Development Manager
Conferences and Events	Mitchell Hall, Cranfield University	Conferences and Events Manager
Not-for-Profit	MK Business Leaders	Managing Director
Not-for-Profit	MK City Centre Management	Manager
Local Government	MK Council - Leisure, Learning and Culture Dept.	Sports Development Officer
Not-for-Profit	MK Dons Sports and Education Trust (SET)	Director of Education
Conferences and Events	MKCC Conferencing	Conferencing Manager
Hospitality Sector	Moore Place Hotel	General Manager
Conferences and Events	National Badminton Centre	Manager
Not-for-Profit	Newport Pagnel Business Association	Chairman
Hospitality Sector	Novotel MK	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Old Dairy Farm Campsite	Manager
Evening Economy (Food and Wine)	Paris House	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Ramada Encore	General Manager
Retail and Services	Scribble Events	Director
Attractions and Activities	SNO!zone	General Manager
Transportation	Soul Brothers	Managing Director
Attractions and Activities	Spymissions	Manager
Not-for-Profit	Stowe (National Trust)	Manager
Evening Economy	The Hub	Manager
Not-for-Profit	The Parks Trust	CEO
Conferences and	The Stables Theatre	CEO

Events	Ltd	
Evening Economy (Food and Wine; Entertainment)	Theatre District	Marketing Manager
Retail and Services	thecentre: mk	Commercial Development Manager
Higher Education	University Campus Milton Keynes	Associate Dean
Conferences and Events	Whittlebury Hall	Marketing and PR Manager
Conferences and Events	Wilton Hall	General Manager
Local Government	Wolverton and Greenleys Town Council	Projects Officer
Conferences and Events	Wyatt James	Managing Director
Not-for-Profit	Xscape MK Partnership	Sponsorship and Partnership Manager

APPENDIX 2a. Sample Interview Questionnaire

Participant: Destination Milton Keynes, CEO

TOPICAL AREAS	QUESTIONS
The changing DMO	<p>[1] What is the current organisational structure and objectives of DMK?</p> <p>[2] Structure of DMK board (public/private)? Are small businesses represented on the board?</p> <p>[3] Which group is the key decision-maker (LAs or businesses) and holds the majority of board seats, if collective decision-making is to be undertaken?</p> <p>[4] DMK's top membership tier is corporate. Are only corporate partners having a voice in destination decision-making processes?</p> <p>[5] Is today's DMK representing the voice of businesses as oppose to the one of LAs?</p>
Internal DMO Network	<p>[1] What is the role of partnerships in today's DMO organisation?</p> <p>[2] What is the number of DMK's internal network member organisations (are all of them on DMK's website)?</p> <p>[3] Do you see key players as essential to collectively lead and promote the destination?</p> <p>[4] What would be the impact of 'fluid membership' on DMK as part of new DMO agenda?</p> <p>[5] If not all tourism and hospitality businesses in MK are members of DMK does the organisation have an agenda for dealing with 'free-riders'? and perhaps, promote the benefits of joining DMK?</p>
External DMO Network	<p>[1] Do you see LEPs, and particularly SEMLEP as prospective partner to DMK since both organisations have interest in capitalising on the wider visitor economy? LEPs, in addition, can</p>

bid for funding through RGF and EU funding pots and support destination development.

[2] What about other DMOs in the region? Do you see those as competitors solely or perhaps as partners - to collaborate with on LEP scale?

[3] What other organisations are part of the wider or external DMK network? VisitEngland? Tourism South East? Government departments (DCMS)? What is their role in supporting DMK?

Context I: [1] What is the role of the recent economic downturn and slow
Era of recovery process in destination management? To what extent
Austerity DMK has changed, influenced by the era of austerity?

[2] Do you see the recession as a driver of free-riding among the destination and DMK members?

Context II: [1] Do you see the issue of co-opetition as a major barrier to
Co-opetition destination management since the Government expects businesses to orchestrate destination management and development?

[2] Are new, industry-led DMO member organisations allies or foes? How do they find the right balance?

Context III: [1] Is the emerging visitor economy concept part of new DMOs
Visitor agendas? And in the case of DMK?

Economy [2] Do you see new, wider-reaching DMOs, which are expected to be a partnership of public, private and third sector bodies as better capturing the visitor economy?

[3] Do you see the visitor economy as a driver of collaboration/joint efforts between DMOs and LEPs? Is SEMLEP's Visitor Economy Group to facilitate this process?

[4] Does VisitEngland promote in any way the communication between these bodies or it is essentially responsibility of DMOs and LEPs?

Note: Any updates on the DMP Plan?

APPENDIX 2b. Informed Consent Letter (Phase I)



Business School

Informed Consent Letter

Dear Member of the Investigated Network,

As part of my PhD Programme at the University of Bedfordshire, I am exploring the changing landscape of destination management in England and the increasing role of partnerships in emerging Destination Management Organisation (DMO) networks. Destination Milton Keynes is the unit of analysis in this study. The destination management network is to be examined in a dynamic and case-specific, post-2011 Tourism Policy operational context. Outcomes of this study aim to provide directions of improving the process of destination management in contemporary English DMOs. Latter is to be done by uncovering the dynamic context of operation, network characteristics and collaborative behaviour of actors, best practices in destination management. The final goal of this project is to provide a framework/guiding principles on how the process of destination management could be improved in urban, business-led DMOs across England.

I would be pleased if you could help me by agreeing to be interviewed. The process of interviewing will be recorded with a voice recorder. Voice data files will be saved on a password protected hard drive for the purpose of transcription of collected data. Once data has been extracted, voice data files will be deleted from researcher's hard drive.

All the information that I collect will be kept confidential and will not be passed on to any third party in a form that you will be able to be identified. However, if you would prefer your name and position within the organisation you represent

to be identifiable and publicly available, please fill in the Additional Letter of Agreement, which is attached to this consent form.

It is perfectly acceptable for you not to participate. You can, in addition, stop at any point of the interview, should you wish to do so. Your participation or non-participation in this study will not affect your status or personal circumstances. Furthermore, your participation in this study is not in response to financial or other inducements.

At your request, I will also make my findings available to you when I have completed my study. If you are interested, contact me at deyan.hristov@beds.ac.uk or contact my advisor – Dr Ramesh Durbarry at ramesh.durbarry@beds.ac.uk or Dr Sonal Minocha – Executive Dean of the Business School at sonal.minocha@beds.ac.uk. You can also contact either of us if you have questions about the research after you have completed your part of the study. If you have any concerns about this study or the way that you have been approached, please contact the University's independent contact, Prof Angus Duncan, Secretary to the University Research Ethics Committee Prof Angus Duncan angus.duncan@beds.ac.uk.

If you have read and understood these instructions, and you do not have any questions about them, please sign your name below.

I volunteer to participate in this study, entitled *Collaborative Behaviour in Emerging DMO Networks across Dynamic Spatial, Political and Economic Context*.

Signed

Participant's signature / Researcher's signature

APPENDIX 2c. Additional Letter of Agreement (Phase I)



Additional Letter

Dear Dean,

q I agree my name and position within the organisation I represent to be identifiable inside the research project I participate in.

q I agree my details (name and position within the organisation) to be identifiable, should the research I participate in is disseminated through scientific conferences and journal papers.

I am aware of my right to withdraw from this study, as well as adjust the way, in which personal details, concerning my name and position are displayed both inside the study and in case of dissemination of research outputs. In this case I can contact the researcher at deyan.hristov@beds.ac.uk no later than December, the 25th 2013.

By ticking the box/boxes provided and signing this additional letter, I confirm that I have read and agree to the information being incorporated in the statement/s above.

Signed

Signed

Participant's signature
signature

Researcher's

APPENDIX 2d. Network Study Invitation For Phase II

Phase II Network Study Invitation (Email invitation*)

Dear

Let me introduce myself - I am Dean from University of Bedfordshire who has been helping with the new Destination Management Plan (DMP) for Milton Keynes and publishing on best practices in destination management and development in the city.

My team and I have just commenced with a University of Bedfordshire-run PhD project involving Organisational Network Analysis (ONA) of DMK's membership network. ONA is largely used in mainstream leadership and management to boost network efficiency and improve access to developmental resources.

This project is in line with Theme II of the new DMP Plan - Strengthening Partnerships with Destination Businesses and you will shortly receive another email kindly asking you to fill out a brief ONA survey, which should not take more than 5 minutes.

Upon completion, data outputs will be shared with DMK with the intention to inform actions related to strengthening the existing partnerships in Milton Keynes. In addition, we will provide you and your organisation with direct, individualised feedback regarding your location and opportunities to access developmental resources in DMK's membership network.

Achieving close to 100% sample is crucial and your input into this project will be highly appreciated.

Best wishes,

Dean Hristov

* Note: Separate invitation, which was identical with this one was sent through ONA Surveys - the cloud-based network software used for the purpose of data collection in Phase II.

APPENDIX 2e. SNA Survey Questionnaire and SNA Survey Questionnaire Introduction

Phase II SNA Survey Questionnaire (Cloud-based) (Commissioned Jul 2014 – Jan 2015)

1. Pre-study Survey Questionnaire Version:

For the purpose of network data collection, this study employs a sophisticated web-based platform, namely Organisational Network Analysis (ONA) Surveys, which is available on <https://www.s2.onasurveys.com> on subscription basis. The survey content and structure were initially developed in MS Word where the researcher had the opportunity to visualise the full survey prior to embedding it in ONA Surveys.

2. Pilot Study Survey Questionnaire Version:

Once agreed, the content and structure of the DMO network survey was embedded in ONA Surveys and tested with the researcher's immediate team consisting of five individuals. Only minor issues were raised by those testing the network survey. Then, names and contact details of those testing the survey were replaced with Destination Milton Keynes's full network of member organisations. The full member list was collected from the official website of DMK on the 1 July 2014. Extensive background research was undertaken in order to identify senior prospects within DMK's member organisations.

3. Final Survey Questionnaire Version:

The final version of the network survey used for the purpose of data collection throughout Phase II of the adopted methodological framework is presented below and is structured as follows:

DestinationMK Network Survey 2014

What is it?

Partnerships are fundamental to destination development and competitiveness and with this short network study we map out the communication and resource network among DestinationMK member organisations.

Why should I take part?

Our goal is to employ Organisational Network Analysis (ONA) as a network diagnostic tool that will help us uncover intervention opportunities to improve network practice and equally – strengthen partnerships among destination businesses and other key groups in Milton Keynes.

What am I expected to do?

You will be asked to select your DestinationMK network peers from a list before proceeding to questions. There are only two questions (Q1 & Q2) for each of your DMK's peers. Q1 is interested in the frequency of communication (if any), whilst Q2 looks at the impact of resource exchange over your organisation (if any).

Are there any risks or costs associated with it?

Your personal business networks are not subject to investigation. Instead, we are solely interested in how you link to other organisations within the DestinationMK's membership network. All network data will be treated as confidential and not disseminated in a form that you may be identified without your prior consent.

Achieving close to 100% sample is crucial and your input into this project will be highly appreciated.

Thank you very much for your co-operation!

Dean
University of Bedfordshire

Proceed to next step >>

Figure 1. ONA Survey Introduction Screen

The first screen of the survey (Figure 1) mirrors a short introduction to the study and the survey. The purpose of this screen is to brief study participants of the particularities and procedures of taking part in a network survey. This screen also emphasises on the importance of participation in the study.

Matters of ethics and potential risks associated with participation in this network study have also been considered as important part of the survey introduction and thus included (Figure 1). It has therefore been made clear that the study is solely interested in existing links within the complete network of DMK member organisations. As such, the study does not extend beyond DMK's membership network to capture private networks of individual DMO member organisations.

Generally, it has been assumed that once participants proceed to filling out the network survey, they give their formal consent and are thus happy to go forward with participating in the network survey.

DestinationMK Network Survey 2014

Proceed to questions >>

The list below captures all DestinationMK member organisations.

Please select the DestinationMK members your organisation is connected with before proceeding to Q1 & Q2 for each of your selections.

Select

Search:

- 4fx design & multimedia ltd
- Briteyellow Ltd
- Community Action: MK
- Cranfield Airport
- i-print mk ltd
- Max Office Supplies
- 360 Play
- Abbey Hill Hotel (Mercure Hotels)
- Billy One Horn Vintage Caravans
- Bletchley Park Trust
- Calcutta Brasserie
- Carluccio's
- City Apartments

Selection

- Interdirect Ltd
- Milton Keynes College
- Milton Keynes Council
- MK Business Leaders
- MK City Centre Management
- Gulliver's Land
- Holiday Inn Express
- InterMK Ltd (MK Dons FC and MK Stadium)
- Living Archive
- Moore Place Hotel
- The Hub
- The Parks Trust
- thecentre: mk

Proceed to questions >>

Figure 2. ONA Survey Selection Panel

The second screen takes survey respondents to the survey selection panel (Figure 2), where they have the opportunity to see the full list of DMK member organisations at the time of conducting Phase II. Survey respondents are then asked to select all DMK member organisations, who they have links with prior to proceeding to the two network questions, namely Q1 and Q2 for each of their selections.

1. Start
2. Communication & Resource Exchange
3. Finish

Click to jump between steps or go back.

The Stables Theatre Ltd

DestinationMK Network Survey 2014

Note: Questions marked with '*' are compulsory.

Completed

- Gulliver's Land
- Holiday Inn Express
- Interdirect Ltd
- InterMK Ltd (MK Dons FC and MK Stadium)
- Living Archive
- Midsummer Place
- Shopping Centre (intu Milton Keynes)
- Milton Keynes College
- Milton Keynes Council
- Milton Keynes Theatre (MK Theatre & Gallery Company)
- MK Business Leaders
- MK City Centre Management
- MK Council - Leisure, Learning & Culture Dept.
- MK Dons Sports & Education Trust (SET)
- Moore Place Hotel
- The Hub
- The Parks Trust
- thecentre: mk
- University Campus
- Milton Keynes (UCMK)
- Xscape MK Partnership

<< Change Selection

About: Gulliver's Land

Q1: Exchange of Information

1. Exchange of information (e.g. everyday communication, networking on industry events) involving the above member of DestinationMK you have just reported a connection with.

Please rate the frequency of this interaction below.

	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Biannually to none
Exchange of Information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Q2: Sharing Developmental Resources

2. Sharing developmental resources (e.g. funding, research outputs, joint projects) involving the above member of DestinationMK you have just reported a connection with.

Please rate the role/impact of this interaction over your organisation below.

	Transformative	Highly supportive	Moderate Support	Some support	Marginal to none
Sharing Resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

Reset
Proceed to next step >>

Figure 3. ONA Survey Network Questions in Relation to Selections

The third screen of the survey questionnaire (Figure 3) mirrors the main data collection activity and takes respondents through a series of screens for each DMK member organisation, which has been identified as linked to the respondent organisation. Both binary and valued network data is collected during this stage, where the focus is on the frequency of information sharing and the impact of developmental resource sharing between the respondent organisation and other DMK member organisations identified as linked by the respondent.

Data is collected using a standard Likert scale of 5 to 1, where 5 has the most network data value (Figure 3 selections: Daily, Transformative) and 1 has the least network data value (Figure 3 selections: Biannually to none, Marginal to none). Further, certain rules have been established when network data is being collected during this stage. As part the third screen of the survey questionnaire (Figure 3), all respondents are given the opportunity to draw the

parameters of their relationship with each DMK member organisation, which has been identified as linked to the respondent organisation.

However, some survey respondents did not rate the frequency of information sharing and the impact of developmental resource sharing for either some or all DMK member organisations, which have been identified as linked to the respondent organisation. Within this context, it has been assumed that the frequency of information sharing and the impact of developmental resource sharing for either some or all DMK member organisations has been Little to none or Marginal to none (Figure 3) and value of 1 is given. Network survey respondents not rating the frequency of information sharing and the impact of developmental resource sharing may well be due to a number of reasons, namely weak links, personal preferences, inability to accurately rate the connection alike. Due to the high number of data points, which is a common complexity in SNA research (see Chapter 2 C), the researcher was unable to investigate potential reasons beyond not rating their links with other DMK member organisations. This decision was taken in light of existing time and resource constraints.



Figure 4. ONA Survey Final Screen

The final screen (Figure 4) of the survey and indeed the final one uploads all respondent entries during the survey session on the ONA Surveys server, where the researcher has the opportunity to download the raw network data and well as data in a variety of formats, which serve as input into SNA software package adopted by this study, namely Gephi (Cherven, 2015).

Note: The SNA survey questionnaire for DMK's policy network followed the same procedures as in the case with the above survey questionnaire aimed at DMK's complete network of member organisations. The only significant difference in the SNA survey questionnaire for DMK's policy network was related to the selection of organisations in the survey selection panel (Figure 2). Not only does the second screen take policy network survey respondents to the survey selection panel (where they have the opportunity to see a list of already identified number of organisations in DMK's policy network), but also provides DMK's founding and current CEOs with the opportunity to include additional organisations, who they think are also part of the policy network.

APPENDIX 2f. SNA Survey Questionnaire Hard Copy (Phase II)

APPENDIX III: METHODOLOGY

Phase II SNA Survey Questionnaire (Hard copy)

Q1 Your details

Organisation name Size [e.g. SME]

Primary business/Sector [e.g. Transportator]

Your position in the organisation [e.g. Manager, CEO]

This is a network study in which we will try to map out the communication and resource network among Destination Milton Keynes (DMK) member organisations. Destination Milton Keynes goal in this study is to employ organisational network analysis as a diagnostic tool to unveil intervention opportunities in improving destination management practice and equally – strengthen partnerships among destination businesses in Milton Keynes. The latter is one of five core themes in DMK's Destination Management Plan 2014-2024.

Q2 Which of the listed DMK businesses, local government bodies and not-for-profits is your organisation linked to?

Q3 Exchange of information (e.g. everyday communication, networking on industry events). Please rate the frequency of this relationship:

Q4 Exchange of developmental resources (e.g. funding, research outputs, joint projects). Please rate the role/impact of this relationship over your organisation:

CORPORATE DMO MEMBERS	Yes No		Daily Weekly Monthly Quarterly Biannually					Transformational Highly supportive Supportive Some support Marginal				
	Y	N	D	W	M	Q	B	T	H	S	So	M
4fx Design and Multimedia Ltd	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brityellow Ltd	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Action: MK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cranfield Airport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Herald Solicitors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interdirect Ltd	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i-print MK Ltd	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Max Office Supplies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milton Keynes College	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milton Keynes Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MK Council Leisure, Learning and Culture Dept.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MK Business Leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MK City Centre Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OTHER DMO MEMBERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

APPENDIX 2g. Self-reflective Practitioner Questionnaire (Phase III)

1. DestinationMK: Holiday Inn MK (Hospitality Sector)

1. Within an increasingly networked environment, pooling knowledge and resources has become a fundamental prerequisite to ensuring the long-term sustainability of financially-constrained Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) facing challenges to deliver value to their destinations and member organisations. Distributed Leadership (DL) is a recent paradigm that is to gain momentum in destination research as a promising response to these challenges. DL calls for recognising the collective strength of all members on board DMOs or in our case - on board DestinationMK.

Drawing on previous research with DestinationMK, we attempted to provide an indicative definition of DMOs serving as DL networks in destinations:

“DMOs seen as Distributed Leadership (DL) networks capture a cohesive, yet inclusive network of diverse destination actors (i.e. a nexus between businesses, local government and community), not solely having an interest in, but committed to shaping the strategic direction of the destination using formal governance structure (i.e. Destination Management Organisation) that serves as a platform for orchestrating it (the destination) collectively, whilst also following a clear collaborative agenda in delivering developmental objectives and meeting targets (i.e. a Destination Management Plan).”

Do you see the future of DMOs and particularly DestinationMK in adopting such DL model and why?

2. Drawing on our involvement in shaping the new Destination Management Plan for Milton Keynes, we were able to spot DL practice, which is already developing on a DMO level (i.e. within DestinationMK).

Having understood the concept of DL in DMO context (see our definition in Question 1), what do you consider to be the challenges to and opportunities for enacting DL across the complete DestinationMK network of member organisations?

3. Drawing on our involvement in shaping the new Destination Management Plan for Milton Keynes, we were able to spot DL practice, which is already developing on a DMO level (i.e. within DestinationMK).

Having understood the concept of DL in DMO context (see our definition in Question 1), what would be the role of your sector i.e. Hospitality in facilitating the process of embedding DL practice across the complete network?



4. Towards the end of last year we ran a network study across DestinationMK member organisations. Yours and other DestinationMK members' kind contribution led to identifying 6 leadership types on board the membership organisation that complement one another:

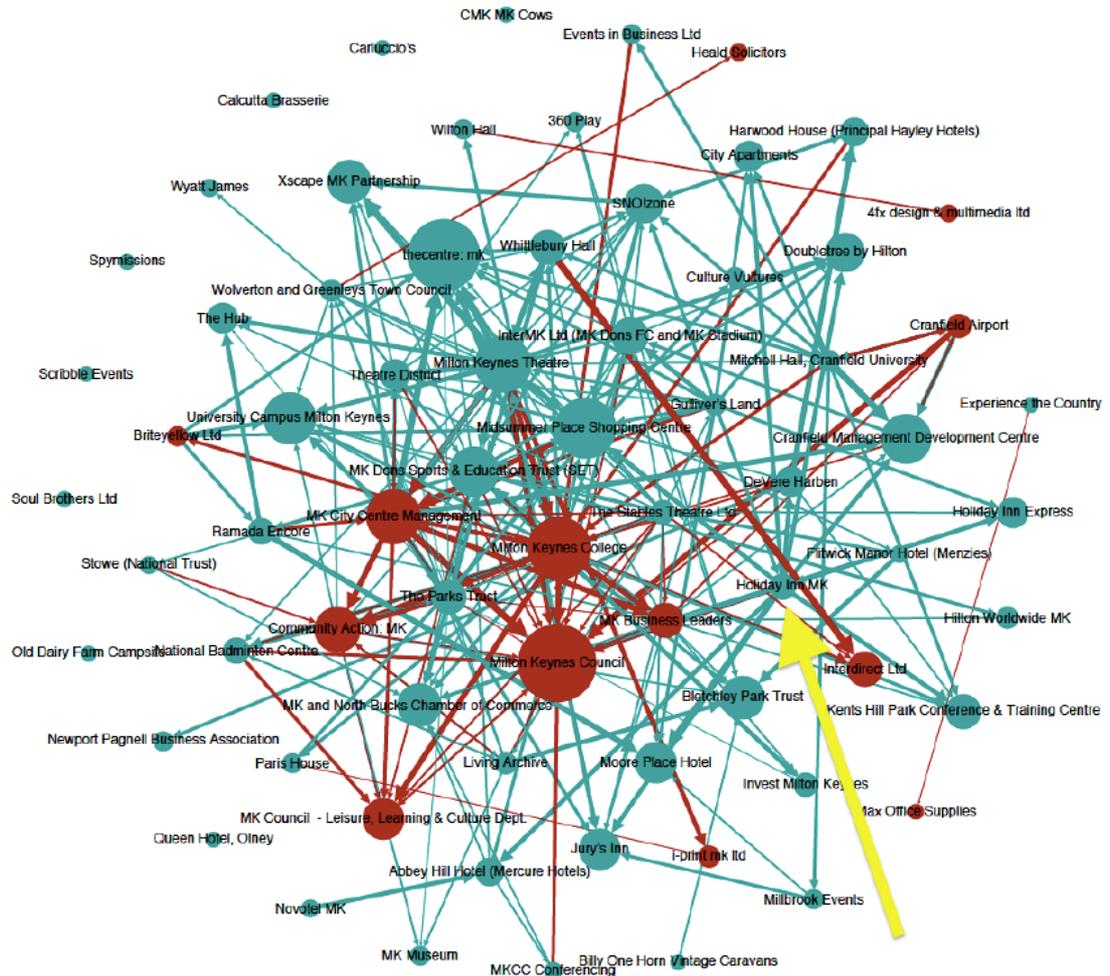
- + Network in-community leaders
- + Network cross-community leaders
- + Highly influential leaders
- + Established leaders
- + Emerging leaders (Holiday Inn MK)
- + Resource-empowered leaders

We call them network champions and Holiday Inn MK is among these network champions.

Do you believe that DL within DestinationMK starts with embracing network champions as catalysts of developing DL across each sector on-board DMK? Would this help break down barriers to participating in DL between corporate (founding) and regular DestinationMK member organisations or even between regular members within and across sectors?



5. As the previous question suggested, Holiday Inn MK falls within one of the six leadership types and is among the champions on board DestinationMK. In other words, Holiday Inn MK is seen as an Emerging Leader type organisation within DestinationMK and as such, it demonstrates evidence of strong DL practice within the complete network (see the figure below).



Having seen the network depiction above indicating your organisation's position in the complete network, what Holiday Inn MK and other champions from your sector can do to involve more member organisations (smaller nodes on the above figure) from your sector in DL practice within DestinationMK (i.e. within your sector)?

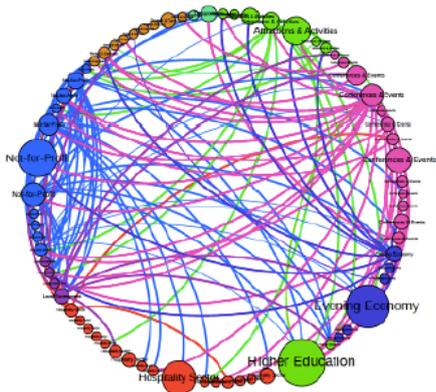
6. Drawing on Question 5 and the above figure, what may also be done to strengthen the existing level of interaction between your sector and other sectors on board DestinationMK (i.e. across sectors)?



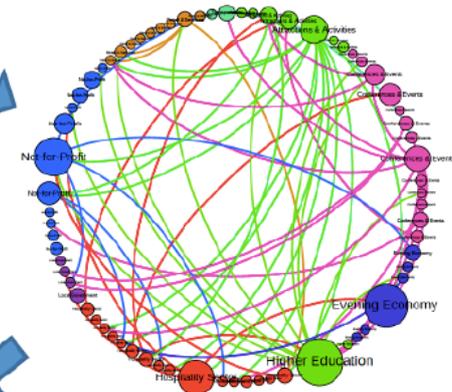
7. Yours and other DestinationMK members' kind contribution to our network study also led to identifying processes related to the frequency of interaction among member organisations and communication of the membership organisation's shared vision (captured in the Destination Management Plan). Such processes, which have been carried out on a daily basis covered only 2.26% of all communication flows within DestinationMK. Most interaction across DestinationMK member organisations occurred quarterly or even less-frequently (see the figure below, where different colours indicate different sectors on board DestinationMK).

These figures suggest that processes related to communication i.e. the visionary role of DestinationMK projected in its Destination Management Plan (incl. vision, mission, aspirations, actions), need to be strengthened, particularly at the early stages of embedding Destination Management Plans (the Milton Keynes plan was launched in July 2014 i.e. less than a year ago).

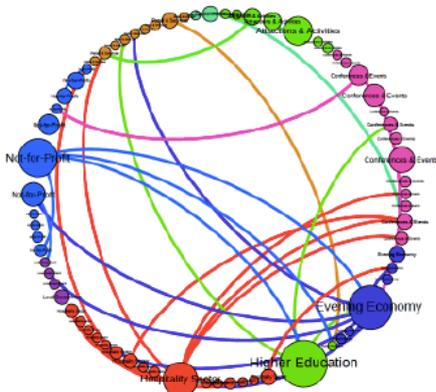
Biannually to None
(53.01% of all communication flows)



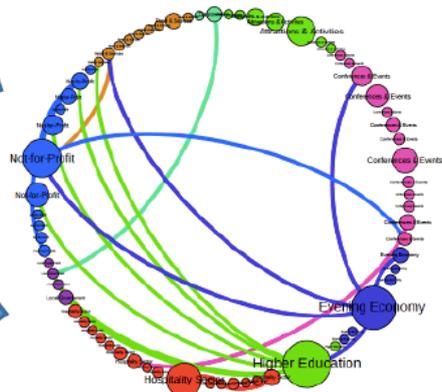
Quarterly
(23.68% of all communication flows)



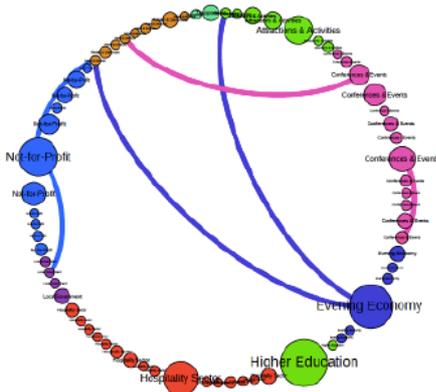
Monthly
(13.53% of all communication flows)



Weekly
(7.52% of all communication flows)



Daily
(2.26% of all communication flows)



The visionary role of DMOs i.e. shaping and communicating the long-term strategic destination development agenda has been considered as one of the key leadership roles of these membership organisations. Yet, the visionary role of DestinationMK at present is seen as rather weak as demonstrated by the figure above.

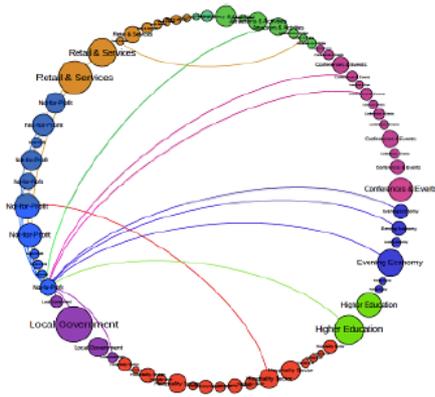
How can such processes related to communicating the destination's vision (captured in the Destination Management Plan) be improved from the perspective of your sector?



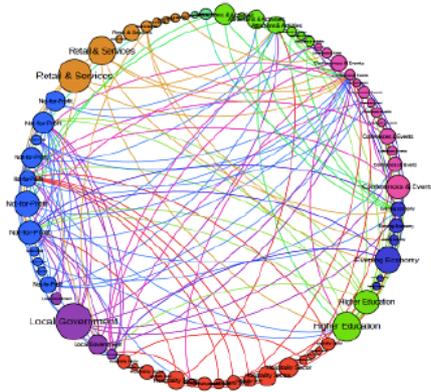
8. Yours and other DestinationMK members' kind contribution to our network study also led to identifying that over 40% of all developmental resource flows in the complete network provided moderate through to high support or even transformative impact over individual DestinationMK member organisations (see the figure below, where different colours indicate different sectors on board DestinationMK).

Pooling developmental resources are central to enacting DL. Yet, over 7% of all developmental resource flows within DMK have demonstrated a marginal or less impact over individual member organisations with further 53.01% indicating just some support (see the figure below).

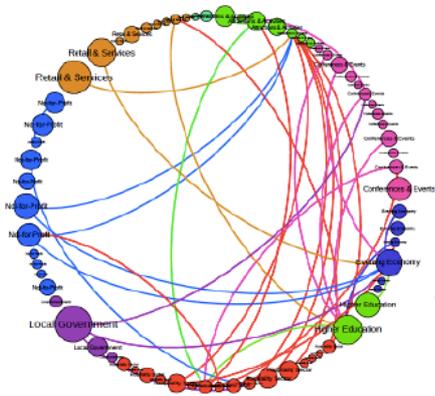
Marginal to None
(7.14% of all transaction flows)



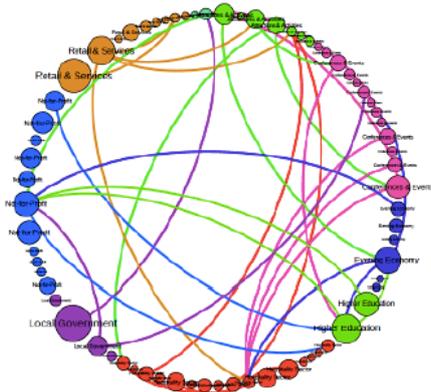
Some Support
(53.01% of all transaction flows)



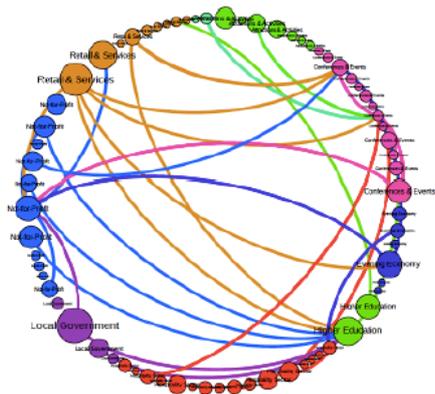
Moderate Support
(13.53% of all transaction flows)



Highly Supportive
(13.53% of all transaction flows)



Transformative
(12.78% of all transaction flows)



How can processes related to distribution of developmental resources be improved from the perspective of your sector so that the majority (if not all) DMK member organisations have access to such vital resources in times when the public purse is less available to DMOs?

9. Public sector and not-for-profit organisations have traditionally been involved in destination leadership practice, providing funding streams in Milton Keynes and across England. This trend however shifted to the private sector in 2010, when the coalition government introduced the localism agenda coupled with major funding cuts and the public-to-private transition in tourism governance.

From the perspective of your sector, are there still issues of power (i.e. barriers to participating in DL) that may have been inherited from what DestinationMK was prior to the introduction of the new more business-led DMO model and how a more commercial, perhaps a business-led DestinationMK may tackle these issues? Both academia and practice have acknowledged that existing power relations may hinder processes related to enacting and further embedding distributed leadership.

Done

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APPENDIX 2h. Semi-structured Interview Questions (Policy makers) for Phase III

Policy Makers: Interview Agenda*

***Note:** This is a sample interview used for one of three policy makers from VisitEngland approached during Phase III. Interview questionnaires, although containing some standard questions in relation to the DMO Leadership Cycle, were tailored to fit the area of expertise of approached policy makers.

Section I: DMOs and DL

General: Reshaped DMOs serving as leadership networks:

- Do you believe that reshaped DMOs can potentially go beyond destination management and assume leadership functions in order to cope with external complexities of the environment (e.g. limited funding provision, increased competition in a highly saturated market, a wider set of responsibilities under the remit of reshaped DMOs)?
- In light of this, what do you Jason think is the role of networks, even leadership networks in the case of MK or other destinations being on crossroads? What would be the role of local networks in destination management and leadership?
- What do you think is the place of distributed (shared) leadership in financially-straitened DMOs and DMK in particular?
- If Yes, to the previous question: Do you believe that DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations are better able to address fundamental issues, such as empowerment of small businesses on board and indeed – recognise the diversity, roles and functions of destination actors by operating an ‘open door’ policy?

Section II: DMO Leadership Cycle-specific

Management’s interaction with leadership:

- Can DMPs provide a scope for collective action and facilitate the setting up of common goals?

- Are DMPs able to strengthen the collective approach to leadership in DMOs? If yes, in what way?
- Are DMPs able to define/filter out key intervention domains in destinations?
- Can DMPs articulate roles and responsibilities of destination leads (e.g. DMO member organisations)?
- Do you see DMPs as a means of providing a framework for leveraging resources in financially-straitened times?

Leadership's interaction with governance:

- Do you believe that formal governance structures (e.g. DMOs) are able to facilitate leadership decisions being of interest to the diversity of DMO member organisations, and even other destination communities beyond DMOs and their membership network? For example, are small businesses underrepresented and do they have a voice in destination management?
- Do you see reshaped DMOs as critical to facilitating a joined-up approach to leadership in destinations, i.e. serving as a means of finding common ground to exercising leadership functions in destinations?
- Should reshaped DMOs be seen as leadership networks adopting fluid leadership policy in order to assign roles of network actors according to individual expertise, access to resources, areas of influence and sectoral links?

Governance's interaction with management:

- Do you believe that formal governance structures are key to facilitating a joined-up approach, i.e. bringing together often diverse DMO members into the development and implementation of DMPs? Or are DMOs key to producing a successful DMP?
- So may be more business-led DMOs can provide opportunities for wider representation for both businesses and even not-for-profit organisations?

- Do you believe that formal governance structures are able to facilitate a joined-up approach to leading and decision-making in meeting strategic objectives set out in DMPs?
- Do you believe that governance structures put in place allow for a wider representation of stakeholder interests and empower/provide a voice in shaping management plans and strategies?
- Can DMOs support and facilitate the collective effort of member organisations to undertake progress reviews of DMPs and destination strategies, i.e. treating the DMP as a 'live document' so that it can respond to dynamics in the organisation (DMO) and its environment?

APPENDIX 2i. Semi-structured Interview Questions (SEMLEP) for Phase III

Industry Practitioners (SEMLEP): Interview Agenda

Section I: Reshaped DMOs serving as leadership networks:

- Do you believe that DMOs brought by the new political and economic context, have a leading role in exploring and capitalising on the benefits of the visitor economy? In other words – what is the place of DMOs in realising the prospects of further developing the visitor economy and ultimately – the SEMLEP area?

Section II: The Role of SEMLEP in the Wider (Regional) Leadership Net

- Is MK the key destination within the SEMLEP area since it probably has the highest concentration of key assets linked to the visitor economy and related industries? *(This has been illustrated on a map in SEMLEP's recently launched Strategic Plan for these industries)*

When I interviewed Daniel earlier this year, he brought the attention to the collective dimension of leading on destination development in the SEMLEP area:

“The most important fact that we should bear in mind is that partnership is at the core of SEMLEP; our strength is the collective strength, not the individuals’ strength.”

- In this sense, do you believe that SEMLEP and DMK should be seen as partners (co-leaders), i.e. providing leadership functions on strategic development and growth agendas?
- Do you then see DMK as a key organisation nested in the wider leadership network in the SEMLEP economic area?

The then SEMLEP's VEG group and the meetings that I attended in 2014 tell me that the group has the potential to assume a wide array of strategic responsibilities and actions under its remit.

- In light of this, can SEMLEP's VEG (now Cultural & Creative Industries Group/AHSVEC&C Group) be seen as an evidence of leadership developing on a regional level? Or is this plan the first step towards creating this commitment to wider partnership in light of the visitor economy involving DMOs, such as DMK and other DMOs in the SEMLEP area?
- Do you believe that DMK and SEMLEP can potentially work together to integrate destination management and leadership into wider economic strategies? *(e.g. in funding and realising major local projects related to infrastructure improvements, expanding on the existing portfolio of local attractions etc.)*

Section III: Looking at the Future

- Do you believe that a strong partnership between SEMLEP and DMK can be established and perhaps firmly embedded in further developing the visitor economy and realising the benefits of this major contributor of economic development across the SEMLEP area?
- Do you see DMK as being a key strategic delivery partner and even a partner in exercising leadership functions on a regional level in light of the recently introduced Strategic Plan for the Cultural & Creative/AHSVEC&C industries?
- Dean: Has SEMLEP been involved in the development of the DMP for MK and have they been involved in the SEMLEP's Strategic Plan and particularly the one for VE Creative etc.?

APPENDIX 2j. Informed Consent Letter (Phase III)



Informed Consent Letter

Dear Lyndsey,

As part of my PhD Programme at Bournemouth University, I am investigating how reshaped DMOs across England develop leadership capacity and serve as leadership networks in destinations within a new political and economic context. The final goal of this study is to construct a set of practical outputs having implications for management and leadership practice in reshaped DMOs across England.

I would be pleased if you could help me by agreeing to be interviewed. The process of interviewing will be recorded with a voice recorder. Voice data files will be saved on a password protected hard drive for the purpose of transcription of collected data. Once data have been extracted, voice data files will be deleted from researcher's hard drive.

All the information that I collect will be kept confidential and will not be passed on to any third party in a form that you will be able to be identified. However, if you would prefer your name and position within the organisation you represent to be identifiable and publicly available upon dissemination of research outputs, please fill out the Additional Letter of Agreement, which is attached to this Informed Consent.

It is perfectly acceptable for you not to participate. You can, in addition, stop at any point of the interview, should you wish to do so. Your participation or non-participation in this study will not affect your status or personal circumstances.

Furthermore, your participation in this study is not in response to financial or other inducements.

At your request, I will also make my findings available to you upon completion of this study. If you are interested, contact me at dhristov@bournemouth.ac.uk or contact my advisors – Dr Sonal Minocha at sminocha@bournemouth.ac.uk or Dr Lois Farquharson at lfarquharson@bournemouth.ac.uk You can also contact either of us if you have questions about the research after you have completed your part of the study.

If you have read and understood the above, and you do not have any questions, please sign your name below.

I volunteer to participate in this study, entitled *Rethinking Destination Management Organisations: Emerging Destination Leadership Practice within a New Political & Economic Context*

Signed

Participant's signature

Signed

Researcher's signature

APPENDIX 2k. Additional Letter of Agreement (Phase III)



Additional Letter

Dear Dean,

[] I agree my name and position within the organisation I represent to be identifiable within the research project I have agreed to participate in.

[] In addition, I agree my name and position within the organisation I represent to be identifiable, should the research I have agreed to participate in, is disseminated through scientific conferences and academic journal papers.

I am fully aware of my right to withdraw from this study, as well as adjust the way, in which personal details, concerning my name and position are displayed both inside the study and in case of dissemination of research outputs. In such case, I have the opportunity to contact the researcher at dhrstov@bournemouth.ac.uk no later than April the 1st 2015.

By ticking the box/es provided and signing this additional letter, I confirm that I have read and agree to the information captured in the statement/s above.

Signed

Signed

Participant's signature
signature

Researcher's

**APPENDIX 2i. Pre-phase III Consent Letter (Email): Sent on February, the
20th 2015**

Dear DMK Member,

Thank you for taking part in our DMK network survey!

The last phase (Phase III) of this research will involve interviews with some of you based on Phase II network depictions with the aim to strengthen the partnership network between DMK members so that we can better position destination Milton Keynes on the map.

Some of you may not wish to share the name of their organisation with other DMK members. In such cases, we are happy to remove the name of your organisation from network depictions should you wish us to do so.

***Note:** We would like to ensure you that names of DMK members are solely used for the purpose of research and will not be shared with any third parties such as organisations and individuals beyond DMK's network of members.

Please feel free to get in touch with any questions you may have on this. Have a great weekend!

Best wishes,

Dean

APPENDIX 3a. Achieved Sample Throughout Phases I, II and III

APPENDIX INTRODUCTION

This appendix begins by providing a snapshot of the achieved sample across the three phases of data collection, namely preliminary study, SNA enquiry, and post-SNA enquiry. Drawing on this discussion of the outcomes of the applied data collection tools across the three phases of data collection and achieved primary and secondary data samples, the chapter goes on to introducing the three discussions to follow under the next three chapters.

OUTCOMES OF PRELIMINARY STUDY (PHASE I)

The rationale behind undertaking Phase I (preliminary study) to address objectives A and B was the need to understand both the nature and role of the shifting political and economic context in triggering change in DMK; to provide evidence of such change and locate the rising importance of local leadership and development of shared leadership practice. It involved participant observation (SEMLEP's VEG participants) and interviews with CEOs and Senior Management of organisations in focus along with policy network analysis and key insights from Visit England and DMK conferences. This section of the chapter provides a breakdown of the achieved primary and secondary data sample.

Achieved Primary Data Sample

In-Depth Semi-Structured Interviews

This qualitative Phase 1 has been completed in three sub-phases and drawing on both primary (Table 1) and secondary data (Table 2, Table 3) sources and involving policy analysis, group observation, and semi-structured, telephone

and face-to-face interviews with executive and senior personnel of case-specific organisations involved in destination management. The fieldwork was commenced throughout both November and December 2013. While the policy network analysis examined changes in the landscape of delivering destination management in England, the interviews investigated transitions in the unit of analysis and the structure and characteristics of the questioned destination management network, as well as prospective allies that are nested in the wider network. A total of four lengthy one-to-one discussions aiming at CEOs of the investigated dyad, namely DMK and SEMLEP have been completed. Involving both the former and new CEO of DMK then allowed for capturing changes in the organisation triggered by the turbulent operational context.

SEMLEP's CEO provided insights on the raising importance of the visitor economy as an avenue for cross-organisational collaboration. The input of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)'s Development Manager at last, was considered as imperative in light of the large number of small-scale enterprises in the destination of investigation. The interview agenda covered key topical areas providing retrospective and current account of the organisations of analysis, unveiling characteristics of the shifting operational context, along with opportunities to capitalising on the visitor economy as a vehicle for local destination development.

Visitor Economy Group Meetings

Observation undertaken through attending three meetings of SEMLEP's VEG group was then utilised in order to enrich the data on emerging and early stage DMO-LEP collaboration. As an insider, the observer represented the higher education institution (University of Bedfordshire) that is also among SEMLEP's VEG members shaping strategies and plans linked to destination development. The latter allowed for complete integration of the researcher into the setting of investigation. The researcher had access to minutes of meetings records, draft strategic plans and notes from observation of discussions. NVivo10 assisted in

the analysis of thick data through the development of a coding scheme with the aim to uncover emerging themes.

Further Immersion In The Organisational Setting And Transformation

This was an opportunity for the researcher to participate in and actively contribute to co-shaping the Destination Management Plan for MK and DMK through a series of events, workshops and meetings (see Hristov & Petrova, 2015). Those have taken places throughout 2014 in various venues throughout Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

Participation in Case-Related Conferences

During this period, the researcher also had the opportunity to participate actively in three case-related conferences, namely Milton Keynes’s Visitor Economy Conference 2014; Visit England’s Visitor Economy Conference 2013; Visit England’s Visitor Economy Conference: Milton Keynes 2014. They provided further insights into the new landscape for DMOs and destinations in England.

Technique	Details
Semi-Structured Interviews	Destination Milton Keynes (Former CEO)
	Destination Milton Keynes (CEO)
	SEMLEP (CEO)
	FSB (Business Development Manager)
Participant Observation	SEMLEP VEG Meeting (12 June 2013, Cranfield)
	SEMLEP VEG Meeting (19 Sept 2013, Cranfield)
	SEMLEP VEG Meeting (13 Nov 2013, Cranfield)

Case Study Immersion	Through a series of events, workshops and meetings (throughout 2014).
Conference Participation	VisitEngland Visitor Economy Conference 2013 WTM Destination Management Forum 2013 MK Visitor Economy Conference 2014

Table 1: Primary Data Sample (Phase I)

Achieved Secondary Data Sample (national Policies, Strategies, Conferences, Forums)

The detailed policy network analysis available in Appendix IIIb is the result of an extensive desk-based research, which draws on the 2011 Tourism Policy, the White Paper on Local Growth in addition to over 25 other government acts, white papers, plans, strategies alike (Table 2).

Technique	Details
Policy Network Analysis	2011 Tourism Policy (2010 Coalition Government) White Paper on Local Growth (2010 Coalition Government) 25+ government acts, white papers, plans, strategies

Table 2: Secondary Data Sample: National Level Data (Phase I)

Achieved Secondary Data Sample (Case-Related Policies, Strategies and White Papers)

In addition to the achieved secondary data sample of national level data, this study also makes use of local level data. That is case-specific secondary data in relation to DMK and its geography. This extensive desk-based research involved a review of over 40 key local plans, strategies and papers (Table 3).

MILTON KEYNES STRATEGIES & PLANS	
A Sustainable Future Plan 2010	Low Carbon Action Plan 2010-20
Accessibility Strategy 2007	Lakes Estate Neighbourhood Plan 2014
Arts & Public Art Strategy 2014-23	MK & Bucks Rural Strategy 2008-2012
Arts Strategy 2010-14	Neighbourhood Regeneration Strategy 2008
Arts Strategy Action Plan 2012	Open Space Strategy 2007
Business Plan 2012-13	Parking Strategy for Central MK 2013
Business Strategy 2011-14	Public Art Strategy 2006-11
Core Strategy 2013	Public Art Strategy Action Plan 2012
Council Corporate Plan 2012-16	Public Open Space 2012
Cultural strategy 2006-12	Road Safety Strategy 2013-18
Community Strategy 2004-34	Rural Development Strategy 2008
Cycling Strategy 2013	SEMLEP Strategic Economic Plan 2015-20
Economic Development Strategy 2011-16	Smart City Strategy
Future Ready MK 2012	Sport & Active Communities Strategy 2014-23
Green Infrastructure Plan 2008	Sport & Leisure Strategy 2009-14
Heritage Strategy 2008	Sub-Regional Strategy 2005
Heritage, Museums & Archives Strategy 2014-23	Sustainable Construction Policy 2007
Housing Strategy 2012-17	Transport Vision & Strategy 2011-31
Inward Investment Plan 2013	The Parks Trust Strategic Plan 2011
Local Investment Plan 2013	Walking Strategy 2003
Low Carbon Living Strategy 2010-20	Workforce Development Strategy 2010-14

Table 3: Secondary Data Sample: Local Level Data (Phase I).

OUTCOMES OF NETWORK ENQUIRY (PHASE II)

Achieved SNA Data Sample: Complete DMK Network

Phase II involves a complete network (*quantitative*) study, which was aimed at all DMK member organisations and an ego network study, which is aimed at both DMK's founding and current CEOs. Phase II aimed to address objective C of this study. Whilst the complete network study investigated processes and practices related to the enactment and practice of DL within the network of DMK member organisations (Table 4), the ego network study enquired into similar processes and practices beyond this network of DMK member organisations and is therefore aimed at DMK's wider policy network (Table 5).

Sector of the Economy	Organisation	Target Person
Attractions & Activities	360 Play	Managing Director
Hospitality Sector	Abbey Hill Hotel (Mercure Hotels)	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Billy One Horn Vintage Caravans	Manager
Retail & Services	Briteyellow Ltd	Chief Executive Officer
Not-for-Profit	Community Action: MK	Director
Transportation	Cranfield Airport	General Manager
Conferences & Events	Cranfield Management Development Centre	Manager
Conferences & Events	DeVere Harben	General Manager
Conferences & Events	Events in Business Ltd	Director
Attractions & Activities	Experience the Country	Operations Manager

Hospitality Sector	Flitwick Manor Hotel (Menzies)	General Manager
Attractions & Activities	Gulliver's Land	Managing Director
Hospitality Sector	Harwood House (Principal Hayley Hotels)	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Holiday Inn Express	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Holiday Inn MK	General Manager
Attractions & Activities	InterMK Ltd (MK Dons FC and MK Stadium)	CEO
Not-for-Profit	Living Archive	General Manager
Retail & Services	Midsummer Place Shopping Centre (intu Milton Keynes)	General Manager
Conferences & Events	Millbrook Events	Business Development Manager
Higher Education	Milton Keynes College	CEO
Local Government	Milton Keynes Council	Mayor
Evening Economy (Entertainment)	Milton Keynes Theatre & Gallery Company)	Business Development Manager
Conferences & Events	Mitchell Hall, Cranfield University	-
Not-for-Profit	MK Business Leaders	Managing Director
Not-for-Profit	MK City Centre Management	Manager
Local Government	MK Council - Leisure, Learning &	Sports Development Officer

	Culture Dept.	
Not-for-Profit	MK Dons Sports & Education Trust (SET)	Director of Education
Conferences & Events	MKCC Conferencing	Conferencing Manager
Conferences & Events	National Badminton Centre	Manager
Hospitality Sector	Novotel MK	General Manager
Evening Economy (Food & Wine)	Paris House	General Manager
Hospitality Sector	Ramada Encore	General Manager
Attractions & Activities	SNO!zone	General Manager
Not-for-Profit	Stowe (National Trust)	Manager
Not-for-Profit	The Parks Trust	CEO
Conferences & Events	The Stables Theatre Ltd	CEO
Evening Economy (Food & Wine; Entertainment)	Theatre District	Marketing Manager
Conferences & Events	Whittlebury Hall	Marketing & PR Manager
Conferences & Events	Wilton Hall	General Manager
Local Government	Wolverton and Greenleys Town Council	Projects Officer

Table 4. Achieved SNA Data Sample: Complete DMK Network

Achieved SNA Data Sample: Policy (Ego) DMK Network

Organisation	Target Individual, Position
Destination Milton Keynes	Founding CEO
Destination Milton Keynes	Current CEO

Table 5. Achieved SNA Data Sample: Policy DMK Network

OUTCOMES OF POST-NETWORK ENQUIRY (PHASE III)

Phase III involved a post-network study (*qualitative*) and sought to address objectives D and E of this study through the perspective of both industry practitioners from DMK (Table 6) and SEMLEP and policy makers from VisitEngland (Table 7).

Industry practitioners

Sector	Organisation	Target Person
Hospitality	Holiday Inn Milton Keynes	General Manager
Conferences and Events	Whittlebury Hall	Marketing & PR Manager
Transport	Cranfield Airport	General Manager
	SEMLEP	CEO

Table 6. Achieved Industry Practitioners Sample

Policy makers

Organisation	
VisitEngland	Head of Destination Management
VisitEngland	Head of Strategic Partnerships and Engagement
VisitEngland	Head of Policy and Analysis

Table 7. Achieved Policy Makers Sampl

APPENDIX 3b. Policy Network Analysis

The Shifting Policy Network in the Domain of DMOs And Destinations in England

Policy networks are a relatively new concept capturing sets of social relationships, both formal and informal that shape collaborative action between government, industry and the civil society (Howlett and Ramesh 1995; Rhodes 1997). Networked approach to policy-making is seen as an opportunity to promote and establish more collaborative, transparent and inclusive policy-making (Scott et al. 2008a), particularly in light of the rapid globalisation, changing roles of government and economic restructuring on a global-to-local scale (Schneider 2005). The latter has been an on-going trend in England through the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* introduced by the 2010 coalition government. The purpose of this section is to shed light in the development of the new tourism policy network in England and key organisations that are part of it through providing ‘thick’ detailed insights into the changing tourism policy landscape. The section commences by providing a retrospective account of the tourism policy network in England.

REGIONAL TOURIST BOARDS AND THE 1969 DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM ACT

The public sector has been playing a significant role in English tourism for many years (Fyall et al. 2009). This role was predominantly exercised by local authorities (County, Metropolitan and District Councils), typically in areas of England with a long-established tradition of hosting visitors, as well as by a network of Regional Tourist Boards (RTBs) (Tourism Insights 2013). RTBs were established through the *Development of Tourism Act of 1969*. Other two key bodies - the British Tourist Authority (BTA) and the English Tourist Board (ETB) – nowadays known as VisitBritain and VisitEngland, were also established in line with this Act. Key responsibility of BTA was:

“To encourage people to visit Great Britain and people living in Great Britain to take their holidays there; and to encourage the provision and improvement of tourist amenities and facilities in Great Britain.”

(Development of Tourism Act 1969, p. 2)

Further, BTA exercised predominantly marketing and promotion functions and so did ETBs, which had identical responsibilities. However, if the former organisation was responsible for promoting tourism and bringing business to all nations in the UK, the latter one was geographically limited to England. In addition to BTA and ETB operating on a national and global level, destination organisations with a strategic role in destination development and management across England’s regions were Regional Tourist Boards (RTBs). RTBs in England had similar tasks and functions to BTA and ETBs and those were to be exercised through the promotion and publicity in any form, provision of advisory and information services, undertaking research activities, funding tourism development and organisations (Development of Tourism Act 1969). RTBs were nevertheless mainly responsible for the delivery of national government policy aspirations for tourism in England on a regional as opposed to national level (Coles et al. 2012). RTBs were also expected to lead on regional tourism strategy and its implementation (Coles et al. 2012).

The 1969 Act covered the establishment of the Scottish Tourist Board and the Wales Tourist Board, which both had similar functions to ETBs in England (Development of Tourism Act 1969). This analysis, however, does not take into account the devolved tourism administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland for two reasons. First, the focal point of the research is the evolution of destinations and destination organisations in England exclusively, rather than targeting the whole of the UK. At second, England is the UK’s major tourism destination that plays a strategic role as a national tourist group (Hall and Jenkins 1995).

THE NEW REGIONALISM AGENDA: DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES IN TOURISM

When the 1997 labour government came into power, the issue of returning to regional intervention through centrally controlled, appointed agencies was high on the agenda. The Business and Enterprise Committee was appointed by the House of Commons to assess the need for regional governance. The Committee subsequently invited comments on the need for a level of governance filling the gap between local and national levels when economic development and regeneration are to be promoted. The British Chambers of Commerce, the Confederation of British Industry, and the Federation of Small Businesses believed that central government or local authorities are neither able nor skilled enough to operate effectively at this level (House of Commons 2009). The *Regional Development Agencies Act of 1998* thus provided for the establishment of eight English Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in April 1999, in addition to the London Development Agency (LDA) in July 2000 (House of Commons 2009; HM Stationary Office 1998). This act was said to be a significant paper, in a sense that it was shaping the future of destinations and destination organisations in the UK through the governmental devolution and decentralisation to the sub-national level.

RDAs were seen as quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations operating at arm's length from government and acting as both strategic economic bodies and operational delivery bodies (BIS 2012). In addition to that, development agencies assumed the role of being key strategic partners and 'delivery arms' for government departments with an interest in sub-national economic development (BIS 2012). Under Part I of the *1998 Regional Development Agencies Act*, the purposes and activities that RDA have been involved in included to further economic development and regeneration; promote efficiency, competitiveness and investment of businesses; create employment opportunities; enhance the development of area-specific skills (HM Stationary Office 1998). In addition to their primarily economic duties, RDAs were expected to contribute to policy on transport, planning and land use, further and higher education, crime prevention, housing and public health, tourism, culture and sport. RDAs had to support sustainable development and have an impact equally on both rural and non-rural parts of their areas (HM Stationary Office 1998).

Core activities of RDAs were financed through a single pot or Single Budget, which was a fund pooling money from a number of contributing government departments (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012). RDA responsibilities had increased since they were introduced in 1999 (House of Commons 2009). Development agencies took on the administration of regional development grants (April 2002), research and development grants (April 2005), Business Link (April 2005), the Rural Development Programme (April 2006), European Regional Development Funds (ERDF) (2007) and the Manufacturing Advisory Service (House of Commons 2009). European funds thus played significant role in providing additional resources to RDAs as a trade-off to administrative duties exercised by these regional bodies. The ERDF and the Rural Development Programme were among the key funding sources, which were administered by Development Agencies. The ERDF fund provided match funding for economic development and the overall allocation for projects and programmes across England for the period of 2007-2013 was some £2.8bn (House of Commons 2009).

RDAs once played an essential role in supporting tourism development at regional level through co-funding industry development projects. The money previously given by government to the RTBs via VisitBritain was redirected to Development Agencies (VisitEngland 2013a). Subsequently, this process led RDAs fund RTBs functions in the last decade. Tourist Boards were, not surprisingly integrated in Development Agencies leading to some RDAs even assuming RTB functions (Coles et al. 2012). This is how England's nine Regional Development Agencies became responsible for funding, delivery, management and sectoral performance of tourism (Fyall et al. 2009). Nevertheless, there had been a steady flow of criticisms towards RDAs as organisations, the variety of responsibilities under their remit, and particularly the extensive resources they required to function. Agencies were regarded as unnecessary duplicators of existing functions and part of an agenda to "regionalise" the UK. This *quango* (quasi-autonomous, non-governmental organisation) was labelled inefficient and resource-demanding (Kennell 2011). The Taxpayers Alliance, one of the most influential pressure groups in the UK and England, argued that RDAs had been an expensive failure and over £15 billion of taxpayers' money were spent over the past nine years with little or no

output (Taxpayers' Alliance 2008). The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), however, saw this as an investment and emphasised on the significant £17.6bn that had been invested by RDAs between 1999-2011 prior to their abolishment (BIS 2012).

In supporting the latter statement, the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) highlighted that performance of RDAs had been measured by progress reports since 2005 (House of Commons 2009). There was no methodology, however, to explain how measures were calculated in the annual RDA self-assessments (Taxpayers Alliance 2008). These quangos were accused in waste and duplication of resources, high expenses, poor investments, expensive trips abroad (Taxpayers Alliance 2008). Along with criticisms on the current approaches to delivering regional economic development, neo-liberal ideas influenced changes to the spatial scale of tourism governance. Many destinations in the past were restricted to existing politico-legal boundaries due to their heavy reliance on local government funding (Coles et al. 2012; Solum and Everett 2014).

THE SHIFTING LANDSCAPE OF GOVERNANCE: EMRGING LOCALISM

The 'shifting power to the right levels' attitude of the 2010 coalition was a clear indication the spatial scale of economic governance is likely to be shifted. As a consequence, the relationship between tourism and local economic development was greatly impacted by two areas of public sector reform – the process of abolishing RDAs and the wide-range reshaping of the landscape of the public governance and support for tourism (Kennell 2011).

The closure of RDAs was confirmed in the June 2010 Budget and bodies were formally abolished on the 1st of July 2012 by bringing into force the *Public Bodies Act 2011* via a Commencement Order (BIS 2012). This announcement and the following act reflected the 2010 coalition's neo-liberal agenda to change the landscape for local economic delivery, and importantly – reduce the financial burden on government (Slocum and Everett 2014) and ultimately – the

degree of intervention of public bodies by introducing business-led Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to replace scrutinised RDAs (BIS 2012).

The programme for closure was commissioned by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) as the key sponsoring department for RDAs and £1.4 billion were subsequently identified over the Spending Review period to wind down the agencies (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012). BIS announced that it would ensure that knowledge and expertise of the 3,000 RDA staff was retained and effectively handed over newly-established LEPs (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012) although, there was no clear agenda of how this was to be done. In its *Lessons from the RDA Transition and Closure Programme* paper, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills outlined that retaining RDA staff was essential (BIS 2012). An emphasis was however given to 'key staff', as opposed to the 3,000 RDA employees, which posed the question of what the definition of key staff was for BIS. As previously outlined, tourism development was among the many priority areas under the remit of abolished RDAs. In light of the new 'localism agenda', the coalition has also recognised the prospective role of tourism in its *Local Growth: Realising Every Place's Potential* paper, announced in November 2010:

"RDAs have previously played a role in tourism. Going forward, a strong emphasis will be put on leadership at the local level, particularly by local tourism businesses. LEPs, given their local expertise could play a role in co-ordinating this activity and actively engaging with the private sector...VisitEngland can play a supporting role at a national level."

(BIS 2010, p. 17)

The shift in the spatial scale of economic governance thus brought the localism agenda to replace the abolished RDAs. The Coalition's localism plan involved reducing bureaucracy and hence administration costs but equally important was the transition towards local development and the opportunity for local communities and businesses to influence the future of their geographies.

In order to complete this objective, the coalition announced the approval of 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships, intended to be non-statutory, business-led bodies, which would assume most of the responsibilities of former RDAs (BIS

2010) and better reflect natural economic geography, as opposed to bureaucratic boundaries (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012).

LEPs agenda incorporated strategic leadership in their areas to set out local economic priorities. Among the key roles of LEPs were:

- Co-operation with government to set out key investment priorities, infrastructure, project delivery support;
- Supporting high growth businesses in LEP areas;
- Ensuring business is involved in the development and consideration of strategic planning applications;
- Working with local employers and learning providers;
- Coordinating approaches to leveraging funding from the private sector;
- Delivering green projects and supporting digital infrastructure (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012).

LEPs were established with the clear idea that they should not have direct access to central funding and will be able to meet their day-to-day administration costs (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012). The coalition's assumptions that the new local partnerships will be operating as self-sustaining entities without making the use of start-up funding in the very beginning, did not, however, corresponded to the reality. Hence, an initial £5 million fund was allocated to LEPs to cover start-up costs, which was then followed by additional £25 million government funding (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012). In addition, each LEP was being offered £125,000 for the rest of the 2012-2013 financial year. The coalition has estimated that the overall funding pot may go up to £45 million in the period to 2014-15 to cover running costs of LEPs (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012). This continuous government funding allocation to LEPs then suggested that these partnerships have not reached a state of maturity where they will not anymore be reliant on the public purse and hence, be purely business sector-driven.

Considering opportunities for supporting tourism development, LEPs would however be able to bid for various government funding schemes, such as the Regional Growth Fund (RGF) and the Growing Places Fund established to support key strategic development areas being affected by current cuts in public funding. LEPs nevertheless had to compete with other bodies bidding for

funding as the RGF, worth £2.7bn over five years 2011-12 – 2015-16 (Mellows-Facer and Dar 2012) was not limited to bids from the enterprise partnerships solely. Importantly, the coalition government's *Local Growth White Paper* emphasised on the importance of tourism as part of its LEP Proposal and future economic development delivery (BIS 2010), and hence the need for destination management at local level by non-governmental tourism sector bodies. LEPs were expected to work closely with the new tourism bodies at local level aiming to integrate destination management into wider economic strategies (Penrose 2011).

THE ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORTING DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

Along with abolished RDAs and RTBs, equally Local Authorities (LAs) in England have long been among the key influential actors in tourism development, and had a strong supportive role in the case of planning and management of destinations. LAs contributed to development of policies to promote growth and shape tourism industry in their areas. These local bodies encouraged a broad range of tourism activities, in that case – promotion and information, planning, visitor and attraction management and the development of new attractions (Stevenson 2002). They have been supporting essential natural and built resources, infrastructure and service provision that have a direct impact on visitors and their overall experience. Arguably, these functions of LAs then cannot be substituted by sectoral businesses and firms as the concept of the 'public good' (Harrill 2009) is to a large extent valid in the case of tourism, and particularly the management of destination resources. As Harrill (2009) argued, a public good by its very nature is a candidate for government activity.

Fyall et al. (2009) outlined that when a structural change is to be considered, the public sector is expected to be able to contribute to the provision of funding, which equates to the levels previously available to the industry. Certainly, this was not the case of England. Instead, what is evident nowadays, is that LAs seem to take step back from their regulatory function and

put the responsibility for development of tourism in the hands of local interested groups representing the private sector, such as hospitality and attractions businesses and firms. In other words, as indicated by Stevenson (2002) a decade ago, it was likely that private and non-for-profit organisations will become more involved in the joint provision of tourism services with local authorities. And so, they have to be involved in the provision of funding in England (Penrose 2011).

Recently, this transition of power has been influenced by the neo-liberal stance of the 2010 coalition seeking to change the landscape of tourism governance, where the private sector is expected to be accountable for the future development of the industry. The Coalition's *Local Growth White Paper* nevertheless placed a strong emphasis on the prospective role of LAs in supporting local economic development, having a role in leadership and co-ordination, using their land and other key public resources (BIS 2010). The ruling dyad thus recognised the role of Local Authorities in stimulating growth and argued that:

“LAs have a critical role to play in supporting the economy of their area and have a wide array of levers at their disposal, which can support the area...and they are uniquely placed, via politically accountable leadership, to bring stakeholders together from across all sectors.”
(BIS 2010, p. 12)

Whether LAs will be able to cope with the reluctance of private sector interested groups to co-operate when shaping localities, is a question that is still unclear. The extent, to which LAs should exercise regulatory functions, emphasising on the fact that the coalition proposed private sector bodies to ‘lead the parade’ is an issue opening up a whole new debate. In this section so far, it is clear that considerable if not predominant attention has been given to government arrangements supporting tourism indirectly (i.e. for those that tourism was not, or is not key responsibility by definition) in England, such as former RDAs and subsequently, LEPs. Thus less emphasis is placed upon key tourism bodies, some of which could be traced back to the *1969 Development of Tourism Act*, such as RTBs having tourism development as a key priority under their remit.

Arguably, the key reason for that is the vital role of supporting bodies in providing funding for tourism marketing and management of English destinations. Thus, if the key role of RTBs in the past was to effectively market the destination to domestic and international markets, the resources required for marketing and promotion campaigns had been provided by RDAs - this being one of the reasons why RTBs had been increasingly integrated in RDAs prior to the abolishment of the agencies in July 2012. Following suit, the 2010 coalition has seen LEPs as partners and co-funding bodies to a new model of destination governance on a local level being subject to discussion of the section to follow.

Key contrasting point, when comparing former RDAs and RTBs with the new non-governmental bodies reflecting the Coalition's neo-liberal stance, however, was the future uncertainty when it comes to funding initiatives on local economic growth and tourism development projects. This is so due to the increased responsibility of private sector interested parties in the allocation of funding streams for tourism management and development reflected in the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. The government defended the idea that LAs will have a strong financial incentive to invest in local tourism bodies, because of the sector's excellent prospects for driving economic growth (Penrose 2011). This may certainly not be the case across all English 'areas of tourist activity' (Penrose 2011) as coastal and other well-known destinations may have more developed tourism industry, as opposed to some urban, rural and less-visible areas, where LAs may well have little or no interest in allocating funding for destination development initiatives.

THE 2011 GOVERNMENT TOURISM POLICY

The coalition government's written intention to propose major changes to the way tourism is managed was captured in the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. The purpose of this section is not providing a comprehensive overview of the latest policy paper for England, nor an exploration of the coalition's approaches to capitalise on major sporting and royal events, such as the 2012 Olympics and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Instead, the proposed changes to the ways

tourism in the UK is governed and the increasing role of alliances are brought to focus in the following paragraphs.

When introducing the new 2011 Government Tourism Policy, the Prime Minister David Cameron, in his foreword, outlined that:

“Government will play its part in tourism, but the real key to making Britain’s tourist industry flourish lies with the industry itself and the businesses and organisations involved. Decision-making will be driven by those that know their area best and allow the industry to take responsibility for its own future ... With this approach, barriers for growth will be removed, whilst supporting the industry.”

(Penrose 2011, p.4)

The Prime Minister emphasised on the importance of partnerships between businesses and organisations as the fundamental key to creating competitive destinations in England. The 2010 coalition’s main argument for delivering change in governance was that for an industry of its size, the tourism is to a large extent dependent on public funds. In the current fiscal situation, providing taxpayers funded support for tourism is unacceptable, as well as unsustainable initiative in a long-term perspective (Penrose 2011). Subsequently, this reliance of tourism over public support could have been partly explained by the sectoral need tourism organisations and businesses to co-operate in order to promote a shared visitor destination, as oppose to competing as individual attractions, hotels and other venues (Penrose 2011). For this reason, the benefits of co-operation were of key importance to the tourism and visitor economy, when compared with many other sectors, as the coalition argued.

However, as the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* revealed, partnership arrangements are difficult to capitalise on (see Penrose 2011), and this is so due to the opportunity for ‘free riding’ by destination organisations that do not contribute to the collective investment in marketing and promotion in a destination, but nevertheless benefit from joint efforts of others as they operate in the same area. In addition, the large number of destinations of varying sizes, different attractions and local political alliances were all perceived to create further barriers to collaborations among entities representing the industry (Penrose 2011). The *2011 Government Tourism Policy* thus suggested that exactly this diverse range of tourism stakeholders is an obstacle to successful

co-delivery of destination development, management, marketing and promotion (Penrose 2011). This then led to government intervention in an attempt to fill in this gap, which is the reason why such initiatives have been publicly funded for a long time.

What is more, in the light of the current austerity measures undertaken by the ruling political parties, the uncertainty of how UK tourism is to be funded highlighted important questions as the industry is to a large extent affected by cuts in funding. The government justified reducing public funding for tourism with the global economic recession of 2008 and the slow process of recovery. In the current austerity context and given that market failures are generally undesirable, allowing this public funding to continue was unaffordable (Penrose 2011). These were the 2010 coalition's main arguments, highlighted in the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* for restructuring the governance of tourism, intensifying sectoral involvement and increased responsibility of the private sector, and importantly – reducing public funding for tourism to a minimum. Considering this situation, Dinan et al. (2011) pointed out that the taxpayer should not be expected to pay for marketing a large and successful sector of the economy. Indeed, the tourism industry was seen by the government as one of the 'winners' in the UK economy (Penrose 2011) the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* reflected the Coalition's neo-liberal policy agenda. It was, however, clear that in future tourism bodies will be expected to do more with less resource available.

THE NEW MODEL OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT IN ENGLAND: DMOs

The new LEP arrangements promised to be the new partner of tourism bodies operating at local level and indeed, the *Local Growth White Paper* announced that there is a need for leadership by local tourism interests, in particular - local tourism businesses (BIS 2010). Newly-formed tourism bodies, namely Destination Management Organisations (DMO) – a definition proposed by the coalition's *2011 Government Tourism Policy* (Penrose 2011) and the White Paper on Local Growth (BIS 2010) had to be the organisations responsible for the future delivery of tourism activities:

“DMOs should be membership and partnership bodies defined by local tourism businesses, attractions and interests, with management directly responsible to members, and with boundaries established by the DMOs themselves.”

(BIS 2010, p. 45)

Accordingly, the introduction of the *2011 UK Government Tourism Policy* further supported the concept of the shifting model of destination management. The ‘Coalition-tailored’ paper argued that:

“...we will modernise and update local tourism bodies to become focused and efficient Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) which are led by and, increasingly, funded through partnership with the tourism industry itself.”

(Penrose 2011, p. 21)

This recommendation, however, related to England exclusively as the Policy outlined. Marketing and delivery of national tourism policy objectives to local destinations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland were responsibility of their devolved tourism administrations (Penrose 2011). As former regional government arrangements, such as RDAs were abolished, it was expected that DMOs will be formed through existing tourism support bodies (e.g. RTBs), councils, local business networks and newly-established LEPs, on the basis of local tourism interests (BIS 2010). The evolution of destination management was seen as an evolution of the Tourist Boards (RTBs) (Coles et al. 2012). If retrospectively RTBs were mainly involved in the provision of tourist information and had marketing and promotion functions, the contemporary model of destination management was expected to achieve more than simply enhancing destination image and increasing industry profitability (Morgan 2012) as this section will suggest further down.

The coalition perceived the new destination management model in England as a partnership network of predominantly private and non-for-profit businesses and organisations, whilst also having some public sector bodies on board. It is worth noting that, if a destination is to be successful in times of a turbulent market environment, active collaboration is imperative (Fyall et al. 2012) and clearly, this could be the cornerstone of new destination management

arrangements in England. Notwithstanding, the newly-reconstituted model of destination management intended to reflect a high-density network of private sector entities in the governance of local tourism across natural and economic areas in England, thus bringing up important questions, which deserve a greater degree of attention.

The issue of 'free riding', which captured businesses that benefit from collective investment in tourism marketing and promotion in a destination, without directly contributing to it was addressed in the 2011 Tourism Policy, and it has been among the key themes when discussing collaboration within a destination. As the new local tourism bodies will be expected to represent a large number of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), this phenomena is gaining even more prominence in England's tourism governance nowadays. Advocating that 'free riding' will be reduced as a consequence of the new landscape of tourism governance and the associated new model of tourism management at destination level is unacceptable to a degree. If the problem was prominent in the past when the English tourism governance mainly included public bodies, there is even greater uncertainty of how destinations will tackle with obstacles to stakeholder inclusion and accordingly limit the number of parties that are reluctant to join and contribute to a DMO in their area. It is then clearly evident that managing the diversity of stakeholders and interests needs further attention (OECD 2012), not only in a global context, but in English tourism governance as well.

At second, new DMOs in England were expected to adopt a 'fluid membership' policy, where local tourism businesses would be free to join and leave as they wish (Coles, Dinan and Hutchison 2012). Accordingly, the *2011 Government Tourism Policy* argued that fluid membership is to be seen as a way of ensuring good governance and wise use of resources (Penrose, 2011). This 'money back guarantee' approach adopted by DMOs may be seen as being beneficial to tourism and hospitality businesses that seek better exposure. Yet, it may have a profound effect on the DMO organisation itself, leading to a collapse, should key businesses within a destination decide to join rival tourism bodies.

DMOs across areas of tourism activity will inevitably overlap (Coles et al. 2012), and thus smaller local tourism bodies are likely to be 'swallowed' by large and successful ones as major businesses move to foes. This may lead to DMOs lose their destination identity, unique selling points and even resources, as a consequence of relocation of member organisations towards larger tourism management arrangements. In this sense, if destinations need to strive for uniqueness in order to survive (Laesser and Beritelli 2013) how are then vulnerable tourism bodies to be sustained in the current context?

Co-opetition is another key issue reflecting on a state of simultaneous co-operation and competition among stakeholders in a tourist destination (OECD 2012). Co-opetition, however, could be a major barrier for tourism parties to co-operate and enter alliances, which is essential in the light of the new model of local tourism governance in England operating in a unique politico-economic context. The emerging landscape of tourism governance in England implies a new dimension of the concept of co-opetition - a state of co-operative initiatives among rivals in a destination that not just represent predominantly private sector entities. What is more, an emphasis is placed on the increasing responsibility of sectoral businesses and firms in the management and planning of the tourism destinations in England. These new characteristics of the environment and the changing organisation question the opportunities for and the extent, to which DMO members will be willing to co-operate in an environment, where constant competition is present. Co-operative behaviour is multi-dimensional and fluid when business and institutional entities act with public goods and in the public domain (Beritelli 2011b; Godfrey 1998). New English DMOs may face significant challenges in financially-straitened times, which will inevitably affect their leading, guiding and coordinating role of destination stakeholders (Pike 2004; Morgan 2012).

Issues said to be crucial for the survival of DMOs, such as preventing 'free riding' and rethinking the co-opetitive state of destination management operations are of paramount importance. The latter raising the question of how far these non-governmental, destination management bodies are committed to, and being able to contribute to the Coalition's vision for tourism in England (Coles et al. 2012).

THE DEPARTMENT FOR CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT AND THE CHANGING ROLE OF VISITENGLAND

In addition to the abolished RDAs and their LEP successor, there have been two key bodies on a national scale having an impact over new destination management bodies - the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and particularly VisitEngland (VE) – being an advisory, non-departmental public body of the DCMS at the time of this analysis. DCMS is the sponsoring government department for tourism in England (OECD 2012), whereas VisitEngland (formerly ETB) is the national tourism body for the nation and part of VisitBritain.

The former British Tourist Authority (BTA), nowadays, known as VisitBritain (VB) does not fall under the scope of this study as the organisation is responsible for promoting the whole of Britain and its nations to overseas markets and does not deal with the new DMOs at local level. In contrast, VisitEngland's role was to promote solely destination England within the UK (OECD 2012) and selected international markets. Destination England captured the spatial context of this analysis and its tourism industry is the most developed across nations in the UK. VE is in a process of refocusing its organisational priorities (Penrose 2011), as influenced by the *2011 Government Tourism Policy*. Government's argument was that in addition to the new DMOs having local impact, England needed national tourism body to market destinations and support local tourism bodies (Penrose 2011). Hence VisitEngland was proposed to be restructured into a small, highly efficient, industry-led national tourism body for England – having the same kind of industry partnership arrangements as the new DMOs.

The extent to which VE would be able to support DMOs, however, was unclear for a number of reasons. Firstly, only £33 million out of £128.6 million of DCMS funding was intended to cover activities related to the tourism body of England (OECD 2012), and this was to happen over a period of five years 2011-12 – 2014-15. It may well then be argued that resources may not have been set aside for DMOs. Further, VisitEngland was expected to have the same organisational structure as local destination management bodies, led by the

industry with some LAs on board. Limited voice of the public could then be a function of limited access to public funding streams. Among the key priorities of the reshaped VisitEngland were set to be:

- Provision of market intelligence data, industry statistics, reports and trends;
- A source of best practice in sustainable, rural and accessible tourism;
- Helping DMOs on local projects regarding destination marketing, partnerships with local tourism bodies (Penrose 2011).

The extent to which VisitEngland will be able to play more than a marginal role in consulting a large number of DMOs across England on local projects is, however, to be questioned. A single person employed by the national tourism body (VisitEngland 2013b), who is responsible for destination management may be limited in his/her attempts to co-operate with and provide expertise to DMOs. VisitEngland's changing role is just another indication of the Coalition's gradually implemented neo-liberal agenda, encapsulating a lot more responsibilities in the hands of newly-formed DMOs and their private sector members, thus making the landscape for tourism governance even more complex.

The 2010 *Local Growth White Paper* proposed that DCMS and VisitEngland work together, along with government departments and public and private sector partners to support DMOs and LEPs (BIS 2010). In this sense, as Morgan (2012) argued, in a world where stakeholders will demand more for less from public sector budgets, championing tourism destinations will be those adopting an inclusive, bottom-up approach building on solid partnerships between communities, government and businesses. The latter is very much aligned to what a contemporary network approach to destination management and development is. Whether the new model of tourism governance in England is deemed to reflect Morgan's vision is a question, purely related to the extent, to which government and businesses will be capable of creating a public-private synergy in the present challenging times. Mixed alliances are essential, so the English tourism industry flourish (Penrose, 2011) through partnership in delivery of local tourism development objectives, enhancing sectoral competitiveness and improving the quality of the visitor experience.

FUTURE DMOs: IS ENGLAND'S CASE UNIQUE?

Most European Union (EU) states have complex, predominantly public administrative structures when it comes to the governance of tourism (OECD 2012). The changes to the landscape for tourism governance in England brought by the coalition put against some of the key Western European tourism governance models (see *Table 1* below). It can be noted that in some of the top EU tourism performers, tourism at destination level is administered by predominantly state and regional authorities, whereas in the UK and England in particular, this is expected to be done by DMOs at local level, led by private sector interested groups as covered earlier.

In terms of the structure of tourism governance, in most EU states are present complex, bureaucratic arrangements with a number of bodies on national, regional and local levels. In the case of England, however, it can be spotted a single, linear process of communication where the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on the top (*Table 1*) is the sponsoring government department for tourism, followed by VisitEngland being the source of best practice and acting as a consultancy body for DMOs and linked to the new tourism bodies having a local scope of operation. Both DCMS and VisitEngland operate on a national level were directly linked to local DMOs. As pointed out earlier, tourism is devolved matter for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Greater London. Delivery of national tourism policy objectives is thus, responsibility of their respective tourism administrations. It is why the focus of this study is limited to England, being the single major tourism destination across the United Kingdom nations.

The data on *Table 1* suggested that the new tourism body in England is intended to be highly-focused, taking a more holistic approach of the destination, and being responsible for a broad array of objectives, that go well beyond destination marketing and promotion. VisitEngland's role as a national tourism body is to be limited to provision of market intelligence data and consulting local DMOs (OECD 2012). Clearly, this straightforward model, aimed to avoid duplication of resources among national and local organisations,

compared to tourism government arrangements in other EU states where some functions of local, regional and national tourism bodies overlap as it could be noted under the National Tourism Bodies and DMO Functions section of the table. England, however, was the only state among the key tourism country destinations in Western Europe, which was expected to provide funding for DMOs purely from the private sector. The question is whether the new local tourism organisations will sustain the pressure of limited public support and how is this to be achieved.

	The Netherlands	Belgium	Spain	Italy	France	England
Tourism Management at Destination Level	State/Region/Local Authorities	State/Region Authorities	State/Region Authorities	State/Region Authorities	State/Region Authorities	Local - DMOs
Structure of Governance						
National Tourism Body Functions/Objectives	Innovation Entrepreneurship Sustainability Stakeholder engagement	Marketing International markets Knowledge and quality Accessible tourism	Marketing Promotion International Markets Tourism research	Marketing Promotion Strategies for tourism Research activities	Product development Marketing Promotion Setting objectives Stakeholder engagement	Consulting DMOs Research activities Source of best practice
Local/Regional DMO Functions/Objectives	Marketing Promotion Product development	Marketing Promotion Innovations PPPs in promotion	Marketing Promotion Information provision	Marketing Promotion European funding schemes	Marketing Promotion Information provision	Destination leadership Planning and decision-making Partnerships Regeneration and more
DMO Funding	Government	Government	Government	Government	Government	Private [DMOs/LEPs]
DMO Scope of operation (Spatially)	Regional; Local	Regional	Regional	Regional	Regional; Local	Local

Table 1. Tourism Governance Structures: EU and the UK

In *The Coalition: Our Programme for Government* paper, David Cameron (PM) and Nick Clegg (Deputy PM) outlined that the government will take steps to improve the competitiveness of the tourism industry in England and recognise the important role it plays as part of the economy (The Cabinet Office 2013). The 2010 coalition's neoliberal philosophy may provide insights into some of these questions. Thus, neo-liberal angle, in the context of changing tourism governance can be explained with the ruling dyad's aim to reduce the size and influence of the state and emphasise on tourism businesses as being best placed to lead the development of tourism and marketing the destination. England's transition from public to private support for DMOs and destinations is not unique. Indeed, as noted by Kennell (2011), a wide debate takes place in Europe about the value of public spending across strategic sectors of the economy and society, such as culture, tourism and regeneration (Kennell

2011). The implications of such major shifts have been evident in a number of European countries with traditionally strong destination market presence, such as Greece (Kapiki 2012; Stylidis and Terzidou 2014), Spain (Eugenio-Martin and Campos-Soria 2014), Slovenia (Mihalic 2013), Iceland (Johannesson and Huijbens 2010) and alike.

The above discussion suggests that indicated that DMOs worldwide are now in a process of adopting a more-commercial approach to destinations and this has been echoed in recent academic contributions (see Hristov and Zehrer 2015; Reinhold et al. 2015).

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APPENDIX 3c. Phase I Sample Interview (DMK, Founding CEO)

Participant: Destination Milton Keynes, Founding CEO

TOPICAL AREAS	QUESTIONS
The changing DMO	<p><u>Retrospect:</u></p> <p>[1] What was the structure of DMK before the Government imposed shift in destination management?</p> <p>Jackie: Exactly the same, because DMK started out as a private-led organisation. So the actual structure has remained exactly the same. It has a board of directors who are elected from membership – a membership of nearly all private sector organisations. And we have an independent chair and that has remained exactly the same right from the original organisations.</p> <p>[2] What were the key priorities of DMK at that time?</p> <p>Jackie: They are still the same as they were: first, to provide tourist information/visitor information and that was done through a dedicated telephone enquiry line, the website – being absolutely critical to be DMK a successful organisation. The second was to promote MK as a desirable destination, both for leisure and business (Conferences, meetings). And the third is the ultimate desire to become sustainable destination. Those were the three key objectives and they were the original ones, and still the 3 key ones.</p> <p><u>Current:</u></p>

[3] Current organisational structure of DMK?

Jackie: Exactly the same, because DMK started out as a private-led organisation.

[4] Structure of DMK board (public/private)? Are small businesses represented on the board?

Jackie: We have a Chair, who is independent. Her background is education (Is that Ann Limb? – she is also SEMLEP’s chair). Another board member has a commercial background. We have a managing director of a leisure organisation as well with great commercial experience. Another has an MBA and specialising in finance and looks after the Finance Group which is a sub-group of the board, also is chair of MK Business Council and CEO for MK Business Leaders (large employers in the area). We also have two hoteliers – one is the chairman of MK Hoteliers Association and the general manager for Jurys Inn who sits on the finance group as well. Steven, the CEO as well. Another is a Chartered Architect and the Chair of MK Theatre and Gallery Company. So we have a spread of expertise there.

[5] Which group is the key decision-maker (LAs or businesses) and holds the majority of board seats, if collective decision-making is to be undertaken?

Jackie: I would say, because the board are all elected from the membership, they are representative of the membership. So it is the membership that makes a decision. There is a marketing group as well and again, from the membership. So the Marketing Group makes recommendations to the Board.

Generally, if there are money available, the Board accepts what the Marketing Group recommends. Plus, there are 3 employed people taking care of the website, conference desk, visitor services. They also inform the board of what they see in terms of trends happening. So the whole thing is a democratic process.

[6] DMK's top membership tier is corporate. Are only corporate partners having a voice in destination decision-making processes?

Jackie: Some of them are. When I was CEO, I was very keen that we had representatives of smaller organisations as well. I think it is really important, especially if you look at how many B&Bs are who are not members. We have very few B&B members for instance. And I feel that they are a really important component of any destination – they provide low cost accommodation. The problem that DMK has is that it does not operate any quality control which was a problem with old tourist board. VisitEngland, have decided to rely on TripAdvisor instead, which was quite surprising.

Dean: Do you then suggest that small businesses are underrepresented?

Jackie: Absolutely! So, it is all very well having on board people with a lot of money (the Corporates) willing to support and that is absolutely essential. At the end of the day, it is about what is the personality of your DMO and I do not think it should be all corporate. That is my opinion.

Dean: Going back to the membership scheme, when it comes

to corporate level, it seems that only corporate partners have an opportunity to be part of DMK's steering wheel. What about those small businesses that are not actually able to pay £1,500 for a corporate membership?

Jackie: This membership structure has been introduced when I finished with DMK so I do not think that I can put a comment on it. I think to me it is a bit disappointing.

Dean: But on the other hand, it is about how DMK survives.

Jackie: Yes, true.

[7] Is today's DMK representing the voice of businesses as oppose to the one of LAs?

Jackie: Businesses. It supports the work of LAs and it has some limited funding from MK Council which is only coming to effect in the last two years. Last year we had some funding from MK Council for the first time to support the work of Inward Investment Team. So there are parameters we have to work within.

[8] What are the current objectives of DMK?

They are still the same as they were (see Q2).

Internal DMO Network [1] What is the role of partnerships in today's DMO organisation?

Jackie: Absolutely essential. From MK point of view, we are lucky that we can establish very strong LA partnerships that have started through the bid for the Rugby World Cup 2015. As a result of that, partnerships have continued and have formed

something that is called an Events Board. We will provide a series of events during the Cup. So Alliances are essential and I would have assumed it will be the same across the country.

[2] Details of DMK's internal network (stats/member businesses)?

To be confirmed by Steven. Ask these questions.

[3] Does DMK tend to distinguish between small businesses and key stakeholders/players on a destination level?

Question has not been used. The impression is that DMK does distinguish between key and small businesses.

[4] Do you see key players as essential to collectively lead and promote the destination?

Jackie: Yes.

Dean: As well as small businesses?

Jackie: Yes, well, I am sure they are underrepresented in any destination.

[5] What would be the impact of 'fluid membership' as part of new DMO agenda?

Jackie: EB are working very hard. You met Vivian. Well, we have lost at least one member going to Experience Bedfordshire. Northamptonshire DMO is less active I would say in terms of DMO structure. Therefore we have DMK members

in Northamptonshire. But, I would say that if they became more active, we can lose some of the Northamptonshire members as well. It depends where people see the powerhouse if you like and I think that being centrally placed in the SEMLEP area, MK is well positioned. But we have to keep focused and we have to make sure that we are providing the benefits that the members want – listening to the members voices and ensuring that services provided fit those requirements.

Dean : So, some of the DMK member organisations are not based in MK?

Jackie: Yes.

[6] Are all existing tourism and hospitality MK businesses members of DMK? If not, Does DMK have an agenda for dealing with ‘free-riders’? and perhaps, promote the benefits of joining DMK?

Jackie: No. When I was CEO I would say that irritated me as there are some key organisations who think they should not be paying towards a membership. Because we bring visitors to MK and we can only live by being supported by memberships and we can only collectively market the area and make sure that people want to come to the area. If we do not do that, who is going to take this role?

Dean : So you are suggesting that there are a lot of free riders in the area of MK?

Jackie: I would not say a lot but there are some key players who are not members. The business sector I think is still untapped opportunity for DMOs in terms of funding. But what

are you offering to a business that is totally unrelated to the visitor economy? Businesses want to see the impact
It is hard to persuade a business that has not got a focus on the visitor economy.

**External
DMO
Network**

[1] Do you see LEPs as prospective partners to DMK since both organisations have interest in developing the visitor economy? LEPs, in addition, can bid for funding through RGF and EU funding pots and support destination development.

Jackie: I think they should be. I was slightly irritated of the merged group in SEMLEP (Culture and Creative + Visitor Economy). It seems to have neglected everything that has a reference to the visitor economy. It is more about the cultural offering now. And I think that I voiced my opinion and I was supported from two people from the cultural sector. I think until businesses recognise the importance of the visitor economy to the overall economy as highlighted by Cameron, it is going to be a whole struggle. Think businesses are not associated with the visitor economy seeing hotels as making a lot of money.

[2] What about other DMOs in the region? Do you see those as competitors solely or perhaps as partners - to collaborate with on LEP scale?

Jackie: I would say partners. I think that the partnership idea is very important.

Dean: Even though they are in a way competitors?

Jackie: well, yes. A good example is the MK Hoteliers organisation – they all compete but at the same time come

together and discuss problems.

Dean: What do you think are the ways of overcoming this?

Jackie: I think, if hotels in CMK are full there is an effect on other in more rural areas.

[3] Which public structures are part of the wider DMK network? VisitEngland? Tourism South East? Government departments?

Jackie: MK Council, The Parks Trust – hugely important – it manages all of the green spaces , open spaces and the lakes. And they have some great plan for the future, including visitor signs. MK Dons is also a big player – the work they have done with MK1 (the retail park next to the stadium, they are working on a music venue for 5,000 people). So that itself will be a huge visitor attraction. So different organisations are seeking to develop MK’s potential.

Dean: What about in terms of VisitEngland and Tourism South East?

Jackie: TSE had to change their name since VisitEngland became the national tourist body. Think they are struggling a bit. VisitEngland I think are important to us if we come back to the old problem of funding. They are taking the collaborative approach to marketing. VisitEngland guys have been to two meetings of SEMLEP and I think they were a bit frustrated with what SEMLEP’s officers were trying to achieve and the output that was made a focus was producing a map of attractions in the area. And the VisitEngland’s representative said yes, but

who is your target audience? The answer was, for people who want to invest here. Well, but why do you think an attractions map is going to bring investors in.

Dean: Vivian had suggested that we have an Airport Kiosk, what do you think?

Jackie: Again it comes down to money and there was a plan for the MK Railway Station – there was no money available to do it. So it is absolutely key. We can perhaps outsource that to a local company that produces leaflets and distributes those to key points in town, it is cost-effective as well.

**Context I:
Era of
Austerity** **[1] What is the role of the recent economic downturn and slow recovery process in destination management? To what extent DMK changed, influenced by the era of austerity?**

Jackie: Well, the biggest effect that we had was the terminated funding from the government. We never had funding from LAs, DMK's funding came from central government. So as soon as the new administration came in, that was the situation. So for the past two years, we have existed solely on membership fees. That made us look very hard at what we had been spending money on. We decided to get rid of two dedicated phone lines which saved us £1,000/year. Also, looked at ways we could partner with our members to enable us to do marketing. So for example we did promotion video, we have been part of travel expos. Although, the promotional video was paid by the MK Council as they have seen a value in it. So it made us and a lot of other DMOs examine their practices and look at how they can get to pots of money by sharing costs.

[2] Do you see the recession as a driver of free-riding among the destination and DMK members?

Jackie: No.

Context II: [1] Do you see the issue of co-opetition as a major barrier to destination management since the Government expects businesses to lead the parade and undertake proactive role in developing the destination?

Jackie: Because we have always been private sector-led I think it is a very good idea. I think it is going to be hard for local authorities to make the change. Because the advantage we had the LAs walked away when it comes to the visitor economy many years ago. So we had card blanche whereas other organisations now – LAs are trying to partner with private sector and it might be harder for them. Businesses would ask: well, why do we have to give our money?

[2] Are new, industry-led DMO member organisations allies or foes? How do they find the right balance?

Jackie: it is a key priority, absolutely. I think the difference with MK as a destination is the fact that there isn't just an urban visitor economy because you have got those villages here. The unitary authority is actually 2/3 rural and there are some attractive villages offering history, culture and heritage. So you have to remember – it isn't just about the hub (CMK) it is about the whole area – I think 13 villages. So this is the unique about the MK as a destination. There is a lot of Roman, Medieval heritage as well. We are looking forward to tap into this opportunity as well – it is also how arts and cultural offering is developing. There are amazing bits of architecture in MK both

contemporary, as well as traditional. This differentiates us.

Context III: Visitor Economy **[1] Is the emerging visitor economy concept part of new DMOs agendas? And in the case of DMK?**

Jackie: Absolutely. The DMP plan is a reflection of that. DMP Progress:

An initial draft went out to strategic partners for revision in October (feedback). Our final draft should have gone out now. When final draft comes back, the plan is that that the DMP will be again revised, updated and should be adopted by the 1st of Jan 2014.

Dean: My opinion: I think that this is a bold and dynamic, yet achievable Plan having in mind the high degree of commitment of LAs, DMK and other interested parties. Clearly, the Plan is to a large extent aligned to VisitEngland's criteria for a DMP, as well as those considering the new DMO body that is not solely interested in promotion and thus boosting tourism. Instead, it is projected as a DMO that goes well beyond meeting traditional tourism objectives as taking on board a wide array of sustainable economic, societal, and environmental deliverables – and I can see those incorporated in the Plan.

In this sense, happy to see a plan that aims to capitalise on target areas, such as strengthening partnerships with businesses. As well as heritage (Northern Heritage Corridor) and Higher Education promotion – both linking the roots of culture and heritage of the past with driving technology and intelligence development of the future. The Visitor Centre is another great idea. Methodology and impact statistics though will be vital if DMK is to convince businesses to further support the organisation's activities (as per SEMLEP's discussion

earlier this week).

The plan is a very good starting point capturing what MK has already achieved and wants to achieve as a destination, and it should be expanded once approved. It is explicit – the Plan is about the wider impacts of the visitor economy seen as a tool for local development, community well-being, and environmental sustainability.

Dean: Do you think that MK is the key spot across the SEMLEP area?

Jackie: Definitely. It is essential. It is at the core.

[2] Do you see new, wider-reaching DMOs, which are expected to be a partnership of public, private and third sector bodies as better capturing the visitor economy?

Jackie: Yes.

[3] Since visitor economy is part of LEP agenda and the new DMOs are expected to take a more holistic/inclusive approach to destination, do you see the emerging wider concept as a driver of collaboration/joint efforts between DMOs and LEPs?

Jackie: Yes.

[4] Does VisitEngland facilitate in any way the communication between these bodies or it is essentially responsibility of DMOs and LEPs?

Jackie: They are trying very hard to make links with all of the

LEPs and that is why one of the partnership managers in VisitEngland has the role to liaise with LEPs. I think some LEPs are easier to liaise than with others.

One of the big advantages that VisitEngland can offer is their research which most of it is free. And I think they recognise how important it is justifying the existence of a DMO in terms of the visitor economy. Hence, you need hard facts to convince politicians to be putting money in it. Link with VisitEngland is essential to every DMO.

In the past DMK was part of Tourism South East and they had to pay £5,000 a year to be marketed (+ all DMK member organisations). So we switched to VisitEngland, and I think that this relationship is absolutely critical.

We paid TSE £2,000 for economic study based on the Cambridge model.

I think the biggest problem the visitor economy has is the lack of ground research. (as per SEMLEP's Nov meeting). So it is knowing on which model you work on.

APPENDIX 3d. Phase I Sample Interview (SEMLEP, CEO)

Participant: South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership, CEO

TOPICAL AREAS	QUESTIONS
The changing DMO	n/a
Internal DMO Network	n/a
External DMO Network	[1] What are SEMLEP’s key partners when it comes to tourism development and exploring the wider visitor economy? We have seen members of two DMOs (DMK and Experience Bedfordshire), as part of the Visitor Economy Group.

Daniel: The SEMLEP is a public-private partnership. It is a very large and significant partnership. Consequently, we have got very large partnership machinery and a large part of that machinery is a group that also incorporates the visitor economy alongside the cultural offering as well. So the VE has been already recognised by our organisation as being very important, significant to contributing to our economic prospects. And as such, it deserves the rightful focus that a lot of our partners – public and private can give to it. And so the working group (VEG) is the mechanism by which we can help focus some of our strategic thinking because clearly, they bring together many individual partners. Our real intervention is to try and grow that sector and make sure we support the right types of intervention to help master that prospect in the future. SO articulation of our ambition is to identify where we are now, where we

could get to in the future, and try to help us get to that point.

[2] Tourism development and RTBs had long been supported by RDAs funding pots. Do you see LEPs as fulfilling the role of abolished RDAs in supporting new, business-led DMOs.

Daniel: Well, LEPs are not RDAs – we might have a lot of the responsibility that government had given to us but we are by no means RDAs. And the principal difference is we are not grant giving organisation. We do not actually have funding on our own. Most of the LEPs have been struggling just to exist in the first place. So most of the LEPs were not funded at all – they were, they clearly had a partnerships historically rooted in the organisation. With our LEP is pretty much the same story – we’ve had some limited funding to exist, but nothing to support actively grant giving any other organisations. So that is where we differ from RDAs and also of course, the added issue is that a lot of the funding that goes to DMOs is also from specific LAs. And LAs have been through an immense financial pressure and will continue to be going forward. So it is quite likely that there is going to be a considerable squeeze on the amount of funding that all sectors, including tourism are likely to get from local authorities.

[3] Is SEMLEP mainly representing the voice of businesses? Or, what is the influence of LAs in decision-making?

Daniel: SEMLEP, just like the other 38LEPs is a private sector-led but they are in partnership with public-private parties, and in SEMLEPs case – also with educational and

cultural sectors. So, in that context, there is a genuine partnership. So the private sector can involve these but it is also the public sector and the public sector plays a very significant role as they bring also the democratically accountable perspectives to the partnership. So we have a leaders group meeting a week before the board meetings so that is all partnership with Local Authorities. Currently having 11 and prospectively, the 12th one is coming on light soon. So we are in a very close relationship with our public partners and we meet CEOs on a monthly basis as well.

Context I: Era of Austerity

[1] How SEMLEP copes with issues of funding in the era of austerity? Are European Structural and Investment Funds your key source of funding?

Daniel: Let's put it this way – we both EU funding and Single Local Growth Funds for 2015 that we are going to be managing, if not directly controlling. Significance to us therefore is when we identify key projects that we need to be supporting particularly in the sector. Then we need to be doing one or two things immediately. European funds will be our first strategic funds which we will have a command of – probably this time next year. Thereafter, we can't secure funding from the European funds. Also with the two major sources of funding streams we have to ensure that we will support projects and go forward. But of course, as you know, there are some key criteria for applying for EU funding and so we need to ensure that we can only fund the projects that are aligned to these criteria. If we do that, the next step would be to put these projects as part of our Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF). Now, I see the prospects of that we can help develop that's sector.

[2] Do you see LEPs and DMOs as partners in destination development having in mind that the Coalition suggested that they should work together? And what about funding local projects that will be beneficial to both parties?

Daniel: I did not quite catch the question but I might just have a quarter, just a bit of it. DMOs have been around for many years and they existed well before the LEPs came so their future is not purely dependent on the LEPs existing. Their future is in delivery of key growth within their sector and I am ensuring that most of them are membership organisations that service their members as well. So in servicing their members as well as the LAs – they are the most potential aspects of their functionality. The alignment that they might have in terms of involvement with LEPs, if you like, is a strategic issue, but is more that we capture a number of DMOs in the SEMLEP area – it is not just one or two – we have a whole batch of them. SO we bring the strategic dimension to play. The individual, localised focus will remain on those DMOs membership and also their relationship with local partners, including LAs.

Context II: Co-opetition

[1] Do you see the issue of co-opetition as a major barrier to destination management since businesses are expected to lead the parade and undertake proactive role in developing the destination?

Daniel: Again, I did not quite catch the question but I suspect this is about the future; this is about the level of ambition that exists in the sector. We realise that if success is delivered in the sector, it will be a major contributor to our economy, and so it is in our interest to support the sector. The significance here is whether we have the sufficient

ambition and we have the credibility to deliver. I think, for instance, you are looking at both MK and Bedfordshire and I can tell you that certainly the MK DMO (DMK) is ambitions partner with wider offering, there is even a prospect for 2023 for the City of Culture. A good example here is Liverpool as a former city of culture attracting 10m people and £250m. So the visitor sector has very significant prospects of playing a key role in our destinations.

[2] Are SEMLEP member organisations allies or foes? How do you think they find the right balance?

Context III: Visitor Economy [1] To what extent is the emerging visitor economy concept part of SEMLEP's agenda?

Evidently, to a large extent.

[2] Do you see new, wider-reaching DMOs, which are expected to be a partnership of public, private and third sector bodies as better capturing the visitor economy?

[3] Since visitor economy is part of SEMLEP's agenda and the new DMOs are expected to take a more holistic/inclusive approach to destinations (going beyond marketing and promotion), do you then see the emerging wider concept as a driver of a dialogue/collaboration between DMOs and LEPs?

Daniel: The sector is very much part of our economy, so therefore, the relationship that we have with the sector and

with the key organisations that deliver the prospects for that growth in there will remain very fundamental to our philosophy. But of course, it is quite often that it depends on what geography we are talking about because across the country, some DMOs will not be as significant as others.

We have got a good track record, we have got some key ingredients, we have got some key opportunities if you like ahead of us. But the question is to try to ensure that we grasp those opportunities and deliver something meaningful then forward. I think that is going to be the challenge.

[4] And in the case of SEMLEP and DMK? How is this to be done?

Daniel: There is no doubt about it. You were part of our VEG where we are inviting some key stakeholders, including DMOs and see what their potential opportunities to grow are. Now, clearly, within the limitations that we have to secure and align funding streams, as I have already indicated to you, we will do whatever is possible to help our DMOs to succeed and deliver. Some DMOs within the SEMLEP boundaries are working on developing strategies and those strategies will reflect what potential there is going forward. There is also something that one needs to reflect on, our DMOs are quite financially independent. Other DMOs across the country are struggling to even secure core funding and sustain as organisations – some of the potential outputs are going to be limited because of the shortage of resources.

[5] VisitEngland is also taking part in SEMLEP's VEGroup. Does VisitEngland actually facilitate in any

way the communication between these bodies or it is essentially responsibility of DMOs and LEPs?

Daniel: Well, I only know well that there are healthy relationships between VisitEngland and the DMOs. In fact, VisitEngland will have to recognise the key DMOs in certain geographies. So, without the ambition, DMOs would not be the DMOs they want to be and have the significance that they bring to the table. So, DMOs relationship through VisitEngland would not necessarily be with LEPs. LEPs are partnerships, we do have relationships with national bodies but our principle relationship with our partners is in the locality. So, our engagement with VisitEngland to date has been fairly minimal. We do however invite each other to major things we do – for instance, they have invited us to the VisitEngland’s Visitor Economy conference – that is a way of initiating a dialogue.

[6] One of the key objectives of SEMLEPs Visitor Economy Group is to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing. How are then partnerships to be facilitated? What are SEMLEP’s future initiatives in that direction?

Daniel: The most important fact that you should bear in mind is that we are a partnership – our strength is the collective strength, not the individuals’ strength. And we run partnership that is very open, very transparent, and very inclusive. And it is that approach that brings benefits to all the partners to work together. And so, any intelligence that we have would be sharing. We will also be collaborating to support the growth in the sector. And the provider, we can only do this when opportunities present themselves,

specifically when we have particular responsibility or role to try to align future investments in the economy. And that is why currently, we are so focused on EU and also the SLGF funding pot that the Gov is making available to us from 2015. Without those, the ability to liver actively in the pursuit of securing funding many of our projects and opportunities, and programmes will be swiped out straight away because there would not be sufficient funding to try to facilitate that.

But also, in all of these, whilst much of this focus is about trying to secure funding into the sector, this sector strives because of the private sector involved in it as well. This sector strives because a lot of businesses see the potential in being involved in this. So, whether it is in Beds, Centre Parcs, which are big investments or others in MK will provide a wide array of opportunities and offering to visitors and even the local population.

There is always a very wide boundary, quite often it is the greenery, it is the uniqueness, we have a uniqueness in MK as a destination in its own right and I would say that there is a primary opportunity to go forward and galvanise some of that uniqueness.

All is much of a challenge to DMOs, challenge to the sector, but is also a challenge to LEPs to fund the packs of investments that could not otherwise be funded by any other source but nevertheless contribute to our localities going forward.

APPENDIX 4. Phase II Descriptive Statistics Tables

Hoppe & Reinelt 's Generic SNA Questions: Structural Properties and Relational Properties of the Network

Table 1. Clustering Coefficient Centrality

Rank	Label
	1.0 Conferences & Eve...
	1.0 Hospitality Sector
	1.0 Local Government
	1.0 Not-for-Profit
0.733333333333...	Attractions & Activit...
0.714285714285...	Local Government
	0.7 Hospitality Sector
0.666666666666...	Hospitality Sector
0.666666666666...	Retail & Services
0.666666666666...	Conferences & Eve...
0.666666666666...	Not-for-Profit
0.515151515151...	Retail & Services
0.511111111111...	Higher Education
	0.5 Transportation
	0.5 Conferences & Eve...
	0.5 Evening Economy
0.474358974358...	Retail & Services
0.472727272727...	Evening Economy
0.466666666666...	Hospitality Sector
0.466666666666...	Conferences & Eve...
0.428571428571...	Not-for-Profit
0.409090909090...	Not-for-Profit
0.408333333333...	Local Government
0.398692810457...	Not-for-Profit
0.388888888888...	Conferences & Eve...
0.380952380952...	Conferences & Eve...
0.379084967320...	Not-for-Profit
0.347619047619...	Evening Economy
0.341666666666...	Attractions & Activit...
0.333333333333...	Attractions & Activit...
0.333333333333...	Hospitality Sector
0.333333333333...	Hospitality Sector
0.333333333333...	Hospitality Sector
0.333333333333...	Not-for-Profit
0.326315789473...	Conferences & Eve...
	0.3 Retail & Services
	0.3 Hospitality Sector
0.285714285714...	Conferences & Eve...
0.285714285714...	Not-for-Profit
0.272727272727...	Attractions & Activit...
0.272727272727...	Local Government
0.266666666666...	Hospitality Sector
0.266666666666...	Attractions & Activit...
0.251461988304...	Not-for-Profit
0.219576719576...	Higher Education
	0.2 Conferences & Eve...
	0.2 Hospitality Sector
0.190476190476...	Hospitality Sector
0.178571428571...	Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Attractions & Activit...
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Transportation
	0.0 Attractions & Activit...
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...

Table 2. Basic Weighted Degree

Rank	Label
	35 Higher Education
	27 Not-for-Profit
	26 Evening Economy
	24 Not-for-Profit
	24 Not-for-Profit
	23 Conferences & Eve...
	20 Not-for-Profit
	18 Attractions & Activit...
	17 Attractions & Activit...
	17 Local Government
	16 Not-for-Profit
	16 Hospitality Sector
	13 Retail & Services
	13 Conferences & Eve...
	13 Evening Economy
	12 Attractions & Activit...
	12 Retail & Services
	12 Local Government
	10 Not-for-Profit
	10 Higher Education
	10 Conferences & Eve...
	9 Conferences & Eve...
	9 Not-for-Profit
	9 Conferences & Eve...
	8 Not-for-Profit
	8 Conferences & Eve...
	8 Local Government
	7 Hospitality Sector
	6 Transportation
	6 Hospitality Sector
	6 Hospitality Sector
	6 Attractions & Activit...
	5 Retail & Services
	5 Hospitality Sector
	5 Hospitality Sector
	5 Hospitality Sector
	5 Conferences & Eve...
	5 Hospitality Sector
	4 Evening Economy
	3 Attractions & Activit...
	3 Hospitality Sector
	3 Hospitality Sector
	3 Retail & Services
	3 Local Government
	3 Conferences & Eve...
	3 Not-for-Profit
	3 Conferences & Eve...
	3 Evening Economy
	3 Not-for-Profit
	2 Conferences & Eve...
	2 Hospitality Sector
	2 Retail & Services
	2 Hospitality Sector
	2 Conferences & Eve...
	1 Retail & Services
	1 Hospitality Sector
	1 Hospitality Sector
	1 Attractions & Activit...
	1 Retail & Services
	1 Retail & Services
	1 Not-for-Profit
	1 Conferences & Eve...
	0 Evening Economy
	0 Evening Economy
	0 Retail & Services
	0 Hospitality Sector
	0 Hospitality Sector
	0 Conferences & Eve...
	0 Transportation
	0 Attractions & Activit...

Table 3. Weighted Outdegree Centrality

Rank	Label
56.0	Higher Education
51.0	Evening Economy (...)
43.0	Not-for-Profit
37.0	Hospitality Sector
28.0	Attractions & Activit...
24.0	Conferences & Eve...
21.0	Not-for-Profit
19.0	Conferences & Eve...
16.0	Not-for-Profit
16.0	Conferences & Eve...
12.0	Attractions & Activit...
11.0	Not-for-Profit
11.0	Attractions & Activit...
9.0	Retail & Services
9.0	Transportation
9.0	Conferences & Eve...
9.0	Not-for-Profit
9.0	Hospitality Sector
9.0	Evening Economy (...)
8.0	Local Government
7.0	Hospitality Sector
7.0	Conferences & Eve...
6.0	Hospitality Sector
5.0	Conferences & Eve...
5.0	Hospitality Sector
4.0	Retail & Services
4.0	Not-for-Profit
3.0	Conferences & Eve...
3.0	Conferences & Eve...
3.0	Hospitality Sector
2.0	Conferences & Eve...
2.0	Hospitality Sector
2.0	Evening Economy (...)
2.0	Not-for-Profit
1.0	Attractions & Activit...
1.0	Hospitality Sector
1.0	Local Government
1.0	Local Government
1.0	Conferences & Eve...
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Not-for-Profit
0.0	Evening Economy (...)
0.0	Evening Economy (...)
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Attractions & Activit...
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Local Government
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Conferences & Eve...
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Not-for-Profit
0.0	Not-for-Profit
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Not-for-Profit
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Conferences & Eve...
0.0	Transportation
0.0	Attractions & Activit...
0.0	Evening Economy (...)
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Higher Education
0.0	Conferences & Eve...
0.0	Attractions & Activit...

**Hoppe & Reinelt's Specific SNA Questions: Structural Properties
and Relational Properties of the Network**

Table 4. Betweenness Centrality

Rank	Label
543.2936951936...	Higher Education
297.3802059052...	Not-for-Profit
254.9660700410...	Not-for-Profit
193.3787795537...	Not-for-Profit
180.5654761904...	Evening Economy
161.3817460317...	Hospitality Sector
139.2280497280...	Not-for-Profit
128.7493006993...	Hospitality Sector
123.4057248307...	Conferences & Eve...
118.6524114774...	Conferences & Eve...
110.1902625152...	Not-for-Profit
101.6494588744...	Attractions & Activit...
101.1166666666...	Local Government
100.7198412698...	Conferences & Eve...
82.86778776778...	Evening Economy
68.73081363081...	Attractions & Activit...
60.46991341991...	Attractions & Activit...
48.07604062604...	Conferences & Eve...
45.54549617049...	Retail & Services
35.41666666666...	Evening Economy
	32.0 Conferences & Eve...
30.39999999999...	Hospitality Sector
19.96359473859...	Conferences & Eve...
14.61111111111...	Transportation
11.78730158730...	Conferences & Eve...
11.67619047619...	Hospitality Sector
9.56944444444...	Not-for-Profit
7.98737373737...	Conferences & Eve...
6.132634032634...	Retail & Services
5.702380952380...	Local Government
5.030891330891...	Hospitality Sector
4.92014652014652	Hospitality Sector
3.476190476190...	Conferences & Eve...
	1.0 Attractions & Activit...
0.95833333333...	Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Attractions & Activit...
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Local Government
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Local Government
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Transportation
	0.0 Attractions & Activit...
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Higher Education
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Attractions & Activit...

Table 5. Closeness Centrality

Rank	Label
3.741379310344...	Retail & Services
3.689655172413...	Hospitality Sector
3.362068965517...	Hospitality Sector
3.241379310344...	Not-for-Profit
3.189655172413...	Transportation
3.017241379310...	Conferences & Eve...
	3.0 Retail & Services
2.913793103448...	Hospitality Sector
2.913793103448...	Hospitality Sector
2.879310344827...	Conferences & Eve...
2.862068965517...	Conferences & Eve...
2.844827586206...	Attractions & Activit...
2.741379310344...	Hospitality Sector
2.724137931034...	Conferences & Eve...
2.724137931034...	Local Government
2.706896551724...	Hospitality Sector
2.706896551724...	Not-for-Profit
2.655172413793...	Conferences & Eve...
2.568965517241...	Conferences & Eve...
2.413793103448...	Evening Economy
2.379310344827...	Hospitality Sector
2.344827586206...	Conferences & Eve...
2.310344827586...	Not-for-Profit
2.241379310344...	Attractions & Activit...
2.241379310344...	Evening Economy
2.137931034482...	Attractions & Activit...
2.137931034482...	Not-for-Profit
2.137931034482...	Not-for-Profit
2.034482758620...	Not-for-Profit
	2.0 Conferences & Eve...
1.965517241379...	Not-for-Profit
1.948275862068...	Higher Education
	1.0 Attractions & Activit...
	1.0 Hospitality Sector
	1.0 Attractions & Activit...
	1.0 Conferences & Eve...
	1.0 Local Government
	1.0 Local Government
	1.0 Evening Economy
	1.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Local Government
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Local Government
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Not-for-Profit
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Transportation
	0.0 Attractions & Activit...
	0.0 Evening Economy
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Higher Education
	0.0 Conferences & Eve...
	0.0 Attractions & Activit...

Table 6. Eigenvector Centrality Centrality

Rank	Label
	1.0 Local Government
0.76260894846...	Retail & Services
0.71210777314...	Retail & Services
0.70225525991...	Higher Education
0.69700210466...	Evening Economy
0.67883701119...	Not-for-Profit
0.67748648641...	Higher Education
0.62637251608...	Local Government
0.58482116660...	Not-for-Profit
0.48314353385...	Attractions & Acti...
0.42920644461...	Not-for-Profit
0.40999822753...	Not-for-Profit
0.38926994721...	Evening Economy
0.34030576898...	Not-for-Profit
0.33462224505...	Not-for-Profit
0.32999228230...	Not-for-Profit
0.32966447413...	Hospitality Sector
0.32314140485...	Attractions & Acti...
0.30902550570...	Hospitality Sector
0.30284887652...	Attractions & Acti...
0.28791404045...	Conferences & Ev...
0.28012039681...	Conferences & Ev...
0.26337950301...	Conferences & Ev...
0.25033289907...	Evening Economy
0.24655931654...	Local Government
0.22118353787...	Local Government
0.21810809681...	Conferences & Ev...
0.21542239421...	Conferences & Ev...
0.20768944756...	Retail & Services
0.16130996807...	Attractions & Acti...
0.15099279374...	Hospitality Sector
0.15050735421...	Not-for-Profit
0.14996444496...	Hospitality Sector
0.14684741722...	Not-for-Profit
0.13345949258...	Retail & Services
0.11796050245...	Hospitality Sector
0.11362064696...	Attractions & Acti...
0.11327651744...	Retail & Services
0.11327651744...	Evening Economy
0.11327651744...	Conferences & Ev...
0.10897126378...	Hospitality Sector
0.10418873910...	Transportation
0.10192935670...	Hospitality Sector
0.09606853068...	Conferences & Ev...
0.09605196233...	Not-for-Profit
0.07252010136...	Hospitality Sector
0.05929329292...	Hospitality Sector
0.05673507792...	Conferences & Ev...
0.04100682443...	Hospitality Sector
0.04100682443...	Retail & Services
0.04100682443...	Conferences & Ev...
0.02363869644...	Hospitality Sector
0.01958143813...	Retail & Services
0.01958143813...	Hospitality Sector
0.01800454219...	Not-for-Profit
0.01195900049...	Conferences & Ev...
0.01195900049...	Conferences & Ev...
0.00699629948...	Conferences & Ev...
0.00699629948...	Hospitality Sector
0.00161047432...	Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Evening Economy (...)
	0.0 Evening Economy (...)
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Attractions & Activit...
	0.0 Retail & Services
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Hospitality Sector
	0.0 Conferences & Ev...
	0.0 Transportation
	0.0 Attractions & Acti...

Table 7. Weighted Indegree

Rank	Label
29.0	Local Government
26.0	Retail & Services
22.0	Higher Education
21.0	Retail & Services
19.0	Evening Economy (...)
18.0	Not-for-Profit
17.0	Higher Education
16.0	Conferences & Eve...
16.0	Not-for-Profit
14.0	Not-for-Profit
13.0	Not-for-Profit
13.0	Not-for-Profit
13.0	Attractions & Activit...
12.0	Hospitality Sector
12.0	Local Government
12.0	Hospitality Sector
11.0	Hospitality Sector
11.0	Attractions & Activit...
10.0	Attractions & Activit...
9.0	Retail & Services
9.0	Conferences & Eve...
9.0	Not-for-Profit
9.0	Not-for-Profit
9.0	Conferences & Eve...
7.0	Hospitality Sector
7.0	Conferences & Eve...
7.0	Hospitality Sector
7.0	Evening Economy (...)
7.0	Evening Economy (...)
6.0	Hospitality Sector
6.0	Hospitality Sector
5.0	Hospitality Sector
5.0	Conferences & Eve...
5.0	Hospitality Sector
4.0	Transportation
4.0	Local Government
4.0	Conferences & Eve...
3.0	Attractions & Activit...
3.0	Hospitality Sector
3.0	Retail & Services
3.0	Not-for-Profit
3.0	Conferences & Eve...
3.0	Local Government
2.0	Attractions & Activit...
2.0	Retail & Services
2.0	Hospitality Sector
2.0	Conferences & Eve...
2.0	Conferences & Eve...
2.0	Not-for-Profit
2.0	Not-for-Profit
2.0	Evening Economy (...)
2.0	Conferences & Eve...
1.0	Retail & Services
1.0	Hospitality Sector
1.0	Retail & Services
1.0	Conferences & Eve...
1.0	Hospitality Sector
1.0	Not-for-Profit
1.0	Conferences & Eve...
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Evening Economy (...)
0.0	Evening Economy (...)
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Attractions & Activit...
0.0	Retail & Services
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Hospitality Sector
0.0	Conferences & Eve...
0.0	Transportation
0.0	Attractions & Activit...

APPENDIX 5a. Completed Self-reflected Practitioner Questionnaire (Phase III)

1. DestinationMK: Holiday Inn MK (Hospitality Sector)

1. Within an increasingly networked environment, pooling knowledge and resources has become a fundamental prerequisite to ensuring the long-term sustainability of financially-constrained Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) facing challenges to deliver value to their destinations and member organisations. Distributed Leadership (DL) is a recent paradigm that is to gain momentum in destination research as a promising response to these challenges. DL calls for recognising the collective strength of all members on board DMOs or in our case - on board DestinationMK.

Drawing on previous research with DestinationMK, we attempted to provide an indicative definition of DMOs serving as DL networks in destinations:

"DMOs seen as Distributed Leadership (DL) networks capture a cohesive, yet inclusive network of diverse destination actors (i.e. a nexus between businesses, local government and community), not solely having an interest in, but committed to shaping the strategic direction of the destination using formal governance structure (i.e. Destination Management Organisation) that serves as a platform for orchestrating it (the destination) collectively, whilst also following a clear collaborative agenda in delivering developmental objectives and meeting targets (i.e. a Destination Management Plan)."

Do you see the future of DMOs and particularly DestinationMK in adopting such DL model and why?

yes as it make sense all parties working together to make DMO + MK. successful as an organisation

2. Drawing on our involvement in shaping the new Destination Management Plan for Milton Keynes, we were able to spot DL practice, which is already developing on a DMO level (i.e. within DestinationMK).

Having understood the concept of DL in DMO context (see our definition in Question 1), what do you consider to be the challenges to and opportunities for enacting DL across the complete DestinationMK network of member organisations?

you are asking organisation to take more responsibility of the running of MK - life. in the hospitality sector has many opportunities - esp. the need to run a 24/7 business is so to take time out is becoming more difficult

3. Drawing on our involvement in shaping the new Destination Management Plan for Milton Keynes, we were able to spot DL practice, which is already developing on a DMO level (i.e. within DestinationMK).

Having understood the concept of DL in DMO context (see our definition in Question 1), what would be the role of your sector i.e. Hospitality in facilitating the process of embedding DL practice across the complete network?

As ever we would contribute esp with our link to MK Holidays Association. where as a collective we have DMK on the agenda. + Steve attends some meetings - there is a challenge trying to gain buy in from all sectors esp Tourism + Attractions. We need to build one Am. at the moment its "what is in it for me."

4. Towards the end of last year we ran a network study across DestinationMK member organisations. Yours and other DestinationMK members' kind contribution led to identifying 6 leadership types on board the membership organisation that complement one another:

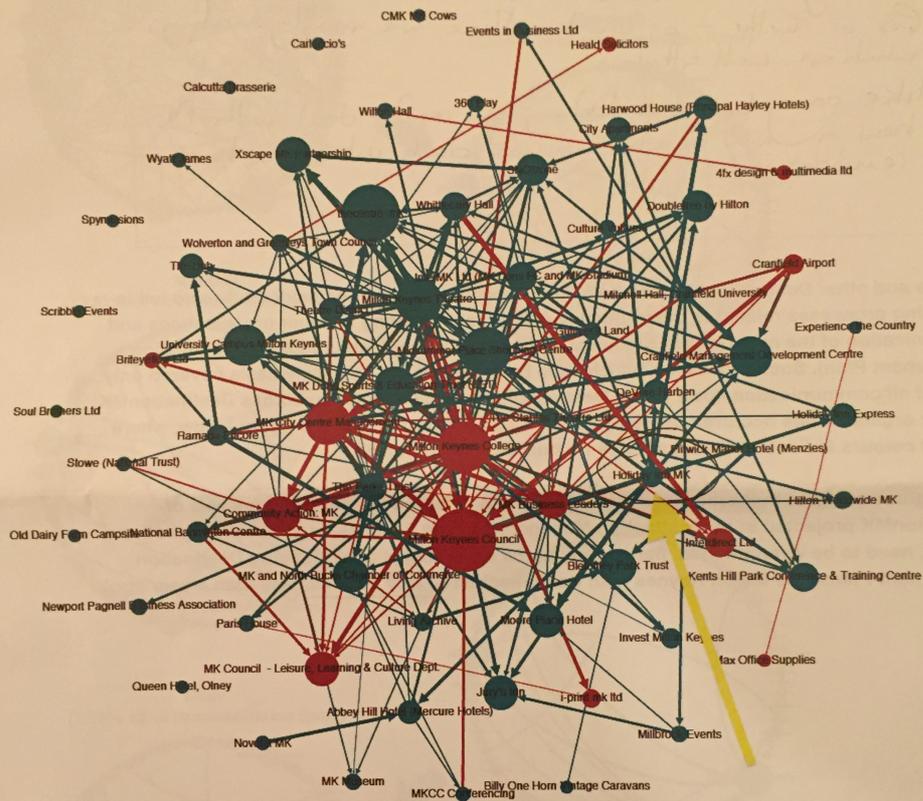
- + Network in-community leaders
- + Network cross-community leaders
- + Highly influential leaders
- + Established leaders
- + Emerging leaders (Holiday Inn MK)
- + Resource-empowered leaders

We call them network champions and Holiday Inn MK is among these network champions.

Do you believe that DL within DestinationMK starts with embracing network champions as catalysts of developing DL across each sector on-board DMK? Would this help break down barriers to participating in DL between corporate (founding) and regular DestinationMK member organisations or even between regular members within and across sectors?

Regular members are an important factor as non attendance + change of members disrupts - progress in the organisation. The DMK Plan is an excellent document if all its objectives are complete.

5. As the previous question suggested, Holiday Inn MK falls within one of the six leadership types and is among the champions on board DestinationMK. In other words, Holiday Inn MK is seen as an Emerging Leader type organisation within DestinationMK and as such, it demonstrates evidence of strong DL practice within the complete network (see the figure below).



Having seen the network depiction above indicating your organisation's position in the complete network, what Holiday Inn MK and other champions from your sector can do to involve more member organisations (smaller nodes on the above figure) from your sector in DL practice within DestinationMK (i.e. within your sector)?

This is why we join and meet in organisations that is helpful to showcase Milton Keynes - a gap or colour grid would be helpful.
 I presume red is lead organisations, + Green Networks and secondary organisations.

6. Drawing on Question 5 and the above figure, what may also be done to strengthen the existing level of interaction between your sector and other sectors on board DestinationMK (i.e. across sectors)?

The Plan was launched with an overview.
The organisation needs to update via email.
PIS or Twitter - or updates. There are monthly meetings
which are well attended
like any business. Today you read & deal with the
hear a news or what's on your desk unless you have
reminders.

7. Yours and other DestinationMK members' kind contribution to our network study also led to identifying processes related to the frequency of interaction among member organisations and communication of the membership organisation's shared vision (captured in the Destination Management Plan). Such processes, which have been carried out on a daily basis covered only 2.26% of all communication flows within DestinationMK. Most interaction across DestinationMK member organisations occurred quarterly or even less-frequently (see the figure below, where different colours indicate different sectors on board DestinationMK).

These figures suggest that processes related to communication i.e. the visionary role of DestinationMK projected in its Destination Management Plan (incl. vision, mission, aspirations, actions), need to be strengthened, particularly at the early stages of embedding Destination Management Plans (the Milton Keynes plan was launched in July 2014 i.e. less than a year ago).

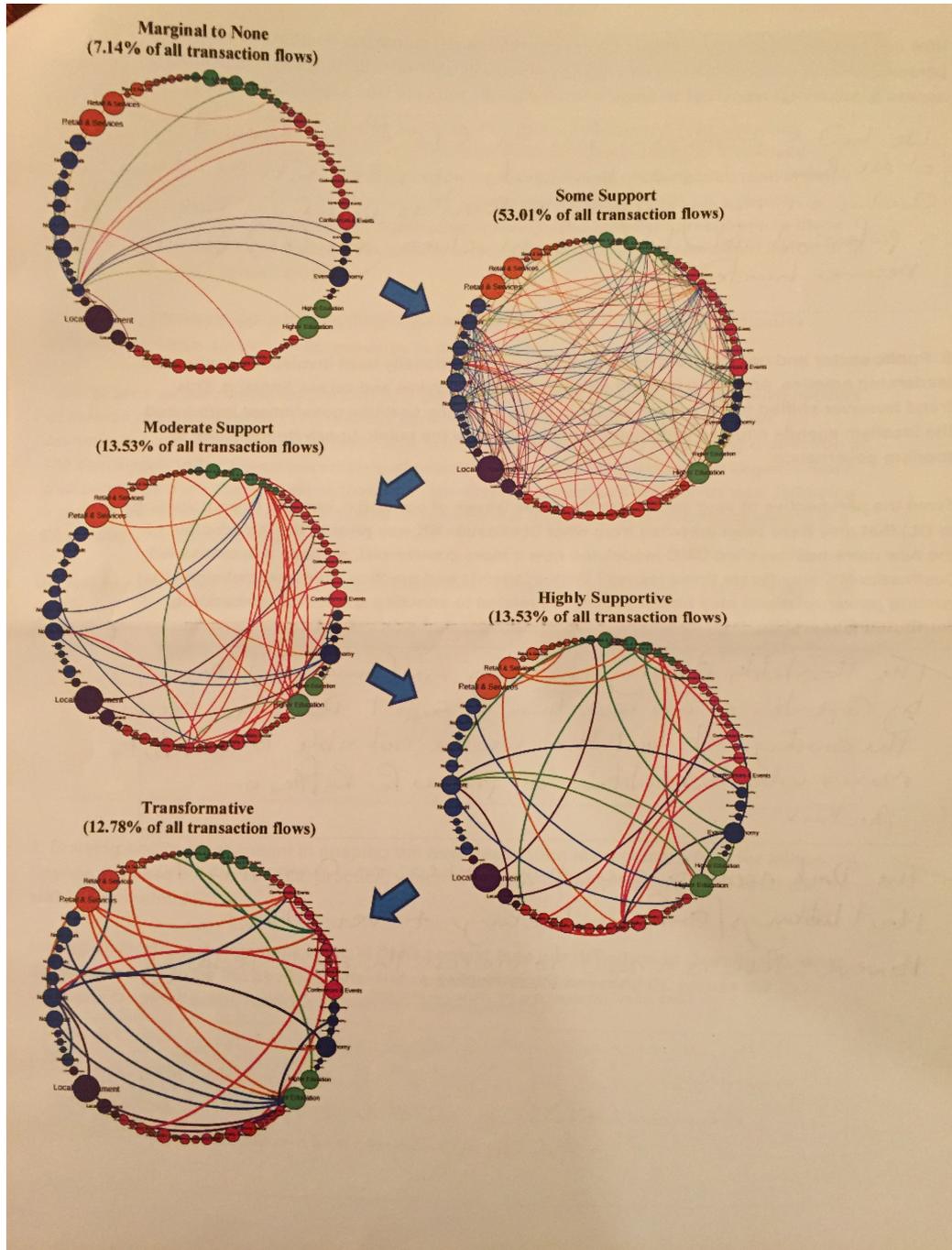
The visionary role of DMOs i.e. shaping and communicating the long-term strategic destination development agenda has been considered as one of the key leadership roles of these membership organisations. Yet, the visionary role of DestinationMK at present is seen as rather weak as demonstrated by the figure above.

How can such processes related to communicating the destination's vision (captured in the Destination Management Plan) be improved from the perspective of your sector?

AB Q7

8. Yours and other DestinationMK members' kind contribution to our network study also led to identifying that over 40% of all developmental resource flows in the complete network provided moderate through to high support or even transformative impact over individual DestinationMK member organisations (see the figure below, where different colours indicate different sectors on board DestinationMK).

Pooling developmental resources are central to enacting DL. Yet, over 7% of all developmental resource flows within DMK have demonstrated a marginal or less impact over individual member organisations with further 53.01% indicating just some support (see the figure below).



How can processes related to distribution of developmental resources be improved from the perspective of your sector so that the majority (if not all) DMK member organisations have access to such vital resources in times when the public purse is less available to DMOs?

We had a presentation from the CEO of MK Council at MK Business leaders two weeks ago, she asks the same question on many subjects, in Business unless you are a professional networker or semi retired your (me) resources becomes limited

9. Public sector and not-for-profit organisations have traditionally been involved in destination leadership practice, providing funding streams in Milton Keynes and across England. This trend however shifted to the private sector in 2010, when the coalition government introduced the localism agenda coupled with major funding cuts and the public-to-private transition in tourism governance.

From the perspective of your sector, are there still issues of power (i.e. barriers to participating in DL) that may have been inherited from what DestinationMK was prior to the introduction of the new more business-led DMO model and how a more commercial, perhaps a business-led DestinationMK may tackle these issues? Both academia and practice have acknowledged that existing power relations may hinder processes related to enacting and further embedding distributed leadership.

The Hospitality Industry is usually Fin. (managed) by big Corporates or who would have to support Destination across the country. at local level we are not able to contribute money unless subscribers or prizes for Raffles or Auctions

The DMK needs to even more money or commission from hotel bookings / conference bookings + even Attractions
However there is a need to increase the people resource

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APPENDIX 5b. Phase III Sample Interview with a Policy Maker from VisitEngland

General: Reshaped DMOs serving as leadership networks:

- Do you believe that reshaped DMOs can potentially go beyond destination management and assume leadership functions in order to cope with external complexities of the environment (e.g. limited funding provision, increased competition in a highly saturated market, a wider set of responsibilities under the remit of reshaped DMOs)?

Participant: I think that there are two fundamental points that need to be considered before answering this question. One – defining a DMO in itself is quite challenging as various DMOs have different functions under their remit hence some are more marketing-centric, whereas others are more management-centric. Well, in England we have some 200 what we define as destination organisations and they all vary in terms of size, resource, remit and it's the constitution effectively. So you have, for instance Marketing Manchester from one side of the spectrum (being more dynamic organisation, having more staff and resources than VisitEngland) and then you have on the other side of the spectrum Visit Surrey. I use Visit Surrey as an example because they have two international airports in their county or on the borders of their county and have quite large numbers in terms of international visitors. Because of that fact, the scope of which they work and the scope of their responsibilities is vastly different. Out of the two, Visit Surrey is the new DMO if you like because they are community interest company, they were in set-up about 3 years ago, whereas Marketing Manchester has been around for quite some time. So that is one I think of the considerations within that question.

Two - the other thing is destination management and what we really mean by destination management. When I talk about it [destination management] on events, I am talking about a leadership function, I am talking about the coordination of the visitor economy, providing leadership for the constituent parts of the visitor economy to make sure that the visitor experience leads up to the message that is sold as part of the communications process. So you know, it is not just about the outward communications to get people to the place, it is

making sure that all different constituents being part work well enough so that when the visitors are there, they have a great experience, they spend more money, they will tell their friends and come back again.

Out of the 200 destination organisations that we have, if I was pressed to say how many of them do destination management, I would probably say - officially we say about 40, the reality is probably less than that – destination organisations that do true destination management. The reason why I say that is because the majority of them are focused on the promotional side of things, i.e. they are outward-facing and that brings challenges in it self in terms of being able to deliver leadership functions.

I think, if we forget the new DMO model, or look at both – the new and old one, can they go beyond destination management? I think yes they [DMOs] do and yes they [DMOs] can and probably yes, they should! They should because the visitor economy is such a broad term, it touches a variety of industries, it touches a variety of stakeholder groups and it is done well, then DMOs do need to have that relationship (i.e. exercising leadership functions) more broadly than the traditional tourism sector. There are examples of these that is happening so if you have looked at Marketing Cheshire – they are a DMO that probably serve this new model if you like and touching upon inclusive management and leadership. They knew that funding will disappear and LAs will pull out from tourism because it was a non-statutory function. Marketing Cheshire said: ok these new LEPs are coming along and we need to change our model to fit around to make sure that we exist. And they positioned themselves as a place branding, place marketing body – a process facilitated by the LEP. Quickly changing from tourism to having the live, work, place, study agenda for Cheshire. Now they work across multiple economic sectors and with multiple stakeholders to enable them to continue to do tourism and to grow the visitor economy more widely.

Researcher: In light of this, what do you Jason think is the role of networks, even leadership networks in the case of MK or other destinations being on

crossroads? What would be the role of local networks in destination management and leadership?

Participant: I think, to a certain extent, the role these networks play is irrespective of whether tourism is a big function. I think the DMO, to a certain extent needs understanding of networks and tourism to make its role more effective, so I would like see some of the DMOs like DMK (because tourism it's not a big thing in MK, however – business tourism and supporting other businesses and where tourism can come to its fore) to be approaching some of the big players. So DMK can help them achieve their goals because they have a network of tourism businesses. [here I explain the concept of distributed leadership before introducing the next question].

- What do you think is the place of distributed (shared) leadership in financially-straitened DMOs and DMK in particular?

Participant: Leadership in DMOs I think comes from understanding of how that place [destination] is going to grow in economic terms and that where a lot of DMOs fall down because the person who suppose to provide that leadership rarely understands that tourism is not the important sector. The tourism is made up of lots of different things and you can achieve your goals by being supportive, manipulating and using others to achieve those growth targets.

Another area where DMOs fall down is when they do not understand what their destination actually is and almost trying to force it from a political reason or economic reason as to what that destination is. There is a role in the leadership function of the DMO to articulate that in different ways because your destination to visitors may be much larger or much smaller to the destination and the network that you work with. Here Lake District and Cumbria is a classic example.

So the whole concept of shared or distributed leadership is something that has not been articulated in those terms before, but is something that has been thought about and is encouraged for a while. So, there are examples where we get destinations to think more broadly and it is interesting to see how they find the barriers to do that.

- If Yes, to the previous question: Do you believe that DMOs serving as leadership networks in destinations are better able to address fundamental issues, such as empowerment of small businesses on board and indeed – recognise the diversity, roles and functions of destination actors by operating an ‘open door’ policy?

Management’s interaction with leadership:

- Can DMPs provide a scope for collective action and facilitate the setting up of common goals?
- Are DMPs able to strengthen the collective approach to leadership in DMOs? If yes, in what way?

Participant [answers both questions above]: I think, absolutely is the answer to that [DMPs provide a scope for collective action and facilitate the setting up of common goals]. I think DMPs is one of the biggest successes – it [DMP] is not necessarily the end document, but is actually the process, which the stakeholders and the DMO go through to reach that document. In my experience many people, who do DMPs, if they do them properly and do that with a degree of engagement with the stakeholders, you get a two-way conversation going. It is almost about having that understanding what the challenges and opportunities are for all those different groups, enables you to have then shared goals and objectives. But also DMPs allow DMOs to be able to provide leadership because you understand what it is that your stakeholder groups are trying to do. A high degree of engagement is key and we have some good examples in England.

- Are DMPs able to define/filter out key intervention domains in destinations?
- Can DMPs articulate roles and responsibilities of destination leads (e.g. DMO member organisations)?
- Do you see DMPs as a means of providing a framework for leveraging resources in financially-straitened times?

Participant [answers both questions above]: Again – absolutely! DMP can articulate roles and responsibilities of destination leads. This is at the core of our guide to developing DMPs. I think this is something that can be missed out – certainly resources is rare – I have seen those parts of it, whereas responsibilities is often there which is good. So yes, I do think that articulating the roles and responsibilities of destination leads is key to DMPs.

We [VisitEngland] asked DEFRA to use some of the DMPs as a source of evidence for some of the applications for funding for RDPE (Rural Development Programme for England). Now, in principle that [the 2nd question] is a good idea – all DMPs should be grounded in solid evidence, they should not just be based on the back up of DMO CEOs or the board. So, a number of the DMPs lacked any real evidence. So if DMPs are done properly, absolutely they can be used and they should be used and is useful for DMOs to understand how they can be used.

Leadership's interaction with governance:

- Do you believe that formal governance structures (e.g. DMOs) are able to facilitate leadership decisions being of interest to the diversity of DMO member organisations, and even other destination communities beyond DMOs and their membership network? For example, are small businesses underrepresented and do they have a voice in destination management?

Participant: I think this goes back to our previous point of what destination management is and if they are good in that role, then absolutely! Yes, DMOs [formal governance structures] are able to facilitate leadership decisions being of interest to the diversity of DMO member organisations. There are a number of examples where small businesses both within the tourism sector and beyond have been engaged because the DMO is doing a good job of explaining the role that SMEs play within the wider visitor economy. So, I think it can and it should but if the DMOs do not understand or do not wish to play a wider management role and is just doing marketing, then no – it won't be successful. So there are boards that joined DMO boards because they have a large reservoir in the

county and want to make sure that tourists use it and it is know about it well. [this links to my point where for example FSB can join DMO boards].

- Do you see reshaped DMOs as critical to facilitating a joined-up approach to leadership in destinations, i.e. serving as a means of finding common ground to exercising leadership functions in destinations?
- Should reshaped DMOs be seen as leadership networks adopting fluid leadership policy in order to assign roles of network actors according to individual expertise, access to resources, areas of influence and sectoral links?

Governance's interaction with management:

- Do you believe that formal governance structures are key to facilitating a joined-up approach, i.e. bringing together often diverse DMO members into the development and implementation of DMPs? Or are DMOs key to producing a successful DMP?

Participant: I would argue that irrespectively of government policy, that is the model that should have been taken [post-2011 Tourism Policy DMO model] and some of the DMOs that have been around for quite sometime, have always been business-led with the support of the public sector. So, Manchester, Birmingham have all been business led and have had sort of at least 50/50 split on their boards. Yes they had more funding from Las and that has changed to a degree, but I think they knew what the new model will be.

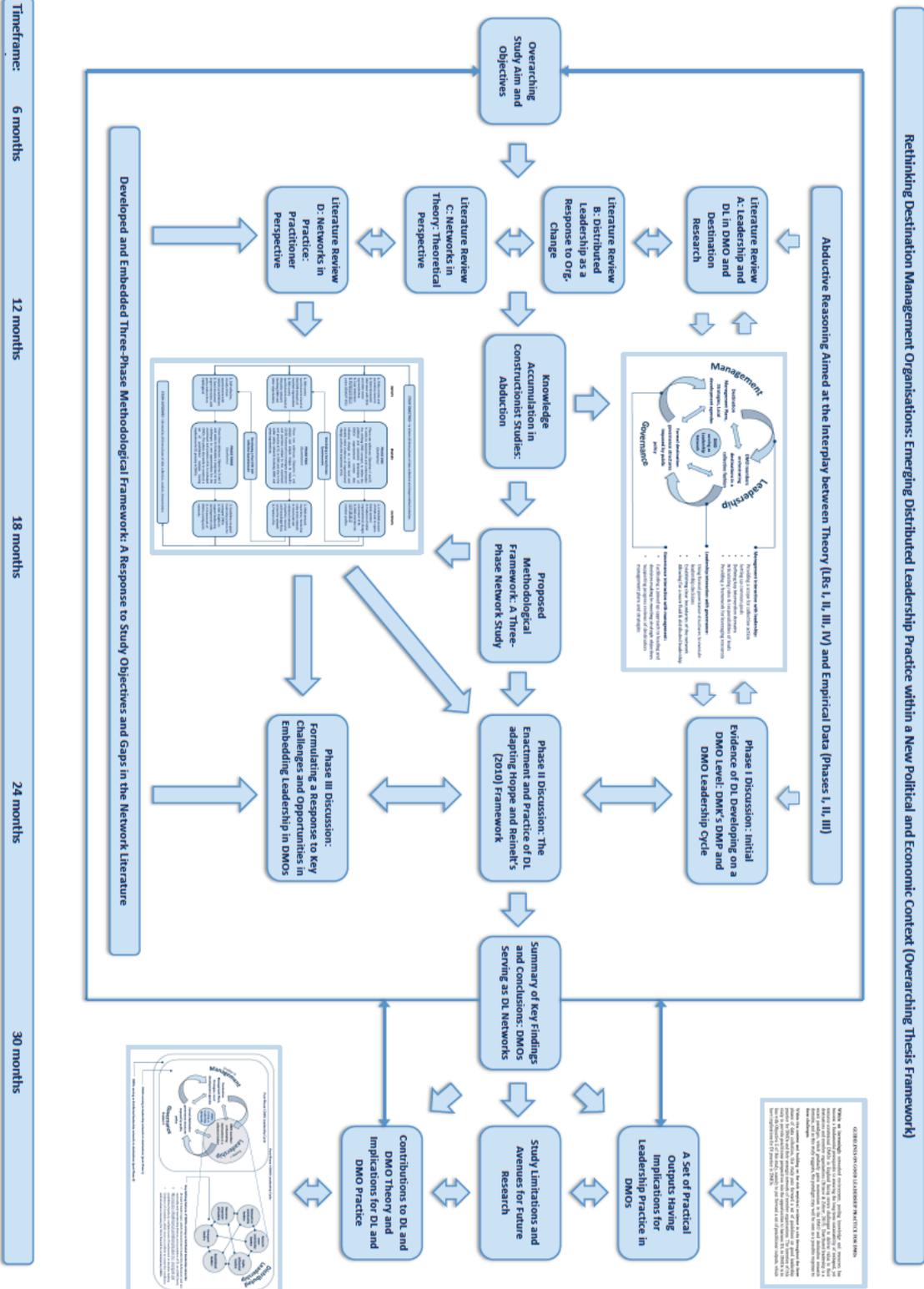
In my opinion, a DMP needs, although it is about the place and involves a variety of stakeholders and what the organisation I responsible for is delivery, you need someone to provide leadership and you need somebody to own it and make sure that it actually is being reported on – that is the custodian – I think this is the sort of role that DMOs can play and they can play very well. If DMOs are run by LAs, businesses will be reluctant to engage because they do not trust LAs. So having a DMO with a PPP can enable a DMP that can be delivered and enabled more effectively.

Researcher: So may be more business-led DMOs can provide opportunities for wider representation for both businesses and even not-for-profit organisations?

Participant: It is interesting actually because there is a big question about membership and whether that is an appropriate model. For me, membership models can be slightly flawed because I know they are degree of consistency in terms of how much revenue is generated but how much work is actually put in retention and recruitment, membership satisfaction is quite high. It is a question whether that is effective. I would like to see a pay and play model – anybody can participate in planning, no need to be member on their website but you do have to pay for the services that you get. So you have the services that are relevant to you [a more flexible membership model – similar to the DMK one]. Then a DMO can confidently say that their network is much broader and much more accessible. So this is my personal view. Breaking down barriers to the traditional model requires strong leadership. Example here is Visit County Durham (Melanie Sencicue is the CEO). So there I have seen a room full of nearly 300 businesses and other local organisation having an opportunity to vote for what is to be included in the DMP for County Durham. Real engagement and real leadership encourage the DMO to be able to do that and it works because they get a lot of support.

- Do you believe that formal governance structures are able to facilitate a joined-up approach to leading and decision-making in meeting strategic objectives set out in DMPs?
- Do you believe that governance structures put in place allow for a wider representation of stakeholder interests and empower/provide a voice in shaping management plans and strategies?
- Can DMOs support and facilitate the collective effort of member organisations to undertake progress reviews of DMPs and destination strategies, i.e. treating the DMP as a 'live document' so that it can respond to dynamics in the organisation (DMO) and its environment?

APPENDIX 6. Overarching Study Framework



APPENDIX 7. List of Publications and Papers in Review

The following list includes a number of journal articles and a book chapter, which stem from this doctoral study and have either been already published or undergoing a review process.

2016

Hristov, D. and Scott, N., 2016. Distributed Leadership Champions in Destination Management Organisations. *Tourism Management* (In Press).

Hristov, D. and Zehrer, A., 2016. Does Distributed Leadership Have a Place in Destination Management Organisations? A Policy-Makers Perspective. *Current Issues in Tourism* (In Review).

Hristov, D, and Ramkissoon, H., 2016. Leadership in Destination Management Organisations. *Annals of Tourism Research* (In Press).

Hristov, D, and Ramkissoon, H., 2016. Bringing Cross-disciplinarity to the Fore: A Methodological Framework for Leadership in Destination Management Organisations. In Nunkoo, R. ed. *Handbook of Research Methods in Tourism and Hospitality Management* (In Press).

2015

Hristov, D., 2015. Tourism versus the visitor economy and the shifting landscape of destination management. *Tourismos: An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism*, 10 (1), 219-234.

Hristov, D. and Petrova, P., 2015. Destination Management Plans – A New Approach to Managing Destinations in England: Evidence from Milton Keynes, *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1-21.

Hristov, D., 2015. Investigating DMOs through the Lens of Social Network Analysis: Theoretical Gaps, Methodological Challenges and Practitioner Perspectives, *Advances in Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 3 (1), 18-39.

Hristov, D. and Naumov, N., 2015. Allies or Foes? Key Challenges Facing the Shifting Landscape of Destination Management in England, *Tourism*, 63 (2), 193-203.

Hristov, D. and Zehrer, A., 2015. The Destination Paradigm Continuum Revisited: DMOs Serving as Leadership Networks, *Tourism Review*, 70 (2), 116-131.

2014

Hristov, D., 2014. Co-Creating Destination Development in the Post-Austerity Era: Destination Management Organisations and Local Enterprise Partnerships, *Journal of Tourism & Development*, 21-22 (3), 25-34.

2013

Hristov, D., 2013. Rethinking Partnerships in Shaping New Destination Management Organisations: Current Challenges in Austerity Times. *Peer reviewed paper presented at the University of the Aegean 5th International Scientific Conference: Tourism Trends and Advances in the 21st Century*, Rhodes, Greece. ISBN 978-960-89485-4-9.

Section VII consisted of seven appendices. Appendix 1 provided a complete list of DMK member organisations and target individuals. Appendix 2 (a-l) provided an overview of all methodological tools used as part of Phase I, Phase II and Phase III including copies of introductory and consent letters. Appendix 3 (a-d) had its focus on Phase I findings discussed in Chapter 4 A and provided a summary of achieved sample, along with policy network analysis and sample interviews. Appendix 4 had its focus on Phase II findings discussed in Chapter 4 B and provided tables with descriptive statistics drawing on results from the applied network measures highlighted on Figure 4.B.1. Appendix 5 had its focus on Phase III findings discussed in Chapter 4 C and included a sample self-reflective practitioner questionnaire and sample interview with a policy maker from VisitEngland. Appendix 6 provided a visual, process-driven representation of the overarching study framework. The last appendix, namely Appendix 7 provides a list of publications and papers in review, which stem from this doctoral study and have either been already published or undergoing a review process.