Responsible leadership and COVID-19: small Island making big waves in cruise tourism

Paul Pounder

*Department of Business and Management, St. George's University,
St. George's, Grenada*

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore responsible leadership and crisis management. Many sectors and economies have faced the stark effect of coronavirus; however, the damage done was felt more in some areas than others. Cruise tourism is one such sector dramatically affected, as it ground to a screeching halt in March 2020. This has led to crisis management, as passengers, cruise-line crew, large cruise companies and governments were now faced with a new reality as countries around the world closed their borders. This article aims at discussing in detail how responsible leadership, in the small island of Barbados, championed a response to support the cruise tourism sector and assist in managing the crisis.

Design/methodology/approach – The author conducted a literature review on the current knowledge relating leadership and crisis management. Thus building a better understanding in the field and identifying gaps for making new arguments for best practices of leadership development in crisis management established in the cruise tourism sector. The author gave viewpoints based on the leadership style of the Prime Minister of Barbados.

Findings – Responsible leadership is a style that has been best observed as one that emphasizes a commitment to the common good and provides a constructive societal impact. With this approach, the leaders navigated the uncertainty surrounding the crisis and provided fresh hope to future plans. Thus, the coronavirus was perceived in a positive way, producing opportunities for progress and change.

Research limitations/implications – By developing an understanding of traditional leadership theories, it provides a framework for the adaptation of responsible leadership approach in crisis management. Moreover, the practice of responsible leadership in this COVID-19 era is shown to be crucial to crisis management and enhancing performance. Limitations on viewpoint are based on the author's philosophies.

Practical implications – This paper provides a better understanding of the principles surrounding leadership and fashions a framework for discussing responsible leadership from a crisis management standpoint. The viewpoint provides an optimistic difference in managing a crisis.

Social implications – The paper provides a better understanding of responsible leadership as an integrated approach to governance, ethics and social responsibility. The paper provides a basis to assess the intersection of the literature on leadership and crisis management.

Originality/value – This article contributes to the literature on responsible leadership within the context of crisis management.

Keywords Barbados, Crisis management, Responsible leadership, Coronavirus, COVID-19, Cruise tourism

Paper type Viewpoint

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be one of the biggest crises in our time and as such requires sustained strong leadership in order to overcome the challenges it has brought to the forefront. As of August 21, 2020, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) health emergency dashboard, there are over 22.5 million confirmed cases of the coronavirus, more than 0.79 million deaths and over 14.4 million individuals who have recovered from COVID-19. This pandemic has put the globe into crisis management mode, with leaders trying their utmost to control the spread of the virus. This crisis is even more challenging as its impact goes beyond just public health. Many sectors and economies have faced the stark effect of coronavirus; however, the damage done permeated some areas more than in others.

The tourism sector has been one of the hardest-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and has created a negative effect on both the supply and demand side of the travel industry. Cruise

tourism is one such sub-sector dramatically affected, as it came to a screeching halt in March 2020. This has led to a need for crisis management as passengers, cruise-line crew, large cruise companies, local businesses, communities and governments faced a new reality as countries around the world closed their borders. With national governments trying to find the best way forward amidst mixed theories and practices postulated by political and public health leaders, everyone has set out to strengthen their protocols and policies to protect public health, despite varying constraints on resources. This in turn meant trying to find ways to repatriate tourists and other personnel working overseas to their respective homes, which presented a significant leadership challenge for many countries. This article discusses the four tenets of responsible leadership and shows how their relevance paved the way to lighten the leadership challenge faced by COVID-19 with the outcome of such actions receiving praise from representatives of the Royal Caribbean International and Aida Perla cruise lines (Austin, 2020; BGIS, 2020).

Hence, different types of leadership have come to the forefront through countries' responses to COVID-19 related issues. This article aims to discuss several viewpoints, as well as share expert opinions of how responsible leadership in the small island of Barbados championed a response to support the cruise tourism sector and assist in managing the crisis. The significance and relevance of the research is by filling the gap in the literature that bridges the theory and practice of some of the qualities prevalent in responsible leadership.

Context of the study
As a small island in the Caribbean Sea, Barbados attracts many tourists with its promotions based on sun, sand and surf, friendly people and as a health and wellness destination. Like many other small economies, Barbados uses tourism as a means of social and economic development (Mihalic, 2014), a strategy supported by other researchers who highlight that significant economic benefits can be derived from tourism through the development of adequate policies and initiatives (Tribe, 2005). Accordingly, as stated on the Barbados Tourism Inc. website, Barbados had approximately 614,993 cruise tourists visiting the island in 2018. Hence, Barbados' geographical location and economic conditions make it a prime case for this study, as tourism is its main foreign exchange earner, contributing significantly to the GDP of the country.

This study looks at how a small island like Barbados, through its leadership, has made big waves in the cruise tourism industry, as it sets out to manage a crisis brought about by the halt of the sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Taking the lead on crisis management in Barbados is the prime minister, who is the highest public official in Barbados and makes decisions on issues determined by laws of the island, as is the case of many Commonwealth nations. Thus, this individual, with the support from other ministers and administrators, takes control of any major crisis facing the island, as is shown in the case of tackling COVID-19. For instance, Prime Minister Mottley demonstrated strong political leadership and collaboration at varying levels of government in resolving crises, as posited by Kettl (2006), as well as a transformational leadership style needed to enhance health care systems in small island developing states (SIDS) like Barbados, as posited by Pounder and Greaves (2020). Further rationale for studying this island context stems from the fact that the local economy of SIDS is susceptible to the negative impact of unexpected global economic events. For instance, SIDS have inadequate resources, financial fragility, or poor institutional capacity to be a viable and sustainable economy, thus making a case for exploring a leader style that encompasses decision-making in demanding conditions.

Literature review
The purpose of this literature review is to present the principles surrounding leadership, summarize traditional leadership theories and to fashion a framework for discussing

leadership styles and responsible leadership from a crisis management standpoint. The research presented shows the importance of leadership and its role in the enhancement of communities, institutions and nations (McCallum and O'Connell, 2009). It further depicts leadership in the moment of crisis.

Leadership theories
While several leadership theories exist, this article explores the dominant theories that provide an integrated framework that offers resources and suggestions for addressing the responsible leadership practice. The mainstream theories considered included trait theory, behavioral theory, situational/context leadership, contingency, transactional and transformational theory. To begin the exploration of the leadership theories, each of these contemporary theories is unpacked and defined based on what is readily apparent and addressed in the extant literature (King, 1990; Taylor *et al.*, 2015; Hunt and Fedynich, 2019).

Trait theory identifies the variances in the characteristics of leaders versus non-leaders; for instance, the level of intelligence and self-confidence shown by leaders is stronger, while they have a distinct showing of willpower and integrity (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1991; Noftle and Shaver, 2006). The behavioral theorists posit that leadership skills are teachable through training and observation (Naylor, 1999) and that a person was not necessarily born a leader. These theorists focus more on how effective the leader is at executing tasks as opposed to understanding the perceived traits of the leader. Similarly, the situational/context leadership style highlights that the leader is capable of fashioning a way forward based on a scan of the environment (Northouse, 2004), while Taylor *et al.* (2015, p. 123) suggest that situational leadership encompasses "leveraging a combination of individual knowledge, skills, ability and experience...to effectively perform in variety of situations."

Another key leadership theory is contingency theory (also known as leader-match theory), which focuses on recognizing the leader's ability to match the best style of leadership to situational favorableness. Thus, the contingency approach advocates that a single leadership style does not appropriately fit under all the situations. Fiedler (1978) developed the original writings on this style, with Verkerk (1990) further expanding the theory to predict leader effectiveness. In essence, leadership under a contingency approach, as suggested by Ronay and Vugt (2014), indicates that the leadership process is fluid and ever changing in response to existing situations. On the other hand, transactional theory is based on symbiotic relationships or two-way exchanges that are mutually beneficial and geared toward achieving a particular goal (Muijs, 2011; Lamb, 2013), while transformational theory focuses on how the leaders inspire and motivate their followers to perform in a meaningful way that they would not have done under other conditions. In essence, these followers go beyond the call of duty based on leadership mentoring (Marquis and Huston, 2009; Lamb, 2013; Eisenbeiß and Boerner, 2013).

In summary, the principles identified in the traditional leadership theories have been evolving over time, as more researchers give their own account of the field of leadership. While Hunt and Fedynich (2019, p. 22) noted "there is no finite line to define when one period of leadership theory ends and where another begins", broad periods can identify where the traditional leadership theories can be categorized. As such, King (1990) supports the evolutionary developmental approach of leadership theories based on eras, whereas Hunt and Fedynich (2019) suggest that leadership is a product of the times. Research shows traditional theories fail to fit existing phenomenon or are not adaptable in their present form. Pisapia (2009) and Yammarino (2013) show that newer theories that provide better explanations of the occurrence are derived from tweaking traditional theories. As such, this research builds on the traditional leadership theories to conceptualize leadership styles in a crisis management context.

Leadership styles and crisis management
Fiaz *et al.* (2017) suggest that some of the more common leadership styles include autocratic, democratic, bureaucratic and laissez-faire, all of which are roughly based on the leader's behavior. These styles emphasize individual behavior and provide frameworks for behavioral interventions; however, they give little recognition to the influence of environmental factors on behavior thus making room for exploring more leadership styles. For this research, the key elements for crisis management are grounded in the idea that the ambiguity of information, changing environmental dynamics and the urgency of the response affect the ability of the leader to think and act effectively, hence influencing decision-making (Pearson and Clair, 1998). The previous literature has linked crisis management and decision-making. For example, Sayegh *et al.* (2004) suggest an intuitive-based decision-making approach under crisis conditions and Sommer and Pearson (2007) posit the need for creativity in decision-making during a crisis period with both the intuition and creativity of the individual subconsciously combining disparate information into a coherent form for decision-making (Raidl and Lubart, 2001). While in another example, Schraagen and Ven (2008, p. 325) posit that crisis management is grounded in complex "decision-making situations that are characterized by time pressure, risk and uncertainty". In a more recent paper, Hittle and Leonard (2011) deem that effective leaders should plan for crises and, as such, this would allow them to put decision-making criteria in place, which would allow them to adhere to advanced plans. Further, under crisis management, managing relationships is paramount to decision-making, thus creating a need to be open and participatory to the extent that other relevant persons are motivated to find creative ways to overcome challenges (Kouzes and Posner, 2007).

The notion of relationship-oriented leadership styles aligns with behavioral theory, which focuses on human relationships among other metrics like performance and output. In addition, such behavioral theories fashion transformational leader behaviors that entail motivating followers to move beyond self-interest and transactional leader behaviors that entail motivating followers by identifying rewards or consequences (Bass and Bass, 2008). Furthermore, the relationship-oriented leadership styles also align with the body of knowledge surrounding both contingency and situational theory, where a leader is based on the level of maturity of the followers and the relationship behavior is the extent to which the leader engages in back-and-forth communications.

As such, this research builds on the traditional leadership theories to conceptualize responsible leadership in a crisis management context. The view is that responsible leadership focuses more on balancing conflicting interests that exist among varying stakeholders. Therefore, this makes a case for going beyond the traditional leadership theories that focus on dyadic leader-subordinate relationships and gaining a better understanding of the multifaceted leader-stakeholder relationships and the challenges with meeting their varied interests while achieving sustainable results. Hence, the following section explores the linkage between responsible leadership and crisis management and describes the main components of responsible leadership.

Responsible leadership and crisis management
As outlined previously, managing a crisis is a complex leadership issue that requires unique leadership skills. A crisis usually creates a sensitive environment that in some cases can be hostile, as leaders invariably have to make multifaceted and far-reaching decisions with limited or changing information. Though crisis management invariably entails overcoming threats, some future opportunities may come out of them (Boin *et al.*, 2017). Thus, leadership in crisis management entails having an open mind and the capacity to lead under extreme and unfavorable conditions. This form of leadership goes beyond managing the optics of public

perception, risk and legal obligations, as responsibility to constituents and other stakeholders is of paramount importance as well. Freeman and Auster (2011) posit that responsible leaders critically consider the impact of their actions on stakeholders. Thus, the premise for this research is that Prime Minister Mottley recognizes her responsibility toward both the cruise tourism industry and the greater community.

Responsible leadership also encompasses making rational choices, thus highlighting the ability to act in a responsible manner. Using traditional leadership theories partially captures this phenomenon, as other underpinning dimensions in leader-follower relationships are not considered. Doh and Stumpf (2005) posit responsible leadership as an integrated approach to governance, ethics and social responsibility. Similarly, Maak and Pless (2006) see responsible leadership as the social and ethical interaction needed to overcome a diverse challenge, while other researchers suggest triangulating leadership, ethics and social responsibility. Furthermore, Johnson (2001) links ethics and leadership to subjects such as spirituality and communication, while Ciulla (2005) posits the embeddedness of ethical assumptions in leadership literature, and Waldman and Siegel (2008) note that responsible leadership aligns behavior, motives and values. Additional supporting research by Maak and Pless (2006) and Freeman and Auster (2011) suggest the importance of personal values and its centrality to responsible leadership, with added support given to being true to oneself and authenticity. Additionally, Avolio and Gardner (2005) posit the need for a relational character that is authentic in executing their leadership responsibility, while Miska *et al.* (2014) deem that dimensions related to the degree of stakeholder inclusion and the scope of responsibility are paramount in understanding responsible leadership. By integrating responsible behavior into the leadership style, this would allow for streamlining other relevant principles into the development of policies, processes and practices.

This study considers four perspectives (rational, humanistic, holistic and spiritual-based), which are recognized themes from the literature that are instrumental in pursuing responsible leadership (Pruzan *et al.*, 2007). The rational perspective notes that leaders use the principles of reason when resolving problems. In addition, the rational perspective means that leaders must act in a truthful manner based on the situation and their honest approach to overcoming challenges. Woiceshyn (2011) postulates honesty and integrity as rational virtues implicit in responsible leadership, while Miska *et al.* (2014) build on the rational egoism theory and argue for responsible leadership to consider stakeholder engagement based on varying incentives. In essence, the rational lens highlights the further need for traditional leadership to come into focus and give more credence to analyzing the details, facts and reasons behind making decisions. The humanist perspective highlights that being human allows responsible behavior to be a natural inclination in decision-making. In addition, the humanistic perspective builds on the leader's capacity to sympathize and empathize with individuals and to put themselves in a position to see things through the eyes of others facing the challenge. Pirson and Lawrence (2010) posit that humanism encapsulates forming alliances geared toward building common understandings of goals and developing means to prosper together. Melé (2016) argues that a humanistic approach goes beyond the "boss-subordinate" model of power and influence and gives awareness to what is required within the community, whereas Anadola and Behery (2020) conclude that humanistic leadership characteristics align with the cultural roots of the leader.

In essence, the humanistic lens provides some insights that deviate from traditional leadership approaches, as it encompasses consideration of human dignity, ethical reflection and stakeholder engagement. The holistic perspective takes into consideration the rights of others and the leader's responsibility to respect such rights. Many refer to this as the golden rule – "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" – as it shows fairness and has many likenesses in Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Denton, 2008). In other words, the holistic approach sees the leader beyond what he or she can do, which is a

traditional approach and recognizes him or her for who he or she is. Furthermore, the holistic lens shows that the significant sources of influence on leadership behavior are integrated. The spiritual-based perspective highlights that leadership responsibility stems from one's purposefulness and nature as a spiritual being. Chen and Yang (2012) argue that the responsible leader's values, attitudes and behaviors have a positive effect on influencing followers' behaviors, while Smith *et al.* (2018, p. 81) stipulate, "spiritual leaders are motivating and inspire workers through a strong vision". In short, the spiritual-based perspective focuses on developing positive and humane outcomes. Research done by Fry (2003; 2005) sees the spirituality aspect of leadership as a sense of calling, while Dent *et al.* (2005) suggest that there is no consensus on spirituality in the workplace.

Design/methodology/approach
The author conducted a review of the current literature relating to leadership theories, leadership styles, responsible leadership and crisis management. Information was collected using qualitative techniques based on document analysis and a review and analysis of a series of observations in order to link how leadership evolves in crisis management. Such an approach would provide background information and broad coverage for contextualizing the research (Bowen, 2009). In addition, O'Leary (2014) suggests that the actual documents and their analyses would provide a valid technique for noting occurrences.

The aforementioned approach, therefore, strengthens understanding in the field and identifies gaps for making new arguments for best practices of leadership development in crisis management established in the cruise tourism sector. The author reviewed the case of responsible leadership in the context of cruise tourism in Barbados amidst the COVID-19 crisis and gave viewpoints based on the observed leadership style of the prime minister of Barbados, Mia Amor Mottley.

A case study of responsible leadership in the face of COVID-19 in Barbados
As cruise ships around the world began to face the reality of being unable to dock at any ports, they faced a crisis and those in the Caribbean region were no different. The daunting sight of cruise ship passengers in ports but really feeling lost at sea was enough to spur one prime minister into action. As Barbados was committed to homeport cruise ships in the waters of the island, the prime minister had to put things in place to manage this crisis. Thus, one of Prime Minister Mottley's first steps was to act with steadfastness and take the lead in making a humanitarian effort to solve the cruise ship crisis in the Caribbean region. However, as the country itself was facing its own challenges, the prime minister had to put intermediate measures in place to combat COVID-19. This included building capacity for good testing capabilities and contact tracing, operationalizing medical facilities for quarantining and setting up isolation centers. Despite the daily changes regarding the interpretation of the coronavirus pandemic, the prime minister and the health officials of Barbados were able to rationalize government's intervention by acting on the science. Decision-making was fashioned by construing some level of acceptable risk, even though the problem was characterized by a lack of data, thus adhering to the constant call echoed locally and in other societies around the world "to do the right thing".

A key statement personifying the situation surrounding the cruise ships was uttered by the prime minister, who said: "We have an obligation to these ships; these ships call Barbados home. There is a legal, contractual, moral, ethical and humanitarian obligation that we have" (Miles, 2020, para. 8). These are all perspectives and principles given consideration in responsible leadership (Maak and Pless, 2006; Ciulla, 2005). The crisis in the world and around the Caribbean was getting worse at a fast pace, with many countries banning cruise ships from their ports as they tried to protect their nations' public health from

COVID-19. Thus, during the crisis period, the Barbados Port cruise terminal became a critical point in the repatriation of passengers and crew of the cruise-line industry, as the prime minister pledged her country's support to the cruise industry from the outset of the coronavirus crisis. By broadcasting such high stakes early in the pandemic, the prime minister revealed that a key to responsible leadership is finding the right balance between tact, tone and timing when communicating on crisis issues. The issue of acceptable risk was a critical part of managing this crisis, specifically when the Braemar of Fred Olsen Cruise Lines "was refused docking in Barbados" (Reynolds and Oppmann, 2020, para. 6). At the time, this cruise line had forty persons (passengers and crew) displaying influenza-like symptoms, thus highlighting the need for individual assessment of risk for each cruise line. Balancing acceptable risk and local sensitivities toward COVID-19 was a key to the prime minister of Barbados and other stakeholders. Hence, the Ministry of Health, in making this decision, demonstrates another key aspect of responsible leadership, as indicated by Freeman and Auster (2011), which is the need for leaders to consider critically the impact of their actions on stakeholders.

In this situation, the acceptable risk-to-benefit balance was a judgment call that was too risky a decision for the prime minister and her government. Looking forward, the government ultimately needs to have a common formula or method for calculating acceptable risk. To date, this has been an iterative process, limited to particular persons during the repatriation of cruise passengers. However, the Ministry of Health and Wellness advocates that this risk originate from good public health science.

The movement of stranded persons on cruise lines from the seaport to the airport was a concern in managing the crisis, as there were restrictions in the movement of people, which was further complicated during the period of lockdown on the island. The solution was a controlled corridor between the Barbados seaport and the airport, which allowed for a steady stream of persons to repatriate safely and unobtrusively using this route. The CEO of the Grantley Adams International Airport stated that passengers "were being escorted in 'security bubbles' from the [Bridgetown Cruise Terminal] port directly to the side of the aircraft for boarding" (Forde-Craig, 2020, para. 2). As cited many times in describing Barbados and the heart of its leadership and constituents, Kofi Annan, former United Nations General Secretary, stated in 2002, "Barbados punches above its weight" (Pilgrim, 2020, para. 1). For instance, the many cruise lines dependent on Barbados for support to repatriate passengers and crew were large, which caused the leadership of Barbados stand out, as they simultaneously managed a public health crisis and the logistical repatriation nightmare that was created. Without discrimination or any prejudice of nationality, Prime Minister Mottley allowed many cruise lines to take advantage of Barbados' ports, namely, European cruise ships from AIDA, P&O Cruises and TUI. Additionally, North American brands from Seabourn Cruise Line and the Royal Caribbean Group were able to dock and repatriate passengers and crew to Europe, Asia, North & South America and within the Caribbean region, thus benefitting from the arrangement (The Maritime Executive, 2020). Subsequently, praise came from representatives of cruise lines like Royal Caribbean International and Aida Perla (Austin, 2020; BGIS, 2020), beckoning the prime minister's support and leadership in this crisis. Thus, the Kofi Annan quote aptly described "the indomitable and tenacious spirit of Barbados" (Pilgrim, 2020, para. 1), as seen in the political leader's handling of issues in many interconnected industries. The magnitude of the cruise industry crisis was very visible as, at times, over 20 cruise lines were visible in the Barbados waters with 10 ships being from the Royal Caribbean Group. Also noticeable were the biggest cruise ships, the Symphony of the Seas and Harmony of the Seas of the Royal Caribbean fleet, which were granted permission to offload passengers initially and then later returned to offload over 300 crewmembers to relieve other stranded crew on many of its cruise lines (Henry, 2020, para. 1). These actions all indicate the prime minister's steadfast leadership that was evident throughout the crisis.

Further, by honoring contracts and symbiotic long-standing relationships, a raised level of trustworthiness preserved credibility among cruise-line partners and other existing stakeholders, especially, with the prime minister displaying a candid approach to overcoming the challenges presenting themselves during the crisis. For example, in her multiple public communications during the crisis, Prime Minister Mottley was often transparent, truthful, down to Earth, yet firm about the country's approach to the pandemic, specifically as it related to the ever-changing protocols, thus presenting a relational character that was authentic in carrying out her leadership responsibility (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Additionally, as the country moved toward re-opening its borders, she was honest in her assessment of the implementation of a travel bubble by stating "there is no possibility of the elimination of all risks" concerning COVID-19, while acknowledging that there are some risks that can be taken (Smith, 2020). This candidness and honesty elicited a sense of confidence in the country's approach to the pandemic and her leadership. Building trust was a critical outcome of Barbados' handling of the cruise ship situation. As the Minister of Tourism and International Transport, Kerrie Symmonds, indicated, "we now have people who see us as partners that are trustworthy. . ." (Graham, 2020). Thus, her handling of the situation with the cruise liners aligned with her words about the necessity of building trust, thereby indicating a sense of integrity in her leadership and an alignment of her behavior, motives and values, which, as Woiceshyn (2011) and Waldman and Siegal (2008) note, are critical aspects of responsible leadership.

The actions of Prime Minister Mottley of Barbados provide clear evidence of an evolutionary developmental approach of leadership theories based on Hunt and Fedynich's (2019) assertion that leadership is a product of the times. Her leadership demonstrated facets of multiple leadership theories. For instance, she demonstrated the necessary traits of a leader, such as intelligence and integrity (trait theory) and the ability to chart a course of action for the country and adapt it accordingly to the situation (situational leadership theory). Furthermore, her acknowledgment of the need to help the cruise liners because it was the right thing to do and due to the nature of their relationship (Gove, 2020; Barbados Today, 2020; Graham, 2020) (transactional theory) and her ability to have followers engage in organizational citizenship behaviors in a time of crisis (transformational theory) are the hallmarks of leadership. Thus, her demonstration of different leadership styles is further indicative of Ronay and Vugt's (2014) suggestion that the leadership process is fluid and ever changing.

Furthermore, these actions of Prime Minister Mottley also encapsulated the four perspectives of responsible leadership. In essence, the rational perspective highlights the truthful manner and honest approach to solving the problem, especially since the prime minister is conscientious and makes honesty and integrity the focal point of building the relationship with the cruise lines, thus demonstrating the rational values implicit in responsible leadership (Woiceshyn, 2011). The high level of stakeholder inclusion and the controlled corridor, which protects the health of locals while still satisfying the movement of persons from the seaport to the airport, creates an acceptable and important balance in responsible leadership (Miska et al., 2014). Such a controlled corridor showed the uprightness of the prime minister, while the integrity and conscientiousness of the decision highlighted the respectability for the stakeholders. Knowing and understanding each other as stakeholders was viewed as key to success and this was facilitated through sensitization sessions that informed about the "benefits and risks associated with using personal protective equipment, as well as personal hygiene and social distancing" (Forde-Craig, 2020, para. 5). The humanistic approach was evident when the prime minister stepped into the shoes of both the passengers on the ship and cruise-line operators, indicating her understanding that these individuals had nowhere and no one to turn to.

Accordingly, Prime Minister Mottley, knowing that individuals were desperate to return home, implemented the necessary arrangements to do so in a way that guaranteed both their

safety and the safety of Barbadians (Barbados Today, 2020), thus allowing feelings and emotions to fashion responsible actions. Feelings of isolation and helplessness go against the Barbadian motto of pride and industry, a slogan that the prime minister constantly advocates. The holistic perspective is shown in the fact that the rights of others and "the golden rule" are taken into consideration, given her words to "do the right thing by those with whom we have a relationship" and her understanding that the cruise members were desperate to return home (Barbados Today, 2020). The prime minister's and health officers' allowance of new staff to replace existing staff on the cruise lines was viewed as a fair compromise given the existing situation of crewmembers being stranded on the ship for over three months. The view was that the situation for crewmembers was psychologically intense, to say the least and in some cases may have been too much to bear, thus allowing for a holistic perspective in rotating staff as needed. Furthermore, the spiritual-based perspective was evident by way of the interventions leading toward humane outcomes and primarily because the prime minister sees the task itself as satisfying.

Another example of the responsible leadership of Prime Minister Mottley of Barbados was apparent when the Carnival Fascination received permission to dock in Barbados after it had a coronavirus scare. The ship consequently docked in Barbados and the ailing crew followed the protocols of the Barbados medical officers as they received COVID-19 tests. Going beyond the call of duty, the prime minister personally delivered the results to the ship's captain. As a recognition of the courtesies exhibited by Prime Minister Mottley and the responsible leadership exhibited in a time of need, Christine Duffy, Carnival Cruise Line's president, personally thanked the prime minister (Thakkar, 2020), thus showing an appreciation for her sense of responsibility. In other instances, the prime minister has received medical and psychological requests for further humanitarian assistance from other cruise ships and has been able to facilitate those requests, thus alleviating various forms of suffering and maintaining human dignity among a group of stranded persons in crisis.

By providing an anchor of support for the cruise-line industry, the efforts of the prime minister possibly reduced the full impact of the darker side of deserted terminals and quaysides to a local economy that is very dependent on tourism. The trickle-down effect of the cruise tourism sector heightens emotions among many of the locals in Barbados, especially since the view is that lay-offs and unemployment will spiral out of control without any meaningful intervention. As part of the strategy to reopen the borders and get cruise tourism going again in the Caribbean region, Prime Minister Mottley is co-chairing a task force for the Americas on cruise tourism. Invariably, born out of the love of nation, the interest of the prime minister is to get the local economy generating revenue again, thereby working with stakeholders and having them come together and commit to overcoming the challenges that stand in the way, through supportive initiatives that allow for reopening the economies in a staged and meaningful way. This is a further demonstration of sound leadership and good crisis management, since, as posited by Kouzes and Posner (2007), managing relationships is paramount to decision-making, thus creating a need to be open and participatory to the extent that other relevant persons are motivated to find creative ways to overcome challenges.

Moreover, a key aspect of responsible leadership portrayed by the Barbados prime minister was the thought and consideration given to the stakeholders' interests. In this case, such stakeholders include government ministers tasked with finance, tourism and international transport, health and wellness, maritime affairs and the blue economy and government entities like the Grantley Adams International Airport and the Barbados Port Inc. Other key stakeholders coming from an international relations perspective include airlines, cruise-line operators and their passengers and from a local perspective include tour operators, non-governmental organizations and local residents. Noticeably, the interests of these stakeholder groups vary significantly. The government ministers' interests range from putting people and their wellbeing first, to preventing and controlling the spread of COVID-19

and from managing unexpected expenditures and declining revenues, to unlocking new opportunities for tourism growth. On the other hand, the government entities' interests include managing the arrival and departure of passengers/cargo and safeguarding the health and safety of employees, passengers and other operators at the port. In contrast, the local stakeholders' interests include concern over the high risk to citizens based on imported cases of COVID-19 into Barbados, the ability of the country to manage such risk and its potential impact on life in society. In essence, responsible leadership plays an influential role using trust and legitimacy in discerning and aptly acting upon the multiple stakeholders and competing interests (Bao *et al.*, 2013). Thus, the effective stakeholder management depicted by Prime Minister Mottley was important in successfully navigating the crisis with financial and social constraints. In making decisions during the crisis, the prime minister considered the relevant stakeholders as responsible leadership requires this broad perspective (Freeman and Auster, 2011). As part of her responsible leadership approach toward the stakeholders, receptiveness to the interests of those invested in the decision-making process and those impacted by the decisions were captured though the four perspectives of responsible leadership and provided an overview of the observable actions. Further exploration showed that there is a three-way dynamic relationship between the elected officials, the public officials and the private sector; as such, the histories of the organizations, the roles they play, the resources they command and the political environment all influenced and shaped this dynamic and decision-making process.

Conclusion
This research gives credence to exploring leadership styles in varying context and it gives recognition to responsible leadership as a valuable approach to effective crisis management. This research contributes to the intersection of the literature on leadership and crisis management. It looks at how the pursuit of responsible leadership by Prime Minister Mottley of Barbados was pertinent to managing and coping with the COVID-19 crisis and its impact on the cruise tourism sector in that country. The notion of relationship-oriented leadership appears to be paramount to decision-making in crisis, thus creating a need to be open and participatory with key stakeholders. Furthermore, the responsible leader has to consider key stakeholders and their interests in order to be an effective leader. As explored in the article, the four perspectives (rational, humanistic, holistic and spiritual-based) that are instrumental in conceptualizing responsible leadership can be used to better understand how leadership styles evolve to suit the crisis, as shown in the Barbados case of the cruise tourism crisis due to COVID-19. Recognizing that the COVID-19 crisis affects many sectors, there is potential applicability for responsible leadership across other sectors, as it provides an optimistic difference in managing a crisis.

Thus, this research shows that responsible leadership is a unique approach that interconnects theory and practice and paves a way for managing the crises created by issues such as COVID-19. As a limitation, the author notes that further in-depth exploration of the explanations of the dynamic relationships evident throughout this crisis, has constraints due to the lack of accessibility to further information from the prime minister and other key stakeholders that would allow for a more objective, comprehensive response. Additionally, the information presented in the case discussion is a summary constructed on observations and written articles and thus provides a subjective interpretation based on the author's expertise. Thus, future research can potentially look to investigate leadership and crisis management through more objective means such as surveys, interviews and focus groups, in combination with an analysis of secondary research. Future research should also consider investigating the intricacies surrounding mediating and resolving thorny issues and relationship challenges in crisis management. Despite its limitations, however, this paper

provides a useful foundation from which to explore leadership and crisis management within developing countries.

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About the author

Paul Pounder, PhD is the Director of MBA Programs (International Business and Multi-sector Health Management) in the Business and Management Department at St. George's University in Grenada. He is a Professor of Entrepreneurship and has his teaching and research interest in entrepreneurship, leadership and project management. Paul Pounder can be contacted at: ppounder@sgu.edu